



SECOND CHANCES

SONGS IN OTHER VOICES
BY DOC SCHNEIDER

Intro ←

and so the wheel is turning
it turns this world
and all the stars
at once fell
at once f

re b
u b
e
il
a

I have
C#7 Here
F#m

B
D
A

late to
us in E

Ken Steed



A SECOND CHANCE

This G/A chord is 3X0203 or 3X0200

^{G/A} There is a young man holding tightly to a ray of hope
^{D/F#}
^{Em} writing novels that are woven with his past
^C
^{G/A} lost his father way too early and he found him way too late
^{D/F#}
^{Em} sometimes the losing is the only thing that lasts
^C
^G the only thing that lasts

He asks the pretty mochachino if she likes to dance
 tries to touch her perfect fingers with the change
 and he says he'd like to take her to the coast of France
 but she just thinks the novelist is strange
 the novelist is strange

CHORUS

^C Give them
^D (C Form 3rd Fret)
^{Em} a second chance
^C
^G beneath the painted sky
^{D/F#}
^{Em} for if they had
^C a second chance
^D
^{Em} maybe this time
^C
^{Em} they would fly ^{D/F#} ^{G/A}

They sip a glass of chardonnay in Amsterdam
 and listen to the songs of sad guitars
 they walk across the footbridges all hand in hand
 as the surface of the water fills with stars
 the water fills with stars

And soon she reads his novel on the coast of France
 and let's a silver tear begin to fall

and every time she thinks about their Starbuck's dance
 she knows that love was waiting after all
 love was waiting after all

(Chorus)

^{D/F#} ^{Em} So brave
^{D/F#} the way
^G the heart fights back
^C
^{Em} ^{D/F#} ^G for everything it knows

^{D/F#} ^{Em} Shines on
^{D/F#} Bright
^G ^C against the black
^G ^{D/F#} ^{Em} the fire and the rose
^{D/F#}
 the fire and the rose

There is a young man holding tightly to his ray of hope
 she brushes back her hair and says goodnight
 and down along the harbor comes a single boat
 that breaks right through the darkness with its light
 you know it makes that darkness bright

(Chorus)

last chords ^{D/F#} ^G

Eugene Ruffolo: Vocal, Acoustic Guitar and Backing Vocals
 Zev Katz: Fretless Bass
 Oz Noy: Nylon String Guitar,
 Lucy Kaplansky: Harmony Vocal

String Arrangement: Alan Zahn
 Cello: Jeremy Turner
 Violin: Pico
 Producer: Ben Wisch
 written in 2006

HOMEMADE SONG

Never been a Rhymin' Simon
never been the same as James
never seemed to find my timing
never seemed to change my range
but oh what it feels like
to sing a Homemade Song
something I can sing and you can sing along

And sure, I let a hundred chances pass me by
with a thousand excuses
'bout a million reasons why
I never made the mountain
but I'm up here on this hill
which is quite alright with me
cause this hill is still a thrill

Never been a Rhymin' Simon
never been the same as James
the troubles always been my timing
never heard the next chord change
but oh, what it feels like
to sing a Homemade Song
something I can play and you can sing along

And sure, I passed my time and prime
for writing songs
but then something still moves me
and floats my soul along
And suddenly I'm singing
and I'm back up on this hill
and once more like before
this hill is still a thrill

Never been a Rhymin' Simon
never been the same as James
never seemed to find my timing
never seemed to change my range
but oh, what it feels like
to sing a Homemade Song
something I can sing and you can sing along

Take it in your heart
(and) put it in your pie hole
find your favorite part
and that'll always take you home
Sing
Sing this homemade thing
and sing along
Sing
Sing this homemade song

And if it's only me and you
and we're up here on this hill
will I sing a song for two?
you know I will

Never been a Rhymin' Simon
never been the same as James
never seemed to find my timing
never seemed to change my range
but oh what feels like
to sing a Homemade Song
something I can play and you can sing along.

Vocal: Jon Allmett
Backing Vocals: Peaches, Cheryl Wilson
Sax: Steve Eisen
All Else: Jeff Jacobs
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1997





MARIE

Your voice was like a river
rolling out across the land
and some times I could hear you
calling for my hand
calling for my hand

Just to take me past
the bars and walls
that locked me up inside
and then at last
I'd see it all
if only for one night

Oh but I did not believe that dream
I never thought I'd ever find my way
When it seemed too late
you opened up the gate
and set me free
I can't believe that you came back for me

Marie
I have loved you forever
Marie
we can walk out together
Marie
I can't believe that you came back for me

And so the wheel is turning
that turns this world around
and all the stars are burning
that once fell to the ground
that once fell to the ground

Here beneath the sky
you begin to dance
like I dreamed you danced before
only you and I
in an old romance
what else are chances for?

Oh and now I do believe that dream
I never thought I'd find my way
And when it seemed too late
you opened up the gate
and set me free
I can't believe that you came back for me
Marie
I have loved you forever
Marie
we can walk out together
Marie
I can't believe you came back for me

I've got a pocketful of songs that I can sing you
I have this heart that I never gave away
I have a headful of dreams that I can bring you
and now these words I finally get to say

Marie
I have loved you forever
Marie
we can walk out together
Marie
I can't believe you came back
Marie
I have loved you forever
Marie
we can walk out together
Marie
I can't believe that you came back for me
You came back for me
You came back for me

Vocal, Acoustic Guitar, Backing Vocals Eugene Ruffolo
Electric Guitar, Tipple Marc Shulman
Fretless Bass Zev Katz
Wurlitzer Electric Piano Ben Wisch
Drums: Cameron Wisch
Producer: Ben Wisch
written in 2003

TURN THE WORLD AROUND

In the heart of a war torn nation,
in the faces worn by pain,
where it takes too much strength just to face it again.
In the eyes of the desperate children,
in the tick of these desperate days,
when the sorrow surrounds us in so many ways.

Chorus:

One light can make the night much brighter,
One voice can send the clearest sound,
One hope can make the load much lighter,
One turn can turn the whole wide world around.

In the tears shed by shattered mothers,
for the many and the few,
when the eyes of the wounded are looking at you.
In the dream of a frightened child,
in the back of her broken heart,
there is a hope with which you can start.

Chorus

In thousands of tiny hands,
the crayons are crying,
And each of them understands,
their families are dying.
Someone needs to stop this,
someone needs to stop this now,
It could be that you're the someone who can
turn the world around.

Chorus and Outro

Everything: Jeff Jacobs
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1994

IF I CAN LOVE ENOUGH

Broken bones beneath my feet
are old forgotten songs.
Words that beat a fast retreat
when no one sang along.

I dig them up like fossil finds,
and search them for a clue.
Maybe there's some hidden sign
that leads me back to you.

Chorus:

Sometimes there's a shiny one,
a diamond in the rough.
Tell me I might reach you there,
if I can love enough,
if I can love enough.

Like a wound that cut too deep,
you wore it on your sleeve.
A heart I thought I'd always keep,
I never heard you leave.

Make this song my signal flare
across this darkening sea.
Maybe you will hear it there,
and turn around to me.

Chorus

Nothing lasts forever,
you never said it would.
But sometimes in an old song,
I still think it should.

Chorus

Let me love enough.

Duet: Jeff Jacobs and Cheryl Wilson
Tuning: DADEAD
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1996

WHEREVER YOU ARE

I close my eyes to this December night,
In this cold air, I turn my face up to the light,
I feel your lips floating down from years ago,
I feel my pain melting like this falling snow.

I feel my feet rising from the ground,
this busy street hardly makes a sound,
I hear my voice promising forever,
And though we left, this moment left me never...

Chorus:
Wherever you are,
Look in the sky tonight.
You are never so far
that you cannot find that light.

When it grows dark,
it shines where you are...
Even from this distance,
I can still see that star
from wherever you are.

I lost your face somewhere long ago,
And of your eyes, the color now is all I know.
But on this night, this falling snow can bring you back,
And in this light, all the rest just fades to black.

It is the hope that I remember here,
It is the life that I remember breaking clear,
It was your hand I felt within my hand,
a burning warm burning down this frozen land.

Chorus

On this very night,
I am imagining the sound,
there are eyes upon the light
and feet are rising from the ground.

Chorus

Wherever you are,
Wherever you are,
Wherever you are.

Eugene Ruffolo: Acoustic Guitars, Vocal and Backing Vocals
Zev Katz: Fretted and Fretless Electric Bass
Ben Wisch: Wurlitzer Electric Piano and Acoustic Piano
Lucy Kaplansky: Harmony Vocals
Cameron Wisch: Drums and Percussion

String Arrangement: Alan Zahn
Cello: Jeremy Turner
Violin: Pico
Producer: Ben Wisch
written in 1995



I WANTED EVERYTHING

Chorus

I wanted everything
You had it all
Love was the only thing
To ever make me fall
To ever make me fall that way

When love first hits you,
It hits you hard
And I was crazy without you
Dreaming about you
There in my yard

And there were letters I wrote
That never were sent
And words that I said
That never said what I meant
Learning how hard it is
To hide what your heart might say
Learning how true it is
Hearts don't come back when you give them away

Chorus

Before we knew it
Time slipped away
And I was destined to lose you
Watching them choose you
And get in my way

And there were years that went by
Before that letter you sent
Telling me tales of all the places you went
And there, on your final page,
you ask if my dreams came true
Finally, you hear me say
All of my life my dream has been you

Chorus (different words)

Suddenly everything
Comes into view
Such an amazing thing
To watch the change in you
And see my dreams come true with you.
And just like I always knew
Everything is you.

Vocal: Jon Allmett
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1997

EVERYTHING GOLD

You talk to me by the moon
You're just like a moonlight lady
You take me back, you take me back
And somehow we stayed in tune
With dreams made beneath that moon
In the long ago and far away
Where everything gold must stay

We lived us a life between
In pictures on separate pages
There's you, there's me, there's you, there's me,
And somehow we stayed in tune
With dreams made beneath that moon
In the long ago and far away
Where everything gold must stay

Oh, time still holds us
In that moment long ago
I feel it shining like the moonlight
On that snow
We walk on this middle ground
It's something just like forever
It's gold again, it's gold again
And somehow we stayed in tune
With dreams made beneath that moon
In the long ago and far away
It was long ago and far away
It was long ago and far away
Where everything gold must stay
Let it stay
Where everything gold must stay.

Vocal: Greg Ferguson
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 2004



MASSAPEQUA

Original Chords are A/B, C#m, Bm, D, F#m, E, Esus, G, A

A/B is 002200

Esus is 022200

F#m is 244222

Intro

A/B-C#m-Bm -Esus-E-Esus -E

A/B

Massapequa

C#m
you're my home

Bm Esus-E
but you're not home to me

A/B C#m
I can walk down your tree-lined streets

Bm E
but sad is all I'll see

F#m G A
and I know it's not your fault

C#m D
but I blame you just the same

Esus E
which is why my heart still breaks

Bm E A
every time I say your name

CHORUS

G A
And I've waited long enough to tell you,

F#m F#m G
Massapequa?

A
Massapequa?

C#m D Esus-E

Oh oh oh oh

C#m D E

oh oh oh oh

Massapequa
please forgive me
if I don't forgive myself
for leaving on my own
and saving no one else
and there are days I don't remember
in every picture frame
which is why my heart still breaks
every time I say your name

(Chorus)

F#m C#m
Great water land they called you

E F#m
in their native tongue

C#m F#m
but they left their land behind them

D Esus-E
just like me when they were young

Massapequa
one dark night
you gave a chance to me
I stood upon the shoreline
and I headed out to sea
and those days I don't remember
they flicker like a flame
which is why my heart still breaks'
every time I say your name

(Chorus)

Outro

C#m D E
oh -oh oh



I have waited long enough A C#m--D--E
I have waited long enough A C#m --D--E
I have waited long enough A

Vocal, Acoustic Guitar, Backing Vocals: Eugene Ruffolo
Bass: Zev Katz
Percussion: Ben Wittman
Drums and Shaker: Cameron Wisch
Electric Guitar: Oz Noy
Keyboards: Ben Wisch
Producer: Ben Wisch
written in 2005-06

ONE HECKUVA LITTLE GIRL

She was not what I was planning on
In this world that I was standing on
When the pathway took a turn into the woods

And the forest and the trees,
man, they looked all the same to me,
I never knew that this could be something so good

Chorus

And just when I thought I was out of songs
She comes along, here she is,
Oh, and now she has me singing –

And just when I knew I was over and through
she takes back, yes, she does,
all the way to the beginning –

And who knew one little girl
could come and rock my world
well, I'm here to say right here today –
she's one heckuva little girl,
yes, she is now, now –
she's one heckuva little girl

Verse 2

When it seemed like we were lost at sea,
And nothing was as it should be
And it seemed like we might never find our way

Well, then, suddenly the light
it chased away the scary night
and has me singing here inside the light of day.

Chorus

so take your diamonds and your rubies
and all the money in the world,
she's one heckuva little girl.

Vocal: Jon Allmett
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written 2003



HINT OF HEAVEN

It was New York, it was ice cold,
There were hundreds of smiles
Skating around that tree.

I was right there, sixteen years old,
There were thousands of miles
But not one that I could see.

And high up above,
There were hearts winding down
And there were fountains of sorrow
Rumbling under the ground.

Chorus:

And you were there to save us,
Like our catcher in the rye,
Singing your songs with that hunting hat on
And the taxis were flying by-
I swear I saw a hint of heaven
shining in your eye.

Just like children, round the rosie,
they were circled around you,
singing "This is a Song for You."

In that cold air, something told me
It was more than a moment
Down on that avenue.

And high up above,
There was grace raining down
And there were anthems of glory
Lifting us up with their sound.

Chorus

There was a song for all those people,
There was a light in every eye –
Grace enough for everyone,
Even those who wonder why

Vocal: Greg Ferguson
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 2000-01, thanks to Sid Schroll



I'LL TAKE YOU BACK

When the waves of despair crash around you,
and they come like a thief in the night
and the sense of some sorrow surrounds you
and its hard just to put up a fight -

When you're keeping your head above water
and you're finding it hard to hold on
and your world is all full of disorder
and the life that you knew seems all gone

Chorus

I'll take you back
just like it was
just like a boat
that can carry two -

I'll take you back
keep you afloat
I'll lead you through
I've been there too
you know and

there is a shining shore
you've seen it in your dreams
and you'll make it there once more, once more
as hard to believe
as that now seems

Now the strength of your soul will surprise you
and the hope that you hold deep inside
and there in the distance arising
is the glow of a beckoning light

Now your faith is a way of believing
that you have an unbreakable soul
and this life is a blanket you're weaving,
grows strong when you sew up the holes -

Chorus

(And)I'll take you back
just like it was
just like a boat
that can carry two -

I'll take you back
keep you afloat
I'll lead you through
I've been there too
you know and

there is a shining shore
you've seen it in your dreams
and you'll make it there once more, once more
as hard to believe
as that now seems

Bridge

So hold on my golden girl
we're gonna sail past that darker world
and here's what your father's for -
to hold up the light on that shining shore -

Short Chorus
(so) I'll take you back
just like it was
just like a boat
that can carry two -

I'll take you back
keep you afloat
I'll lead you through
I've been there too you know

I'll take you back.

Vocal: Jon Allmett
Background Vocals: Peaches, Cheryl Wilson
Keyboard: Jeff Jacobs
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1999



DEEPER

(Lyrics by John Mayer · Music by Doc Schneider)

(all barre chords, except the A7)

C is a barre in the E form at 8th Fret, and Bb at the 6th in the verses

C is a barre in the A form at 3rd Fret, and Bb at the 1st sometimes in the chorus

Intro

Dm -(second string slide 6/8)-Bb-C -Dm (twice)

I keep a note that I wrote on a taxi receipt
it says "Don't listen to anybody other than me."

I hit the big time for a nominal fee
you lose a friend in the end for every dream you see come true

And I got scars upon scrapes
and I got bruises on breaks
masochistically committed to see how much of this I'll take
three years under water
and I ain't even got the shakes

I'm going deeper
deeper and deeper

I'm going deeper
deeper and deeper

I got some dreams to remember,
got some days to forget
got some phone calls in to God
but he ain't called me back just yet

(Chorus and outro)

Down, down
going deeper
down, down, deeper
I'm going deeper
down down
down down down deeper
down deeper
I'm going deeper
deeper and deeper

Vocal, Acoustic Guitar, Backing Vocals: Eugene Ruffolo
Bass: Zev Katz
Drums: Cameron Wisch
Electric Guitars: Oz Noy
Producer: Ben Wisch

Lyrics Published by John Mayer for a Songwriting Contest in Esquire magazine challenging amateurs and pros to write chords and melody for his lyrics. I did not win, but this song didn't care.



NOTHING QUITE LIKE YOU

The wind in these willows
is calling your name,
and the warm in this meadow
is made of your flame-
the sky is a quilted blanket
covered with stars.
I wait for the words
that will say what you are-

Chorus:

I could say the stars are like your eyes
painted across these summer skies
but those words would never work for me.
For if the stars were like your eyes
I wouldn't miss you when you're gone-
I wouldn't feel the way I do.
There's simply no metaphor
to say what I'm searching for-
Truth is there's nothing quite like you.

The sense of your leaving
empties me out-
the things I'm believing
are tempted by doubt.

Here is a magic carpet
where we used to fly,
I wait for the stars
and the time to go by-

There's simply no metaphor
to say what I'm searching for-
Truth is there's nothing quite like you.
Here in this postcard,
you say, "Wish you were here";
and if wishes could do it
I'd fly through the air.

What Summer surrenders
the Fall will return,
but it seems like forever
for these leaves to turn.
here is the place I'll take you
after so long-
I'll clear us a space
and I'll sing you this song.
Chorus

Vocal: Jon Allmett
Tuning: CGDGGBD
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1995

SONG FOR THE MORNING

Tugging my leg as I'm knotting my tie,
mischievous child with a light in her eye,
one sip of tea and we kiss me goodbye
another day of the week as we watch the time fly

And then I crank up the car
And that song slips right in
Tells me stop where you are
This is where I begin

Chorus

This is a song for the morning
And this is a song for the day,
Kisses you warm without warning
And suddenly takes you away
This song is like a lifeline
It's a sound you can't mistake
Echoes of my lifetime
Make the music that I make
Tied to my desk with my ear on the phone
Mischievous child never leaves me alone
I shake my head and I tell myself no
And then I flip on the mute and
hum soft and low
And then I kick the door closed
And that song slips right in
Says I know how it goes
And I'm back here again

Chorus

Now some songs take so long to get here
And I never know where they roam
But I'm always ready to welcome them in
Like family and friends coming home

Chorus

Vocal: Greg Ferguson
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1997



THE LOVE THAT LASTS

Your perfect marriage to a perfect fool
has crumbled in your hands.
You've concluded that love is cruel
and you frown on our romance.
But you are shiny and new to me,
and it's my turn for the dance.
I'm not another in a long line of lovers,
Please give me a chance.

Chorus

I know I had a late start,
but I knew I had a good heart.
I was waiting here on my part
in your story to begin.

Let all the tears gone by go fast,
let go of your grip on the past.
I wasn't your first love,
but I can be the love that lasts,
oh, darling,
let me be the love that lasts.

You've got me singing songs that I
have never sung before.
And my hearts starts sailing and my eyes do shine
when you walk right through my door.
And this sweet feeling has got to be
a special love for sure.
The hands of time have brought you to my door,
and it was worth the waiting for.

Chorus

And I'm not trying to rush it,
and you want to take it one step at a time.
But it's hard for me to slow down my heart.
You are my reason,
and you are my rhyme.

Chorus

Oh, yes, I can be the love that lasts,
Let me try it, let me be the love that lasts,
Now don't deny it, let me be the love that lasts.

Vocal: Josie Aiello
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1992

NUMBER ONE FAN

Saturday morning and I'm singing my songs
To my number one fan right beside me.
And I see you grow sad with your glistening eyes,
Cause you're wondering what is inside me.

Chorus:

Now I cannot explain all the things that I do,
Or where I am going with music.
But let this song wrap my arms around you,
Cause there's no way I'm going without you.

I'm here with you now and I'm where I belong,
I'm your number one fan right beside you,
And we'll watch our girls grow with our glistening eyes,
And go wherever we might decide to.

Chorus

Shake off your worries,
And the doubting you do.
Let's see a smile,
And believe that it's true.
There's nothing to me without you.

Chorus

Vocal: Josie Aiello
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1992

WHO TOOK OUR EYES AWAY?

What ever happened to J. Alfred Prufrock,
and all of the dreams on the green?
And what ever happened to you and to me?

Who took our eyes away?

What made the muse wander on?
Why can't I say what I used to say?
Where has my innocence gone?

What ever happened to Eleanor Rigby,
and the black and white shades of my youth?
And what ever happened to setting things straight?

Who took our dreams away?
Who broke our trumpets in half?
Why do I feel like a waning whine,
suddenly close to a laugh?

But I tremble at the sight of beauty,
I'm afflicted with an old attraction.
I'd give it all for a slight distraction,
but I know it all just blows away...
God I know it all just blows away.

Beauty is the only truth I know
but it flickers when it calms your soul
It's something real I want
Something that lasts I want.

What ever happened to T.S. and Robert,
and what is this frost on my soul?
And what ever happened to changing the world?

Who took our eyes away?
What made the dream fade from sight?
Why do I feel like I'm waking up,
suddenly left in the night?

What ever happened to Dickie and desperate,
and all of the dreams of our youth,
and what ever happened to me and to you?

Who took our eyes away?
Why did the dream have to end?
Why do I feel like I'm waking up,
I've been robbed of my old dreaming friend.

Vocal: Doc Schneider
Producer: Everything else
Producer: Jeff Jacobs
written in 1982

LINER NOTES

This album is a little miracle in three acts. It begins in Chicago. Voiceover: To paraphrase Dickens, whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, these pages must tell. But we can cut to the chase. I do not turn out to be the hero. The heroes here are Jeff Jacobs, Lu Steed, Ben Wisch and Eugene Ruffolo.

Act. I. In Chicago, in a neat little studio on Halsted, Jeff Jacobs, composer and keyboardist, pursues a little side business, producing commercials, helping artists and songwriters turn out first rate demos and other musical tasks. Jeff is the keyboard player in Foreigner, having been with the band for more than 15 years and he played with Billy Joel for five years on the “Storm Front” and “River of Dreams” albums and tours. Those are only a few of his credits. In 2004, Jeff placed an advertisement in Performing Songwriter Magazine, and advertised his services in making “killer” demos. When I saw that ad, it was a revelation to me – I thought of all of my poor little songs with their ripped pants and runny noses and



for Foreigner, Billy Joel – and he will make demos? Could it be true?

Well, it was. That little ad led to a grand adventure. At first, we took some songs from my debut album, “Choices and Chances” (it went double foil!), and sent them off to Chicago for finishing school. “The Love That Lasts” left Atlanta in jeans and a tee shirt, and came back in white linen, with the voice of Josie Aiello. And one led to another. I am still floored every time I listen to Jeff Jacobs and Cheryl Wilson’s duet of “If I Can Love Enough.” To hear these songs

longing eyes, led around by a songwriter whose singing and playing chops were not enough to feed the hungry. I was stunned to think that my songs might get a second chance in the hands of a true pro. Keyboard player

brought to life by great artists was like really hearing them for the first time. To accomplish this feat, Jeff brought an avalanche of talent, not only producing, but playing keyboards, piano, guitar, drums and sometimes even singing.

As each song went off and came back, I began to see the seeds for this album. Songs that never made it to the “Choices and Chances” album began clamoring for a trip to Chicago. So I flipped through various songs I had recorded over the years at Songbird Studio with David Romine, and started sending them off to Jeff. These were some of the most amazing surprises. Songs like “Homemade Song” and “I Wanted Everything” that I wrote and recorded, but did not like my version, boarded the internet for a flight to Chicago and came back as movie stars. Indeed, I was so blown away by Jon Allmett’s version of Homemade Song that I entered it in the 2004-05 Unisong International Song Contest and it took Second Place in the Pop Ballad category out of more than 900 entries worldwide. Talk

about a second chance. From the cutting room floor to a ticker tape parade.

And that song led to the launching of my website – www.legalguitarist.com. The good folks at Unisong asked me for my web address, and I told them I was a lawyer and only a dabbling songwriter, and I certainly had no website. But I had to launch one so that Homemade Song could take its little victory lap – and cdbaby.com has a service called [hostbaby](http://hostbaby.com) – and in no time, we were in business. Choices and Chances which was distributed through [cdbaby](http://cdbaby.com) and iTunes and other services was now getting some competition (and indeed being put to shame) by new songs that came flying out of Chicago on brand new wings. My old songs were having such fun, I started writing new ones – like “Everything Gold” and “One Heckuva Little Girl.” Greg Ferguson sings the former and Jon Allmett the latter – amazing performances. The curtain closes on Act I with the release of *All Blue To Me* (available on [cdbaby](http://cdbaby.com) and iTunes) – Jeff Jacob’s debut album, which we co-wrote. For accidental collaborators, we were turning out some surprising stuff.

Act II. Atlanta. Enter Lu Steed. Lu is a renowned Atlanta artist, a thin reed of burning energy, innocence retained, filled with a joy and a sense of humor far bigger than her little paintbrush of a body. She is a versatile artist who has painted every thing from trucks to still lifes to portraits –

her canvases are studies in enthusiastic observation. Lu happens to be married to my law partner, Bob Steed, and I have tracked her for years like a bounty hunter with the idea of letting me and my guitar step up on to one of her canvases. After a decade, Lu warmed up to the idea – especially when I said that the result would become the cover for my planned album. And then she got into the project big time. Lu approaches painting like detective work, and she wanted to see my songwriting scribbles, lyric sheets – she was intent on climbing into my head before painting it. Ultimately, she painted the study you see on the cover, and caught me good in a moment of serious thought (I was thinking “what if my law partners see this?”). And the backdrop of the painting is a huge version of my lyric and chord sheet for “Marie”.

When I went to her home, I saw that canvas, and the painted version of the “Marie” lyrics. I had written that song in a little flight of imagination (there is no Marie, there is only Helen) in 2003. The song is hard to sing so I never recorded it. It had no chance of being on this album. There was no plans for it whatsoever. But Lu Steed liked the lyric and she painted it on the canvas for all to see. And since that was to be the cover for this album, something had to be done. Marie was saying – can you believe you must come back for me? What to do? Curtain.

Act III. New York City. Bailey Building and Loan Studio. In 1992, I stumbled on what is perhaps my favorite album

of all time – David Wilcox’s “Home Again.” (It ranks up there with great albums like “JT” and “Fool for Every Season” and “Room for Squares”). It was produced by famed producer, Ben Wisch. When I saw Jeff Jacob’s advertisement in 2004, it was not lost on me that right above it was an ad for Ben Wisch’s services as a producer. I knew that Ben had produced David Wilcox’s albums, as well as many others, including Marc Cohn’s debut with the fantastic single “Walking in Memphis.” In 2004, I decided I needed to scrub up my stuff before I could ever look for a chance to work with Ben Wisch.

But by 2006, we had this little problem of Marie and this painting. Jeff had put some fantastic tracks in the can. I seized on a wild idea. Maybe Ben might take a listen to what we had worked on so far, maybe give some production ideas – and what the hell, maybe he can take on Marie. I went to Ben’s website – and we need a big white spotlight and violins here – and looked at some recent albums he had produced. And one artist for whom he had produced or co-produced three albums was Eugene Ruffolo. Strike up the magic moment violins. I listened to some track snippets of Eugene that Ben had on his site, and I was knocked out. Pure voice with heart. Clean guitar chops. Unique and talented, with the influences of James Taylor like the slightest hint of just the right color.

So I went to the Ruffolo site, listened some more, ordered all three of his albums ([cdbaby](http://cdbaby.com)), and took a week to go

through them all. It was like stumbling on David Wilcox's albums in 1992 – the greatest joy for a lover of songs is to hear beautiful songs performed well – and here they were, track after track – “Fool for Every Season”, “Sweet Southern Eyes”, “Holding on To Faith”, “Irreplaceable” – one right after another.

So I get up my nerve. I do a rough recording of Marie. I send it to Jeff. Jeff whips out his own version – and suddenly, Marie seems to be coming to life. I close my eyes, fold my arms and jump off the cliff – I write to Ben Wisch – Hello, you don't know me I know but I was wondering if by any chance you might like to take a flyer and produce a song called Marie – and oh, by the way, no big deal, but I was just wondering, if, somehow, by any chance, well – do you think you might interest Eugene Ruffolo in doing this? Deep breath. I think a day and a half passed. And then – did I read that right? Ben Wisch just said yes.

And so the co-production part of our journey began. Ben and Eugene sent me a rough draft and then a finished version of “Marie.” I still cannot believe it. And four more songs followed. “Wherever You Are.” And then new songs freshly written and sent right away to New York. “Massapequa.” “A Second Chance” (written after finishing John Irving's latest novel, *Until I Find You* – with a nod to Amsterdam, where many scenes are set and where

there are a legion of Ruffolo fans – see eugeneruffolo.nl). “Deeper” (my entry in a John Mayer contest, where he wrote the lyrics and challenged folks to write music to it). (I sent my version of the song to Mr. Mayer – I wish the deadline had been postponed so I could have sent what Ben and Eugene turned out.) In the process, Ben, Eugene and I became friends and correspondents. And their work is nothing short of amazing.

This album ends where it began – in Jeff Jacobs' studio in Chicago. One cold winter day in December 2005, I went to the studio to hear an artist sing “Who Took Our Eyes Away”. As fate would have it, the planned singer did not show. I was in a bit of a rush for a meeting on one of my cases with one of Chicago's great law firms. But as long as I was there, and Jeff had a nice track – well, Jeff sat at his control board, and handed me the mic. “You sing it,” he said. And so I did. It was my own second chance.

Jeff and Ben and Eugene took a little act of faith and made me a believer – I think it's true now. I really am a songwriter after all.

I want to thank the heroes. I also want to thank all the musicians who lent their talents to this project – Lucy Kaplansky, Alan Zahn, Cameron Wisch and all the others I list in the song credits. In a way, this album reminds of a house where the whole community turns out and lends a

hand and raises the walls and builds a house. It would never be built without them. Whenever I think of all these talented souls making their way to a studio to give their very best to songs of a perfect stranger, I am moved.

I want to thank Jenny Garland for the wonderful way this album is laid out and put together. I want to thank Helen for letting me love her and loving all the broken parts of me. I thank my daughters for the gifts of themselves and the gifts of their children. I have come alive in bits and pieces and little McKenzie, Madison, Zoe and Zach open doors I have never seen and doors I passed by once and have been lucky enough for a second chance to go back. I want to thank everyone who had the faith where I could see it in their shining eyes – the Urrutias, the Schrolls, the Barrancos, the McGintys, big and little, new and old. And I want to thank my mother for the gift of loving music and my first guitar and tape recorder. And I know I owe my sisters and my brothers one thing or another. And all of my friends in the dark days.

And lastly, I would like to thank whoever is reading this and listening to these songs. A song never lives until you listen and let it move you. It does me more than a little good to think of these songs being played in quiet rooms wherever you are.

— Doc —