


It's
Who
I am



Kevin
Firth



Kevin Firth

Guitar, Vocal, Harmony vocal, Harmonicas and some percussion

Don Bray

Lap Slide Guitars, Backing guitars, Mandolin and Percussion

Sue Wood

Harmony vocals

Gom Griffiths

Bass guitars

Ray Dillard

Percussion on: Crazy World, Que Respiro, Rattlin' Chains,
Scruffy Little Girl and Young Love

Gwen Dunlop

Violin

Alyssa Wright

Cello, Harmony vocal on 'Crazy World'

All songs written by Kevin Firth

Produced by Don Bray with support from Kevin Firth at Meek Monk studio

Recorded by Don Bray at Meek Monk studio

Mixed and Mastered by Don Bray and Ray Dillard at Meek Monk studio

Photography and design by David Walsh and Kevin Firth

Young love

*Cold hearted woman she did me wrong
It was a cold hearted woman who took my heart
They called it puppy love; then I'm just a dog, because
Cold hearted woman she sure took my heart*

Because -- Young love, straight out'a the box

*Young boy, far from home
He gotta broken heart from runnin' away
She castes her spell, he's blinded by lust, he got
He got no chance
He's drownin' in her*

Because -- Young love, straight out'a the box

*She was an angel; in fact that was her name
She had jet black hair and ruby red lips
Let me tell you now she was so fine, she had
She had this young boy all tied up in knots*

Because -- Young love, straight out'a the box

*Now here's a moral, ain't no mistake
You handle fire, you're gonna get burned
Stay away from divine ruby lips
'Cos, fall in the hole, you might never get out*

Because -- Young love straight out'a the box

Young love

(Straight out of the box). I joined the English royal navy when I was fifteen and signed on for twelve years! During sea training on my first ship I met this lovely lady called Angela – she was twenty. I was a green very unsure of himself kinda lad. She kinda showed me the ropes as it where – in more way than one. I was hers, ‘hook line and sinker’ to do with as she pleased. I knew her for quite a few years and was tempted to tie the knot. My brother and sister were married in their early teens so it wasn’t out of the ordinary in that period of time. Mum said it was, puppy love! Anyway after serving a few years in the Middle East, I received my, ‘Dear John’. The ‘hot flame simmered and died’.

Just For You

Sittin' here today

I had to write a song

For you -- Just for you

Angel faces in a coloured sky (coda)

I see the sunsets smolder

In your eyes -- It's what I see

The way you look at me

How many times -- have I failed you

And how many times -- you forgiven me

But I am the one -- you have chosen

I am the one -- that loves you

And I am the one -- will protect you

Here and now -- and forever

Sittin' here writing this song

Undoubtedly, unashamedly a love song

For you -- Just for you

I may not say the words you want to hear

But you touch my soul when I look

In your eyes -- It's what I see

The way you look at me

(Coda)

It's in your smile

When I look in your face

Scruffy little girl

*On this road so chalky and dry
Under the tropical sun
These people live for today
Tin shacks, the poverty they know
Forgotten people – they - have become*

*Looking through the crowd
With an innocence so pure
This little girl
She reached into my heart*

*A smile lit her face
As my camera took the shot
But those sad eyes
Told a different tale*

*Don't you show that smile
Don't laugh and play
You're just too small
To hide your pain*

*Eyes so deep and clear
Will forever in my dreams
Come haunting when
Her face appears*

*Her face that burned my eyes
Sent tremors through my heart*

*Scruffy little girl
Dust around her eyes
She got a runny nose, dirty face
And tiny calloused toes
Reaching up forever -- holding me
Tentacles of sorrow, burrowing, deepening
Attaching to the marrow of my bones*

(Kevin Firth 9th Feb 2009)

Scruffy little girl

In Costa Rica we had a, 'Secret Santa organisation' where we gave presents to underprivileged kids and food hampers and clothes to the families up in the mountains behind the town of Liberia. I took many photographs that I used to make promotional slide shows for the following year. We would use the slide shows to encourage local businesses to donate.

I spent most of my time zooming in on all the cute little faces. A young lady came into the building where we had set up shop, she was in her early twenties and had 5 children. Her youngest was barely walking and was being looked after by her older sister who was about 4 years old. She had two baby feeding bottles poked in each of her pockets. The tiny girl had a dirty nappy on and white dusty chalk on her face sticking to her runny nose. This fine dust seemed to be everywhere on the hillside of the dormant volcano. Although I was quite a distance away with my zoom lens, she made eye contact with me through the lens. I suddenly found that I couldn't actually take the picture, it was like an electric shock. In that split second it seemed she had connected directly to my emotional being. In those few seconds she had changed me from a happy photographer to a blithering wreck. I was a bit embarrassed to say the least and went outside to try and get a handle on what had just happened.

We later followed the family to their hovel of a home; just a tin shack lean-to. The second oldest girl the one with the feeding bottles kept stopping to have her picture taken, she posed with her brother and seemed to be so cheerful under the circumstances.

Weeks later this song appeared out of the blue.

Feel For Love

I got the feel for love

When you walk on by

Swing and tease those hips so fine

Just make me smile

Oh I love you babe

I need to undress you

I make no apologies -- How I feel

Come on honey -- Let's dance

Oh -- oh

(Chorus - R2)

You got the lines -- You got the looks

You got the tiger by the tail

I been workin' all day

Thinkin' 'bout

What I could do to make you shout

I hope the bed it don't give out

You best be ready babe

Oh -- with the cuffs and chains

I'm gonna get you babe

Ain't no doubt

So honey baby, I hope you're rested

'Cos you ----- are gonna get it

(CH - R4)

Feel For Love

What was supposed to be a tender love song that went pitifully wrong toward the end. I think my wife had recently been reading, 'fifty shades of gray' or something to that extent. Apologies to the romantics!

Crazy world

Lions and tigers -- And Kangaroos
Snakes and ladders – Whatever you choose

A crazy world – We're liv-in'
Building walls – To keep the sinners in

Find a god – There's lots to choose
You gotta kill – Win or lose

Taint our food – Kill our trees
Darker skies – And deeper sea's

Idolize – Our rich will rise
Half the world – Will starve and die
You never know – they need the bucks
Don't think -- they give a fuck

Lions and tigers -- And Kangaroos
Snakes and ladders – Whatever you choose
A crazy world – We're liv-in'

It's Who I am

All those eyes -- Looking out

This is who – Who I am

They are the one's – Placed their song in my heart

And gave their love (r2)

Phantoms in the past, you haunt me

But it's who am

I am the lucky one – To have shared in your love

I wasn't sure – You were there at the time

Then you were gone – but I found you right here, in my heart

In my heart (r2)

Phantoms in the past, you haunt me

But it's who am

Well you taught me – To forgive

And you taught me – How to care

Yes you taught me – To be happy again

Again

To feel joy

And to feel love

Phantoms in the past, you haunt me

But it's who am

It's Who I am

When I wrote this, I was thinking about all the women throughout my life that have helped to shape me into the person I have become. Starting of course with my dear mother then the few important ladies that shared their lives with me in my past and now my wonderful wife. I think it is the ones that have given us true love that help us to see the beauty that surrounds. 'All those eyes – Looking out'

Misbegotten Life

He was a careless man -- He let it all go

He was a fearless man -- Bring it on

He was a loving man -- Just didn't know how

He was a deaf man -- But he could figure things out

Chorus

Ooh -- Ooh Misbegotten life

I said -- Ooh Ooh -- Never had a chance

He'll take another drink

So he don't have to think

He was a workin' man -- Filthy - dirty work

He was a thinkin' man -- They thought he was dumb

Chorus

He was a sad man -- He had a broken heart

He was a drinkin' man -- He died in a bar

But when he left us

Whoa -- when he left us

He left us -- a full -- glass

(Kevin Firth April 2012)

Misbegotten Life

When I look back on my life and compare it that of my dad who passed away many years ago. I feel like mine has been an almost charmed life; he like my mother was deaf, he also battled asthma which he didn't help by being a chain smoker and alcoholic.

At the heart of industrial Lancashire, England in the 50s and 60s the only work he could find because of his deafness was the dirtiest and most foul that no one else would do.

However he had an innate intelligence; he could fix things, almost anything that came his way; radios, clocks you name it. We had one of those big wooden radios that he had found and fixed, he would sit there with his big head phones on; he had a tiny bit of hearing unlike our mum. It seemed it was his only joy in life apart from the booze. We always knew when a piece of music had touched him as tears would fill his eyes. I must have inherited the enjoyment of music from him. He built me a toboggan out of a pump organ he brought home on his back. However, sadly at work he was – 'The Dummy'!

My older sister Rita was with him in the local pub when he died, he left a full pint!

TIME

*Fallin' down -- is not so bad
Gettin' up -- is terribly hard
Those days -- wakin' up
Dark -- dark grey skies*

*Mistakes -- we can make
Years gone by -- river of tears
Turn back the time -- is what we ask
Regrets -- dis-a-pppear*

Chorus

*The past is a beast you can never ever change
And the future is what's comin' -- simply let it be
Focus on what's good -- ooh - and live*

*Look outside -- of your head
Beauty abound -- open your eye's
And take the time -- to treasure love
'Cos love can come -- Oh love -- love can go*

Chorus

(Kevin Firth 2nd July 2009)

TIME

The inspiration from this song I think came after reading a couple of books by Eckhart Tolle, in particular 'A New Earth' and 'The Power of Now'. Basically about living your life in the present. The song implies; living in the, 'now' and learning to, 'let go'. Probably a bit of contradiction as most of my songs are about my life's experiences.

Rattlin' Chains

Feelin' strange, got the
Nowhere blues in my head
Rattlin' chains, I got some cuffs - around my heels
Can't you see I'll never be free
These four walls is all that I'll see
Then I'll die, then I'll die – sure I'll die

They say I killed a man
Shot him in the head
Rattlin' chains, I got some cuffs around my heels
Can't you see I'll never be free
These four walls is all that I'll see
Then I'll die, then I'll die – sure I'll die

On the street I'm a tough guy
With my gun
Rattlin' chains, I got some gold
Around my neck
Score some blow, I'll get so high
Me and my shooter, we will fly
Then I'll die, then I'll die – sure I'll die

I got a date with the 'lectric chair
At noon
Rattlin' chains, I got some cuffs - around my heels
That was my life, the best I could do
Come on sparky going to Katmandu
Then I'll die
Don't you worry and don't ask why
Come on sparky gonna say Bye Bye
Then I'll die, then I'll die – sure I'll die

But will you miss me – Oh will you miss me
When I'm gone

Rattlin' Chains

This is my anti 'Gangsta' song. Is there anybody else out there a bit fed up with some of this rapper stuff? You know these supposedly super cool tough guys, pants around their ankles, heads on back to front and they must have some kind of serious jock itch; grabbing their friggin nuts all the time. Anti-establishment and seemingly anti-women -- bitch this -- bitch that. Hey I come from the hippy generation 'Make love not war,' Oh and Pull up yer friggin pants -- bitch!

I refer to 'SPARKY' in the song I guess you all know what that is eh? -- Yep the electric chair – you guessed it 'just checkin' -- another cheerful song from your truly.

You are so precious

*You hold my heart in your
Wedding dress
How I love you
My little girl
You once held my hand
He's your man now
Your wedding band
And I'll trust in him
To take my daughter
And hold her hand*

Chorus

*You are so precious
Diamonds in gold
When I have no tomorrows
And I leave this world
I'll thank my lucky star
That you were here – to behold*

*The days will come when
Rain clouds fill your hearts
Doubts and fear
Is all you'll see
Well hold on to her
Catch her smile, it'll set you free
Because when I'm down
The treasure in my eye, smiles for me*

Chorus

Bernie and Maria

*She was born – on a dirt floor
He was a workin' man
From Baltimore
She dreamed of moving on
Far away from this tin shack
Damn stroke took his wife's mind
She ain't coming back*

Chorus

*The Gringo and the Tica
Is it love
Or something else*

*When she was twelve
Her mother's boyfriend done gone
And raped her
Now when Bernie's wife left him
Well his life became a blur
Under a tropical sun
In a dusty old bar, they were near
Maria held his hand
For him five long years – disappear*

Chorus

*Bernie – he looked into her loving eyes
'I'm old and grey', he said
'My time has come and gone – how time flies'
He kissed her sweet young lips
Then walked away, into the setting sun
Love is blind
It don't care – when all said and done*

Chorus

Bernie and Maria (Jan 2014)

I have spent a lot of time in Costa Rica and previously in Mexico which are beautiful places to live and witness all the many different ways people live. I have learned over the years to try not to allow my Western values to cloud my vision when it comes to how we are 'supposed' to live.

Although the song is about a fictitious 'Bernie and Maria' you can see it almost everywhere you go especially in the bars and places lonely people go to find love or 'something else'. It's not unusual to see elderly men who have lost their wives for one reason or another seeking young female companionship.

The locals call us Gringo's which I won't go into here, look it up on Wikipedia. And we call them Tico's or Tica for a female local. In either context it is not given or taken as an insult and is widely used locally in Costa Rica.

My wife and I have personally known couples who have met this way and have forged loving relationships to the ultimate gain of both partners. It is too easy to misjudge this situation with our narrow minded North American thinking. It probably happens everywhere but we notice it more in the poorer countries because of the severe gap between the have's and the have nots.

It also reminds us that, 'love is blind' it can happen in the most unlikely of places and conditions.

Que Respiro

Pura Vida Costa Rica
Friendly Faces – sunny skies
Paradise of colours
Contradiction in the air
That I breathe

Bars on the windows
Razor wire
Guards for hire
Like living trees here
Wild things
Hear them sing

Sunsets cloud your eyes
As the beauty unfolds
Taking you on this – Magic ride

Chorus of monkeys
That howl into the night
Reminding you
You're not alone

Yeah sure it could be better
If we want it to
Take it real slow
Make no mistakes

Oh Please, please, please
Oh please
Keep the wild, untamed and free

Pura vida Costa Rica
Rostros amables – cielos soleados
Paraiso de colores
Contradiccion en el aire
Que respiro

Que Respiro

'Que Respiro,' roughly translated means; 'that I breathe.' I tried to put into one song what it is like to live in what I consider my second home, 'Costa Rica.' After the initial 'honeymoon' of living there it was too easy to find fault and realise that the picture postcard wasn't always that factual. This was always pretty much the case I found in the many places I had been fortunate to visit. You really have to try and overlook the seedy side and look for the beauty that is literally everywhere. Sure we live there with what I think are contradictions but it is still the closest thing to paradise.

Restless Hearts

*That dark cold night so many years ago
When you moved on
Plane took you away
America you were bound
Leaving behind all these gray faces
Took your guitar and your squeeze box too
Alone I had another beer and wished you well*

*You and I we met far from Lancashire
On a different shore
In a different time
Two kids with a laugh and a song
We raised hell Oh -- what a time we had
No worries what tomorrow will bring
For the day is where we were*

Chorus

*Boats and trains and planes
We're always movin' on
Restless hearts
A curse to all we love
We're always movin' on
Restless hearts*

*Leaving home to sad farewells
So many times
It don't change
Still breaks your heart
You're the only one - to take your path
It's a scary road but you take it anyway
Somewhere along the way - I caught this train
And somehow through this fog I can't get off*

Chorus

Restless Hearts

I have a lifetime buddy called Redmond, we served in the Royal Navy together many moons ago. He was from the same part of the U.K as me; Northern Lancashire. In the Navy we were part of a three piece band onboard ship. 'Our name was whistle stop and fart.' After the Navy we kept in touch and formed a duo, we had a lot of fun playing in folk clubs that were everywhere in those days in the mid-seventies. For a while I think we both would have liked to become professional and go on tour. I had commitments with a wife and two kids and wasn't as confident as he was that we could make a living performing. We had both travelled extensively in the Navy, he came to the realisation before I did that there was nothing in Lancashire worth staying for. He left for the U.S with a guitar and a squeeze box (button concertina) where he still lives to this day. It was a sad parting but we have stayed friends over the many years. I came to the same conclusion a little later when I immigrated to Canada.

I seem to have spent most of my life saying goodbye.

Workin' Away Blues

*Come and get your love here
Come and get your love right here, right here baby
I'm on a sinkin' boat
An' I can't float
I got a years' worth of cryin'
I'm drownin' in my tears*

Chorus

*I got the work away blues
I got the work away blues honey
One of these late nights
I'll come home
And keep you warm*

*Come and get your love here
Come and get your love right here
You say you're lonely
And been so sad
I got your letter
Now I'm feelin' bad*


Chorus

*Come and get your love here
Come and get your love right here, right here, right here baby
If I can ever
Get outa this can
I could take some leave
Would be my plan
I gotta invest some time
To be your man*

Chorus

Workin' Away Blues

Anyone that has worked away for from home and family for long spells will recognise the intent in this song. Here I have put my head back to a time when I used to work as a deep sea diver off Scotland and Newfoundland, Canada. Not only did we have to spend many weeks' even months offshore but quite often living inside a diving decompression chamber for weeks at a time. When the weather was too bad to launch the diving bell. I would lie in my bunk in very cramped quarters and think about being home with my wife.

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1. Young love (3.46)
 2. Just for you (5.01)
 3. Scruffy little girl (4.14)
 4. Feel for love (3.33)
 5. Crazy world (4.02)
 6. It's who I am (3.57)
 7. Misbegotten life (3.50)
 8. Time (3.51)
 9. Rattlin' chains (3.11)
 10. You are so precious (3.13)
 11. Bernie and Maria (4.57)
 12. Que Respiro (4.26)
 13. Restless hearts (4.27)
 14. Workin' away blues (4.23)

It's Who I Am

For lyrics and other information please visit my web page at: <http://www.kevinfirth.ca/>

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All songs words and music

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