



Words to Music

A Collection of Lyrics by Nan Geary

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A Whispering Hope Music Project

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Translation: Play nice with others. Don't play with other people's toys without asking first.

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www.art101.com/nan

A companion music CD is available at:
www.cdbaby.com/cd/nangeary

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FOREWORD

This book is really a love letter. How so? Well, let me count the ways.

First of all, it is a record of my lifelong passionate affair with words. Early on, I fell in love with not only their multilayered meanings but also their sounds and rhythms. So, it was a natural progression for me to go from writing poems to composing song lyrics. This progression was accelerated in college in the 1960s, when a small poetry magazine refused to publish my poems because they had rhyme and meter (gasp!) — just as, decades earlier, poetry journals must have refused works in so-called free verse. (I always seem to miss the boat of “Cool,” no matter what shape it assumes.) None of that mattered. Piano and guitar were waiting to resonate with my thoughts. My love of poetry and singing easily translated words into music. And here they are.

Secondly, this book is a love letter from Andy Markley, who promoted the project and created the clean, elegant graphic design. He loves my stuff enough that he wants to put it out there in the world. Andy and I have been friends since the 1970s, when we played in a band called Equinox. As pretentious and self-absorbed as we were then, we still managed to give wholehearted support to each other’s creative efforts. To this day, Andy is my most enthusiastic cheering section — as evidenced by this book, which would not exist without his drive (computer and other).

So, this book is also a grateful love letter from me to him — and to anyone else who shares my hopeless infatuation with language and melody. If just one of you is inspired by my songs to write one of your own, or to revive some of your old lyrics, then this love letter has reached its destination.

In joy,
Nan

*To Tom O,
my pole star*



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THE AEOLIAN HARP

Summer sings so short a song,
A look, a smile, a sigh, it's gone.
But I'll sing for you,
My stormy one,
Who weeps for summer's loss
As for a gold coin tossed
And a gold dream lost,
And you curse the cost.

Some say that songs are measured in time, that's a lie.
Music measures us our moments till we die.
So fixed I stand and stretch my fingers to the sky
And let the wind play me,
The Aeolian Harp,
The Aeolian Harp,
The Aeolian Harp,
For wind is the only thing that never stops singing,
singing,
singing,

Singing songs of love and hate,
My dreams are strings to resonate,
And I'll sing for you
Until they break,
By a strong wind torn,
But who can fear the storm
And who can reckon cost
When nothing clutched is nothing lost —

So I am sung by the solar songs,
The cycles and the seasons,
The chorus and the cadence,
One, two, three, four, five,
I'm alive, I'm alive,
The Aeolian Harp,
The Aeolian Harp,
The Aeolian Harp,
For wind is the only thing that never stops singing,
singing,
singing.



ALL SHALL BE WELL

(Wedding Song, after the writings of Julian of Norwich)

All my life this love has been.
One born two are one again.
All shall be well
And all shall be well,
All manner of thing shall be well.

We, for love complete and great,
Bow beneath so sweet a weight.
All shall be well
And all shall be well,
All manner of thing shall be well.

Binding, we loose,
Losing, we find.

Life is by a circle spanned.
Wear this circle on your hand.
All shall be well
And all shall be well,
All manner of thing shall be well.

Kaire, Kaire!*

Come rejoice, rejoice today.
All shall be well
And all shall be well,
All manner of thing shall be well.

* Transliteration of Greek for "rejoice"



ALMOST BLUE

Here I am, alone too much,
Thinking too hard, nursing a touch
Of nostalgia for you.
I'm testing my heart —
It's almost blue.

I've tried to do all the song sings,
Crystallize my loss, doing all the wrong things, wrong things:
Sipping the old wine of the old times,
Making what might have been
Out of what could never be.
But these dreams don't bind me
As I thought they would do.
I have to remind me,
Oh yeah,
I'm almost blue.

Now who would have guessed
From my fairy tales' chaste fires
And the dark towers a child's desires
Built me,
This thing hasn't killed me, killed me!
I'm laughing and silly sometimes,
I'm paying my bills on time.
Hardly a day goes by
I don't think of you,
But I'm almost high
And I'm almost blue.

So how are you doing?
I hope you are fine.
You're not even yours,
So you couldn't be mine,
But I love you, I love you.
You burned off some vanity,
But you left me my sanity.
Thank you, thank you.
I'm just a little lonely
And I'm only
Almost blue.



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BARRIER REEF

The moon and the rolling sea
Take a hold of me,
And, moving, I come to grief
On your barrier reef.

And all that rides on the swells
Is torn by your coral and shells.

Oh I would not love you now,
But you showed me how.
So why, after choosing me,
Are you refusing me?

But oh, you gentle man,
How can you help me understand
When you don't understand
Yourself?

There are so many parts of us that are not named.
Don't be ashamed
To let them be.

Of all the fears I have that cripple me,
The worst must be
The fear of me.

This time I'm not afraid
Of the love we've made.
Sometimes I know I crash and burn,
But I'm willing I'm willing to learn.

But oh, the woe and the waste!
How can I show you passion's face
When you don't want to face
Yourself?

And oh, you measuring man,
How can I make you understand
When I don't understand
Myself?

The moon and the rolling sea
Took a hold of me,
And, moving, I came to grief
On your barrier
barrier
barrier
reef.



BEAUTY

Well, you say the smell will kill you
On the pillow since he left his scents
And sudden silence.
So you move into another room,
Yet leave the other life unlocked
For future filings.
And you cry that you are empty,
Yet you're littered with his leavings,
And you dust them daily.
And you ask me in your grieving,
Tell me what I have, and I say,
Well, there is Beauty.

Beauty is the same,
Though I know it only hurts you in your lonely pain.
Beauty is the same,
Beauty, beauty, changing never,
Ever changing, it always will remain.

There is beauty in the sunlight
Smiling on the sheets that you will wash
And fold in lavender.
There is beauty in your dreams, your future,
And the never never past
That you remember.
Oh, there is so much in beauty,
And there's beauty in so many
That you can't be empty.
And don't ask if you have any —
One has but to look at you and say,
Well, there is Beauty.

Beauty is the same,
Though I know it only hurts you in your lonely pain.
Beauty is the same,
Beauty, beauty, changing never,
Ever changing, it always will remain.

LEARN MORE ABOUT NAN GEARY'S BODY OF WORK.

A companion CD featuring 10 songs from this book is available for purchase at Nan's website. You may download one free MP3 and link to secure online ordering at CDBaby.com.



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