

PORCUPINE
SONG STORIES
Written by Tim Easton

1. BURGUNDY RED

I wrote the lyrics to this song on one of the old typewriters that sits around my house in Joshua Tree. It's a straightforward blues lyric about a woman who wakes up after a bender, and when I went to Tennessee to begin the record I started the sessions with this track because I thought it would be an easy way to warm up the band and get loose. We ended up doing 17 takes in a row and the band was indeed warmed up and well acquainted afterwards.

2. BROKE MY HEART

The musical interlude that introduces this song features melodies from the entire album played on every instrument within reach at Club Roar- and also some hand held cassette recordings of the Mexican waitresses at La Hacienda in Nashville saying the expression "Digo las cosas como tale son" which translates to "I tell things as they are." The song itself is the mid-western version of what a pop song about broken love sounds like to me.

3. PORCUPINE

I wrote this in a cabin in the Hocking Hills of Ohio several years ago. I really couldn't tell you where the lyrics came from. I started playing guitar and these are the words that came out. I didn't question myself and wrote it down. The "company man" verse was written five minutes before we tracked it and the album was named after this particular song because it was the only track that was done in one take.

4. THE YOUNG GIRLS

This one was written after reading a Raymond Carver poem by the same name. He's known for his short stories but he has also published a book of poetry. I wanted a Staples Singers feel for this one and even drove to Memphis with the lap top and a Mojave Microphone to record the great Susan Marshall on backing vocals in order to find the sound I wanted.

5. STORMY

This song is after Sonny Terry and Brownie Maghee's song OLD JABO, which is about a runaway slave. I changed their one chord blues into a song about a girl I saw wearing the outfit described in the first couple of lines. I imagined she was capable of the troublesome and runaway behavior that takes place in the song.

6. A STONE'S THROW AWAY

This song arrived quickly in Rotterdam after witnessing some behavior and having it remind me about some people I used to know. The title "Whisky Drinking Girls" seemed too obvious so after asking an Irish audience later on that tour what I should call it, a woman suggested "A Stones Throw Away."

7. SEVENTH WHEEL

Another one written in as much time as it takes to sing it while staying at friend's house in Dublin.

8. GET WHAT I GOT

For years, this was just a title that came from the name of a rough and tumble game that a journalist told me he used to play with his brother when they were kids. I wrote the lyrics to match the bravado of the title phrase, singing them in unison with the tone of the bent strings on my guitar.

9. BALTIMORE

I was in the passenger seat of the van while traveling through Baltimore one day. Randy Newman, among others, have songs called "Baltimore" and I wanted to add my own to the pile. I had never visited that town but had driven through many times so I made up a song about a guy who takes a bunch of drugs and goes on a murder spree. I used view out my window and the map on my lap for reference points and landmarks. By the time we got to D.C. the song was done, but Philadelphia sounded like a more fascinating destination for the character in the story and that's also where we were going to play a show that night.

10. NORTHBOUND

I was in Los Angeles and not in the best of moods when I wrote this, thinking literally about which direction I wanted to go. It's also my answer to Doc and Merle Watson's "Southbound," which also finds the singer longing for another place.

11. LONG COLD NIGHT IN BED

This song was written in Seattle after walking a very recently ex-girlfriend to the bus. Put it this way, I had it coming.

12. GOODBYE AMSTERDAM

A lot of close friends or fans have decided that this song is about my farewell to drugs and alcohol since they associate Amsterdam with only one thing. However, this is really my answer to Mark Eitzel's celebratory and swaggering song "Hello Amsterdam." I wrote this one backstage at the Carre Theatre in the very same town while on tour as the support act for John Hiatt, who I watched and learned from each night. I have some great friends in Amsterdam and it's truly an inspirational city for me and really for anybody who has all of their eyes open.

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