

I'm as Happy as a Clam

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Written one evening in December when I realized that I'm finally ready for Christmas.

I'm as happy as can be at a quarter to three
I'll be happy even more at a quarter to four
I'm happy as I got everything I want
I'm just happy - happy who I am

I'm happy like I ate a twelve ounce steak
I'm happy like a chance to get up and dance
I'm happy as I am surrounded by friends
I'm so happy – yes I am!

I'm as happy as a day when things go my way
I'm as happy as the night when the stars shine bright
I'm as happy as the sky when the sun is high
I'm as happy as a clam

I'm happy as a pass on my final test
I'm happy as a smile when it lasts a while
I'm happy as a song when you sing along
I'm just happy – oh yeah!

I'm happy with my life with my loving wife
I'm happy at home when we're all alone
I'm happy as a kiss on her tender lips
I'm as happy as a clam

I'm as happy as a frog sitting on a log
I'm as happy as a dog - spell it backwards it's God
I'm as happy as a cat snuggled in a lap
I'm so happy – yes I am!

I'm as happy as a day when I get to play
I'm as happy as a night when it feels right
I'm as happy for tomorrow when it's free of sorrow
I'm as happy as a clam

I'm happy with enough I don't need too much
I'm as happy as the morn of the day I was born
I'm as happy as can be everyone can see
I'm just happy – oh yeah!

I wouldn't trade a thing not for anything
I wouldn't change a slice of my perfect life
Everything's fine just the way I am
I'm as happy as a clam

The Wedding Video

© 2010 G. McFarlane

This is my best attempt to date at writing a love song for my wife. The events happened after we attended a concert by Wendell Ferguson and Katherine Wheatley, so it's very appropriate that I recorded the song with Wendell.

Just a casual conversation with a friend who came to call
About our wedding video he saw there in the hall
And though it's been so many years since our special day
We put it in the V.C.R. to play

And as we started watching it I couldn't believe my eyes
We were all so younger, it's amazing how time flies
There were faces we've not seen there for oh so many years
And some I had forgotten they were there

But there we were back in our church on that warm summer day
Reliving every moment like it was yesterday
With hair a little grayer now and eyes a little dim
And some of us have gained a bit since then

But somehow you've avoided all the cruelties of time
You look the same to me now though the years have passed on by
And when I saw you turn to me to speak our wedding vows
I felt a lump there in my throat as if we were there now

Chorus: And here you are beside me after all those many years
 I can't believe my fortune that you would still be here
 I love you even more today than I did way back then
 And if I could do it over I would marry you again

And as the tape played on we relived our special day
With all our friends and family to wish us on our way
And all the little things we did to make our wedding fun
How great it was to be with everyone

And as we watched the video I turned to see you smile
And saw you there with that familiar sparkle in your eye
I've seen it there so often in your shining eyes of blue
And once again I thanked my lucky stars that I found you

Chorus, repeat last line

Lobster Roll

© 2010 G. McFarlane

A "Maritime Rap" piece about one of my favourite foods from my native province of New Brunswick. This song is performed by Celtelectic, a Celtic-Rock trio that also includes Jon Grant and Les Smith, along with some special guests.

Lobster in the ocean
Lobster in the trap
Lobster in a cage and he's never coming back
Lobster on the wharf
Lobster on a truck
Lobster on a plane, gonna need a lot of luck

Lobster in the tank
Lobster on display
He's gonna be my supper, gonna make my day
Throw him in the pot
And boil him till he's done
Chop him into bits, and stuff him in a bun

It's a lobster roll! Lobster roll...

Lobster in the shell is a special thing to eat
It's a plate full of appendages filled with good meat
You break them at the joints to get out all the bits
You better wear a bib cuz you're gonna get wet

Some like the tail
Some like the claws
Some like the roe but that's not all
You take all the leftovers
Once you've had your fill
Throw 'em in the fridge and after it's chilled

You make a lobster roll! Lobster roll...

Add a bit of mayo
Add some lettuce too
Warm up the bun on the barbeque
Serve it on a plate
Serve it with finesse
Serve it with a napkin cuz you might make a mess

It makes a yummy supper
It makes a yummy lunch
It makes for a good time when you serve them to a bunch
Eat it with a pickle
Eat it with some fries
Eat it with a beer and coleslaw on the side

Have a lobster roll! Lobster roll...

You gotta love New Brunswick
And all it has to eat
Little patter 'bout the platter that makes a special treat
It's a maritime treasure
That's fit for a king
A seafood satisfaction that's got me rapping

You live out by the ocean
You have a little fun
I'm cravin' crustacean in a hot dog bun
I'm going to st. Andrews
I'm going to the dock
I'm going to place my order and there I'm gonna stop

And have a lobster roll! Lobster roll...

Music, Sports, Sex and Beer

© 2010 G. McFarlane

Men are often accused of having a one track mind. That's simply not true: we have a four track mind!

I went to work Monday morning
And everyone asked me what's new
I thought for a while and gave them a smile
And said "Nothing much, how about you?"

I don't have a whole lot of hobbies
Just four simple things I hold dear
They stay in my mind and take up all my time
that's music, sports, sex and beer

Chorus 1: I'm a man, I'm a man, I am what I am
 Things are simply as they appear
 There's four things I love and always think of
 That's music, sports, sex and beer

I don't like to cry at the movies
I don't like to shop at the mall
I don't like to read or watch too much t.v.
Or really do too much at all

I don't like to think 'bout religion
Or politics, science or math
My mind's full enough with my favourite stuff
I don't have time for all that

Chorus 2: I'm a man, I'm a man, I do what I can
 I can't make things any more clear
 There's four things I love and all I dream of
 Is music, sports, sex and beer

Some men are born strong and mighty
Some are born weaker and mild
Some are too tall and others too small
Some act like an overgrown child

When you get to the heart of the matter
And find out what's in our brain
No matter how old or stupid or bold
All men are exactly the same

Chorus 3: I'm a man, I'm a man, that's what I am
There's nothing new around here
There's four things we love and always think of
Just music, sports, sex and beer

So ladies please don't berate us
We're quite a remarkable breed
It's our DNA that makes us this way
We're a lot with very few needs

Music can fill me with passion
And sports can reduce me to tears
And I sure do love sex, but everything's best
When enjoyed with an icy cold beer

Chorus 4: I'm a man, I'm a man, I am what I am
You should know what it is I revere
There's four things I love and always think of
That's music, sports, sex and beer

Chorus 5: I'm a man, I'm a man, I know what I am
We're exactly as we appear
There's four things we love and always think of
That's music, sports, sex and beer

Don't Be Afraid to Lose

© 1988 G. McFarlane

This song speaks of the existential concept of anguish, i.e. not choosing in fear of making the wrong decision. Just because you may make a few mistakes along the way doesn't mean you should pull a Brian Wilson. As my Grade 9 Music Teacher taught me, if you're going to make a mistake, make a GOOD mistake.

Open doors and windows
Standing so confused
But what to make and what to do
What road to take is up to you
You are the one that has to choose

Wait not for tomorrow
It always comes too soon
So do it now, don't waste a day
The ball is yours so don't delay
The time has come to make your move
Oh, and don't be afraid to lose

Many times I've wondered
Where I'm going to
But even when I've had to guess
I know the key is happiness
And to yourself you must be true
Yes and don't be afraid to lose
(repeat line)

Time stands still before you
Now it's up to you
So do it now, don't waste a day
The ball is yours so don't delay
It's up to you to make your move
Oh and don't be afraid to lose
(repeat line)

God Hates Shrimp

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It's true! You can look it up – Leviticus 11:9-12 and Deuteronomy 14:9-10. It's interesting how some people take note of other rules from the Bible, but somehow forget about this "abomination".

Chorus: God hates shrimp, and crab and lobster, too
 Mussels and scallops are things you shouldn't chew
 Oysters and clams are strictly taboo
 God hates shrimp, I'm sorry but it's true

It says so in the bible, as everybody knows
There's lots of little rules to keep us on our toes
You'll find there in Leviticus and Deuteronomy
Amongst abominations are shellfish from the sea

He made us all a list of things you shouldn't eat
Like any kind of animal with paws instead of feet
Pigs and bugs and bunnies and certain birds of prey
But shellfish is the only one I'm questioning today

Chorus (I wish it wasn't true)

I hope you understand the cause of my frustration
There's so many ways to enjoy a good crustacean
Steamed, baked or boiled, barbequed or fried
Appetizer, main dish or even on the side

Maybe it goes back to being food for the poor
Somebody should tell him it's not that way any more
Now it's fine cuisine that's enjoyed by the rich
So maybe it's time for him to make a switch

Cuz chorus (What am I to do?)

I'm a Maritimer I live out by the sea
You can well imagine what this means to me
And while there's many good things that come from mother earth
I won't be having any turf if I don't get my surf

I try to live my life the best way I know how
But life like in the bible is not how things are now
So maybe the time has come to let some rules be
And if God hates shrimp well that leaves more for me!

God hates shrimp, and crab and lobster, too
Octopus and squid are things you shouldn't chew
Any kind of shellfish is strictly taboo
God hates shrimp, I wonder about you

God hates shrimp - What about you?

Tango to Preston

© 2003 G. McFarlane

I wrote this instrumental at my wife's grandmother's senior residence in Preston, England. The first tune is called "Two Hearts", the latter "Tango to Preston". I know it's not really a tango, but I didn't know what else to call it!

The Canadian Humline Song

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For years I have been performing James Gordon's "Humline Song", a kind of Instant Concert of classic folk songs. One day I realized that only 2 of the 19 songs in it were Canadian! I'm tickled to be recording this song with James in the same studio where he recorded the original.

(Opening bars of Oh Canada)

In the early morning rain
You were on my mind
Sonny don't go away I am here all alone
You could meet me if I sent you down the fare
So farewell to Nova Scotia the sea bound coast
'bout 25 for 30 miles southeast of Baccalu
The girls are out to bingo and the boys are getting stinko
You'll have to excuse me I'm not at my best
I'm a broken man on a Halifax pier
And I'm getting old

So play me a rock and roll song
We'll rant and we'll roll on deck and below
Birling down, down the white water
All around the circle

The legend lives on from the Chippewa on down
Let the winds blow high and blow low
Out on the Mira on warm afternoons
Frozen in Frobisher Bay, frozen in Frobisher Bay
Ah for just one time i would take the Northwest Passage
And rise again, rise again
We're captive on a carousel of time
I've looked at life from both sides now
And the best game you can name is the good old hockey game

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Choo bop bop bop bop, choo bop bop bop bop
Alouette, gentile alouette
If I had a \$1,000,000
I would fly away with you

Newfoundland 9-1-1

© 2007 G. McFarlane

It seems everyone wrote a song about the tragic events of the September 11th terrorist attacks. Mine tells the story of how the town of Gander, Newfoundland took in over 6,500 stranded passengers for several days while the airspace was closed following the attacks.

Chorus: Come gather round boys, let's pull together
 Gather round lads, well there's work to be done
 Women and men, old and the young
 They need us all to answer the call
 Of Newfoundland 9-1-1

I couldn't believe it when I first heard the news
But I saw the twin towers collapse on the tube
The states closed their airspace for the very first time
With thousands of planes still in the sky

The domestics were brought down as fast as they could
But those o'er the Atlantic, they needed to reroute
With Gander the closest airport around
Built big enough to bring 'em all down

Chorus

The last shift returned without being called
To help in the tower and deal with them all
Dozens of planes from all round the world
Gathering here while chaos unfurled

Hour after hour down a single runway
Thirty nine planes descended that day
Sixty five hundred passengers and crew
And where we can keep them nobody knew

The school bus drivers were all off on strike
But they put down their signs to help with the plight
And shuttled the passengers all across town
To schools, halls, and churches, whatever we found

Chorus

The townsfolk and merchants came out in droves
And brought food and blankets and second hand clothes
They worked round the clock to attend to our guests
To help give them comfort and places to rest

We offered them showers inside our homes
Let them contact their families by computer or phone
Canadian Tire let them have things for free
Prescriptions were filled by the town's pharmacy

From hours to days our guests became friends
We took them to shop and for coffee at Tims
And made a fine dinner of home made moose stew
Then off to the pub for a song and a brew

<harmonica solo over chorus>

Then on the fourth day we were finally cleared
To put all the planes back in the air
We loaded them up with tearful goodbyes
And wished them good luck with the rest of their lives

The whole world changed when the towers went down
And the heroes were there saving lives on the ground
But up here in gander we did all we can
For the plane people stranded in Newfoundland

Chorus twice

When I Come Home

© 1987 G. McFarlane

This song was inspired by a newspaper article I read at the time that stated that country music was gaining in popularity among white collar workers. I thought that if that's the case, then there should be songs with more appropriate lyrics.

I come home at night, I'm tired and I'm beat
My head's on fire, my body's weak
But when I come home and I see your smile
I forget my worries for a worry

I work all day, ain't nothing goes right
I can't get away, work into the night
But when I come and I'm in your arms
I know no-one can do me wrong

When I come home you're there to love me
When I come home you're there to care
When I come home, when I come home
All I want's some time to share

So day after day I put on my tie
I go to the office, I kiss you goodbye
But on that subway, seems I'm all alone
I just can't wait 'til I come home

I Want a Hug

© 2011 G. McFarlane

The best things in life are free!

Chorus: I want a hug, I want to hug you
I want a hug, how about you?
Well let's hug, you know I'd love to
I want a hug, hug, hug, hug!

I want a hug in the morning to start my day
I want a hug just to tell me everything's okay
I want a hug in the evening when the day is done
I want a hug anytime cuz they're so much fun

Chorus

A hug is a smile with both your arms
A hug is a spell like a magic charm
A hug's just the thing to make you feel better
A hug feels good in any kind of weather

Chorus

A hug says more than words can say
A hug is free you don't have to pay
Any occasion for a hug will do
There's a hug for me, there's a hug for you

Chorus

You can hug your family you can hug your friends
You can hug your dog if you think you can
You can hug anybody anywhere
You can even hug your teddy bear

Chorus

A hug is love, love is hugs
You can't have too many, you can't get enough
I've a special hug here just for you
That comes with three words – I love you

Chorus

Say Hello to Tomorrow

© 1985 G. McFarlane

Although I'm definitely not a morning person, I do love waking up and facing the clean slate that comes with the start of a brand new day. It's like a reset button.

Say hello to tomorrow and say goodbye to today
Cuz when that old sun rises there'll be new hope on the way

I've had my share of hard times, it's been a long hard day
Now it is the evening let the band begin to play

Say hello to tomorrow and say goodbye to today
Cuz if we keep on trying there will be a better way

Bridge: Celebration time, today is over
Soon it will be another day

Say hello to tomorrow and say goodbye to today
Cuz when that old sun rises there'll be new hope on the way

Trouble is an old friend who always seems to stay
Let us hope that someday he will finally go away

Bridge, repeat opening verses

Of Limericks and Days Past

© 1984 G. McFarlane

A nostalgic poem written during my university days.

The limericks I once left behind
Have reappeared within my mind
And danced a waltz with fallen leaves
Accompanied by September's breeze
I marveled at this wondrous sight
As day was swallowed by the night
A rich emphatic epitaph
Of glazed nocturnal aftermath
Along the sleepy sullen sky
The shadowed images did lie
Of restless hopes and simple dreams
Residing past the evergreens
And when the moon was in clear sight
(As such it was this mystic night)
My memories walked a midnight stroll
Until the meter took its toll
And cast me down familiar streets
Of swollen hearts and pounding beats
To days of youth and childlike ways
And optimistic glory days
Where rhyme, not reason, dominate
And silly thoughts regurgitate
A punster's pentatonic drone
(The punch lines were an awful groan!)
But nonetheless, a joyful bliss
Has reawaken, like a kiss
A quiet yearning in my soul
So take me back to days of old
To limericks of a dying breed
Whose origins are pedigreed
A country mile in length alone
With verse immortalized in stone
Yes, take me back, somehow, somewhere
Into a time we all could share
Of youthful looks and childlike ways
And optimistic glory days

Hudson's Last Voyage

© 2005 G. McFarlane

Recorded live "off the floor" by our Celtic-Rock trio Celtelectic, it chronicles the circumstances of Henry Hudson's mutiny as he attempted to find the Northwest Passage.

Cold in the north 'midst the icebergs and snow
Six months on shore now we're westward once more
Tracing the path where we saw Hudson last
For his majesty James so we won't be blamed

Billet and I stood before Dudley's trial
The last to remain as we tried to explain
How things came to be that we set Hudson free
As we overthrew nine of our crew
The events surrounding Hudson and his crew
The desertion of Henry Hudson and his crew
The mutiny of Henry Hudson and his crew

It was Dudley's decision to have me on board
As an unbiased witness, a log to record
An authentic source for his book on the North West passage
We sailed in April sixteen hundred and ten
On the vessel "Discovery" with twenty two men
Hudson the captain said he hoped to reach bantam by Candlemas

Five days in the voyage and the cracks were starting to show
As Hudson replaced a crewmate with one of his own
Henry Greene was a rogue and gambler
He divided the crew and caused them to anger
Some called him a spy for a captain fearing losing control

We arrived in June in sight of much ice
On the north shore of Labrador with no path in sight
Said the mate Juet we should never have tried this so early
We entered the strait on a meandering course
Twixt the ice and the fog things only got worse
Our compass was faltering and the crew was showing signs of scurvy

Caught in the ice the crew said to turn the ship round
But Hudson refused as he showed them how far we've gone
For three months more we sailed south 'long the bay
Amidst rows concerning the direction to take
Til the bay finally froze up completely in the midst of November
Hudson ordered a shelter be built for the winter
Which he should have done sooner when conditions were better
For by then John Williams the gunner had died from exposure
He should have done earlier before Williams died from exposure

Cold in the snow nearing fifty below
Suffering from scurvy and chilled to the bone
Losing the savages through a bad trade
Low on provisions, nare a fortnight's remained

In desperation he rowed out alone
For more than a week our captain was gone
Ours hopes resting on what he returned with
Coming back empty the last bread was divided

Six months on shore before sailing once more
We head out in June not a moment too soon
Dividing the cheeses for our vessel's last meals
All that's in store, but still searching for more
There's just got to be more

I can't believe he ordered to search our chests for food
He's got to have more hidden than the whole damned brood
He wants to leave some men on shore to keep the rest alive
We're stuck here in this bay wondering how we will survive
We don't know what he's thinking - is he trying to explore?
He wants to keep on pushing but we don't know what for
We've got to have some answers but he won't say no more
We all just want to go home

The mate John King was first to fall, then Hudson was next pinned
We threw them in the shallop along with all the sick men
Then Philippe Staffe and Woodhouse then Hudson's own son John
Faithful to his father he jumped in on his own
We cut the ropes away to leave them far behind
Our intentions were quite clear as we left them there to die
We headed back for home as we tried to stay alive
Trying so hard to survive

Cold in the north trying to find our way home
Henry Greene dead through a savage attack
Just dying of want the last ringleader gone
Surviving on bones as we make our way home

Arriving in Ireland too weak to stand
Then it's London once more but the crew slipped ashore
Billet and I stood before Dudley's trial
Left to explain so we won't be blamed
The last of Hudson's mighty crew
The remains of Henry Hudson's fine crew
The survivors of Henry Hudson's mighty crew
The mutineers of Henry Hudson and his crew