

JOHN LENT, STEPHEN BAGNELL, CLYDE REED, & CAROL SAWYER / Just Before Taking Jude Out For Breakfast On A Sunny Spring Sunday In Summerland, Thirty Years After God

O God of my lost Catholic childhood, hiding in whatever dark corner of those edgy years I flung myself into so flatly out there on my sidewalks it's a wonder there's anything *left*, and even knowing you will never assume the form you once had in my smiling, earnest years, that trust just above the freckles and loose grin, and admitting my world transformed into this one here, the one I'm in now, the one my body loves, and though I never quite did this body any favors—even so, even *that*—I still think of that wheel of time, that revolution down those clanging, dusty, Edmonton streets, hustling down Whyte Avenue in a February wind, swanning down to Uncle Albert's Pancake House—before franchises, before enclosed shopping malls—our first introduction to sophistication maybe (we thought), going out to a restaurant on a Sunday morning, Christine clutching my left hand, our faces fresh from Mass at St. Joseph's Chapel on the campus, Father Pendergast in full, soft flight behind us now, the two of us mincing down Whyte Avenue in a cool wind, as young as we would ever be, our bodies slim willows moist in a vague pre-Spring it seems looking back now, our thin shadows cast in front of us on the pale but sunned cement, us trying to interpret those forms dancing in front of us against the grey, who those people might become in their lives, dark kisses stretching before us, back-lit by a Catholic God above and behind us whose long, thin fingers spun fragile threads connected to our hearts and minds, shortly to be severed as we spun alternately away from both our selves and that soil we'd been planted in, away into this room here, its white walls, its peace, its loony longing to go back to those streets sometimes, but its firm smile that *this* is enough, *this* its own vertical light, no

strings, no fingers, just a heart beating
in a dark it can take most of the time—
but even so, O God of my long lost
Catholic childhood, *listen*:
lift off the layers of hate that descend upon
us like cages, lift this sour angry light off the
streets so there is no shadow, so we
walk in a flat, translucent dignity
down our streets of gold, then re-
turn to the moist, dark soil we
came from, the real soil,
Enough.

CAROL SAWYER, vocals

CLYDE REED, bass

STEPHEN BAGNELL, reeds

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song room CD | track seven