



I DON'T GET IT by Lou & Peter Berryman

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My name's Old Joe Blow and I live down the street
And I'm here to tell you old age is no treat
It has its advantages I have no doubt
And things could be worse as I'll probably find out

CHO But I don't get it and I don't like it • I'm not gonna go with a smile
I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that in my profile

I'm called a curmudgeon but that isn't so
I help all my neighbors with shoveling snow
I do it to prove that we all get along
Besides that they're all of them doing it wrong

And I don't get it and I don't like it • Oh, I'd be the first to admit
That I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that in my obit

There's five different spectacles I carry now
So why can't they make 'em that focus somehow
Those big foot long subs I won't order again
I have to change glasses at six inches in

And I don't get it and I don't like it • And I doubt I'm entirely alone
But I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that on my tombstone

I said to the judge it's a prissy old town
We own our own porch and there's no one around
My darlin' plays banjo at night while I dance
Do you mean to tell me I have to wear pants?

I don't get it and I don't like it • It's not like I march down the street
But I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that on my rap sheet

The city pays experts a great wad of dough
To figure where speed bumps and stoplights should go
They hike up our taxes to pay the big fee
When all it would'a' taken is a phone call to me

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And I don't get it and I don't like it • Sometimes they treat you like dirt
But I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that on my tee shirt

Bad music'll kill me, the crap never stops
Bad music in malls and bad music in shops
I'm doomed either way 'cause from what I hear tell
There's harps up in heaven, accordions in hell

And I don't get it and I don't like it • Just toss these old bones in a bag
'Cause I don't get it and I don't like it • And you can put that on my toe tag

Did djever tie a tongue • Did djever meet a mate
Ship a sheep or shove a Chevrolet • Host a ghost or wave a wolf away
Did djever lose a lease • Did djever change a ten
Patch a porch or play a baritone • Milk an elk or sell a telephone

Did djever screw a screw, nail a nail, see the sea
Did djever drain a drain, judge a judge, flee a flea
Did djever dream a dream, dodge a Dodge, switch a switch
Did djever stitch a stitch

Did djever twist a wrist • Did djever break a brick
Soak a sock or pick a pickle up • Rent a tent or pitch a wikiup
Did djever drug a bug • Did djever break a bike
Catch a perch or hitch to Baltimore • Baste a vest or pin a pinafore

Did djever drink a drink, swing a swing, sigh a sigh
Did djever plant a plant, dance a dance, fry a fry
Did djever peel a peel, moon the moon, latch a latch
Did djever scratch a scratch

Did djever crack a jack • Did djever looth a tooth
Own a Nash or know an ingenue • Bus to Banff or do the bugalooo
Did djever flaunt a flute • Did djever mow a moor
Push a piglet up an apple tree • Pass a class or bowl a 53

Did djever fax a fax, check a check, brush a brush
Did djever fool a fool, wish a wish, crush a crush
Did djever squash a squash, lock a lock, pawn a pawn
Did djever yawn a yawn

Did djever form a farm • Did djever raise a rose
Board a barge or buy a bungalow • Take a toke or tune a radio
Did djever work a wok • Did djever sketch a ketch
Weave a wig or lug an aqualung ••• Didja ever tie a tongue

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I am the happy raconteuse, I live to hear my voice
But it's okay to walk away and clearly that's your choice
For when I'm feeling windy having had a touch of wine
I'll pass around the hat but if it comes back empty, fine
 Fine, fine, fine, 'fit comes back empty, fine
 I'll pass around the hat but if it comes back empty, fine

I am the happy oil painter and I love my craft
And tho the dudes I've shown my nudes have turned away and laughed
What drives me is the creamy paint, the smell of turpentine
So if I paint my masterpiece, and no one buys it, fine
 Fine, fine, fine, if no one one buys it, fine
 So if I paint my masterpiece, and no one buys it, fine

I am the happy novelist and that's my heart's delight
I do not crave a soul to rave at every word I write
So nothing's gonna stop me when I think of one more line
I'm now on Chapter 90, if it's never published, fine
 Fine, fine, fine, 'fit's never published, fine
 I'm now on Chapter 90, if it's never published, fine

I am the happy lyricist, my words adorn this tune
It may be way to recherché it may be too jejune
It may not reach the fame of Oh My Darling Clementine
I'll register with ASCAP but if no one sings it, fine
 Fine, fine, fine; if no one sings it fine
 I'll register with ASCAP but if no one sings it, fine

I am the sole composer of this happy melody
And thousands more that I adore at least to some degree
My husband and my brother think it's utterly divine
I'll put it on the web but if it's not downloaded, fine
 Fine, fine, fine, 'fit's not downloaded, fine
 I'll put it on the web but if it's not downloaded, fine

BRIDGE We all are happy fine artistes delighted with our plight
 We slave all day for little pay and do our art at night
 No matter what the critics think we never will resign
 And that's why fine art's called Fine Art, if no one buys it, fine.

So tho your chosen medium may have a different name
It seems to me the answer we are seeking is the same
Since we've all heard the joke before, it comes as no surprise
The question of the fine artiste: would you like that with fries?
 Fries Fries Fries, would you like that with Fries?
 The question of the fine artiste: would you like that with fries?

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HE: I was in need of a familiar face
I took a ramble down the ol' deer trace
I didn't see a single elk I knew
I passed an unfamiliar fox or two
I'd introduce myself but what's the use
I'm only one more extraneous moose

SHE: He used to nod to every duck that quacked
And more important they would nod right back
He used to hang around the old bear den
He was the pal of every bear back then
But now they ostracize the big recluse
Who's only one more extraneous moose

HE: I used to flirt with every female deer
But now they look-a me like I'm not here
It's not that I was ever such a prize
But now the doezies all avert their eyes
Like I'm a creature from Dr. Seuss
Or only one more extraneous moose

SHE: He does avoid his former entourage
They wanna put him in the old moose lodge
And give him pills to keep him quiet all night
He thinks they're wrong but knows they might be right
He'd be subjected to less abuse
Within a herd of extraneous moose

HE: Well I been told I should'a kept in touch
But then a moose can only do so much
Until the day the interface improves
I'd be a fool to try to text with hooves
And I'm aware that that's a tired excuse
But I'm a tired old extraneous moose

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Once on a cold November eve
My boyfriend was about to leave
I said wait what's sleeping there
A creature big as a polar bear

I tiptoed over to the garden shed
Felt his great big hideous head
Chest all rough like an elephant's skin
Smelled as bad as a garbage bin

Hands like claws and tail like a fox
Dinosaur legs with argyle socks
Jerked and twitched on the moonlit lawn
Snored like a truck with the muffler gone

I called my boyfriend over by me
This was something that he had to see
He took a look and he said: *"Oh dear
I didn't know that your dad was here"*

He said that too loud I think
I saw an eye of the monster blink
He rose with a roar in the frosty night
Me'n my boyfriend froze with fright

He moved toward us thru the darkening yard
He stared at my boyfriend very hard
Turned to me and he said real clear
"I didn't know that your dad was here"

That's not quite where the story ends
The goon and my boyfriend soon were friends
They say to each other when I come near
"I didn't know that your mom was here"

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There's come to be an old RV decaying on the moor
With hungry eyes assessing size of raccoons in the sewer
While countless bars and skanky cars and crazy crushes lurk
Like kidney stones or broken bones in brains that barely work

But wait who's that so slow and fat and silhouetted there
That slumps and slips and laughs and trips and reels against the glare
Of neon glow on filthy snow as closer now he draws
With lumpy bag he's born to drag, by god it's Santa Claus

With reindeer reigned and sleigh restrained he schleps the crimson sack
A couple crates of Camel Straights and Johnny Walker Black
Thru Pepsi hulls and seagull skulls he lurches with his gifts
By six pack rings and shoes and things half buried in the drifts

No mantle there for socks threadbare no cookies on a dish
No chimney crown to slither down but still they get their wish
For Santa ties his big surprise to side view mirror hinge
And thus imparts to warm the hearts the solace of a binge

Oh fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la

Were there a list that did exist of every naughty soul
That Santa scanned for gifts he'd planned we'd all get lumps of coal
So here's applause for Santa Claus who counters schlubs like me
Who shrug and sigh and walk on by and mumble c'est la vie

Oh fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la la la
Fa la la, fa la la, fa la la, la la

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So there are shelves back in the garden
Inside the shed I built before
The shelves need screws they are collapsing
The tools they held are on the floor

The tools are old some are electric
The cords are frayed and full of oil
Torn plastic bags are laying on 'em
Old bags of mulch old bags of soil

The basement walls are known to crumble
Each time a train goes by the house
The sandstone rocks are held with mortar
Too soft and loose to hold a mouse

I started in some years ago now
Upon a patch one foot in height
Cleaned out the old and sandy mortar
Scraped off the rocks and set them right

But it was such a lengthy process
With so much more I had to do
Like wire the hall and plumb the kitchen
I called it done and I was through

From that point on I've used this method
To carry me when things got rough
The method's name: Low Expectations
The motto is: That's Good Enough

BRIDGE: But if you live in fear of criticism
Because like me your skin is thin, thin, thin
When someone knocks to pass their judgement
Don't let 'em in, don't let 'em in

My father said, if it's worth doing
It always is worth doing well
And that's the worst advice he gave me
So I've rebelled as you can tell

And when this house goes on the market
I don't see how we can go wrong
Someone will pay a hundred thousand
As long as they don't hear this song

Repeat BRIDGE

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I camp on Wisconsin's Rock Island
I look at the scenery, I'm smilin'
I look at a map, I'm astounded
Michigan has me surrounded

CHORUS:

If due south I float I hit Michigan
And due west my boat will hit Michigan
It's due north I slam into Michigan
Or due east and bam I hit Michigan

A clipping off Door County's thumbnail
Rock Island has one unique detail
The atlas on careful inspection
Shows Michigan in every direction

CHORUS

My motown so sweet is from Michigan
The cereal I eat is from Michigan
Tonight I will reach in my fridge again
And pull out a peach grown in Michigan

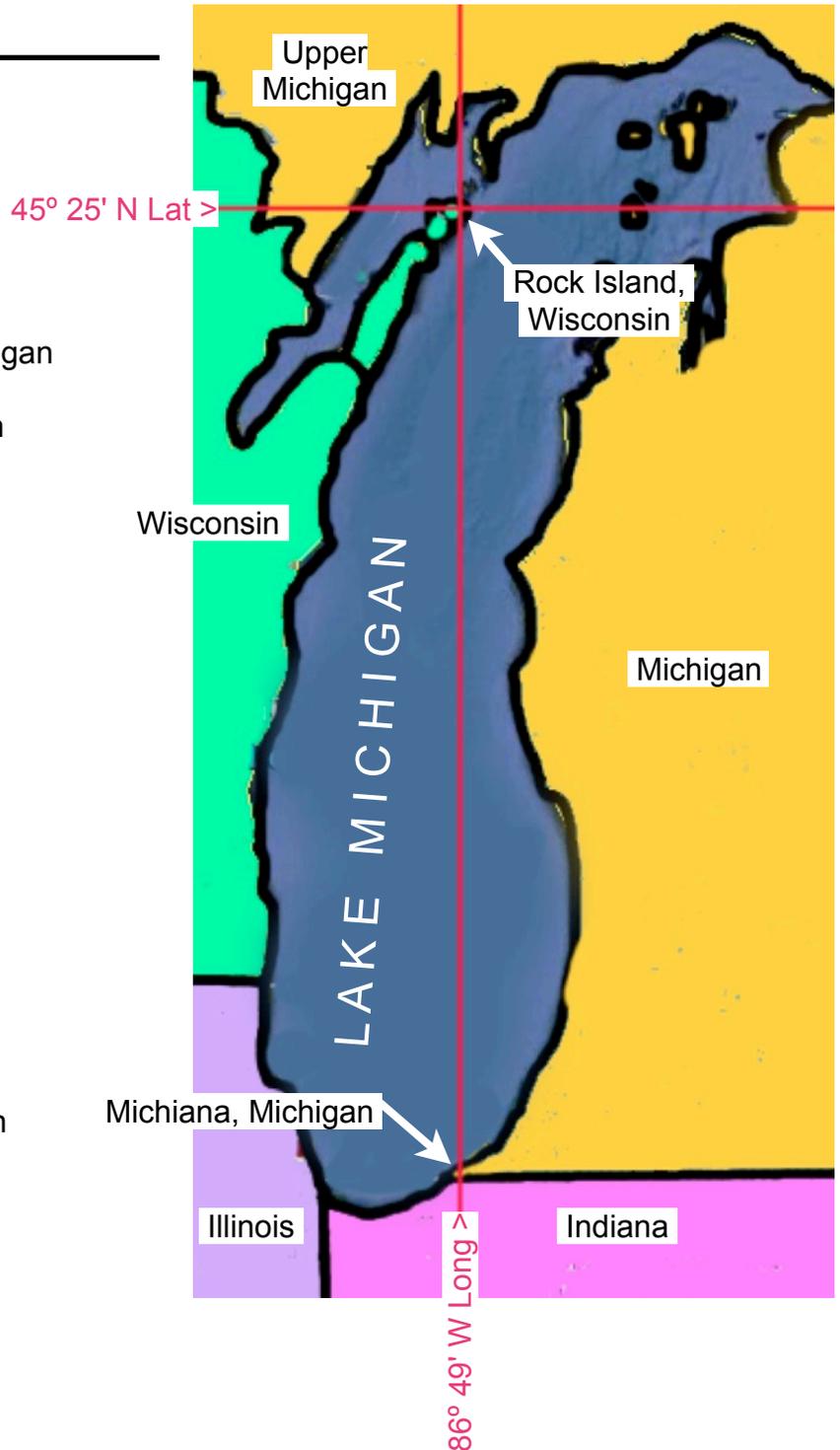
CHORUS

My Gibson guitar built in Michigan
I play in my car made in Michigan
And even the lake I go fishing in
Is known for G od's sake as lake Michigan

CHORUS

I party with cheesehead mainlanders
I party with west Michiganders
When they prove to be party poopers
I trow my lot in wit' da yoopers

CHORUS



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When standing on the eastern half of Wisconsin's Rock Island, mainland Michigan is due east, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is due north and due west, and the town of Michiana Michigan is due south.

Well many years ago in '58 or so
When we were kids you know we sang a song
The words and Melody with regularity
Have kept us company for oh so long

Although we quote the thing, we don't know who wrote the thing
But we are confident somebody knows
To fix this oversight, and at the risk we might
Infringe a copyright, here's how it goes

*When night was glamorous a fellow amorous
Went out to woo a pretty little maid
Beneath her window far he strummed his gay guitar
And sang beneath a star this serenade:*

*Lady Romantical, list to my canticle
Slip from your coverlet, fleecy and white
My heart's a-flutter now, open your shutter now
Here how I utter now sighs in the night*

*The lady listened there with eyes that glistened there
And waited while he sang his roundelay
She said 'You're bold tonight but it is cold tonight
And from my window I must keep away.*

*Midnight brings breezes on, breezes bring sneezes on
Woo me some warmer night, minstrel' she said
'If there's a breathe of cold I'll catch my death of cold,'
And his sweet lady love, stayed in her bed.*

So that's the song we sing, but all along we sing
Without acknowledging the author's name
So if you had a tip regarding authorship
We'd be more well-equipped to lay the blame

But we've been around enough, feet on the ground enough
T'know we'll find nothing out, the way these things go
So on the lighter side, if there's a brighter side
Who wrote these extra lines, no one will know

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The Olin Park Pavilion
's where all of us are right now
Which makes it more important
Than anywhere else somehow

Mt. Everest is amazing
But ya can't get there by car
Milwaukee is exotic
But that's not where we are

CHORUS:

Olin Park! Not quite dark!
Wide awake! By the lake!
Us and you! Deer ticks too!
It's one night in a million

Oh yah hey! Month of May!
Barn so old! Air so cold!
Shiver and freeze! Buy CDs
At the Olin Park Pavilion

And Tuesday in the evening
Is what time it is now
Which makes it more important
Than any other time somehow

Indeed and more precisely
If my watch has it right
It's after Tuesday afternoon
But not quite Tuesday night

CHORUS

Now usually as it happens,
There's nothing more sublime
Than sentimental memories
Of another old place and time

But here we are this evening
On a rare occasion when
The here and now is just about
As good as there and then

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CHORUS

On Tuesday I needed a breath of fresh air, and back in the yard by the shed there's a chair
Where I have my coffee and read when I can, and Tuesday I could, so that was my plan
Now I was on maybe page ten of my book, when something way down in the yard made me look
And there by the curb, floating up from the street, was a thunderhead reaching a height of four feet

I hoped it would just disappear
But the weather's been funny, this year

Tho I wasn't scared in the least little bit, it gave me the shivers I have to admit
I stared at the thing for it's rarely I see a cumulonimbus that's shorter than me
With thunder as soft as a faraway train, it flickered while dripping half teaspoons of rain
But small as it was I was put on my guard, when slowly it turned toward my spot in the yard

I won't say I trembled in fear
But the weather's been funny, this year

I heard myself mumble, now don't be upset; the worst that can happen, your shoes will get wet
But as it advanced and some drops hit my face, a tiny tornado grew down from its base
I gazed at the funnel, amazed at its force, dislodging whole pebbles that lay in its course
One poor little spider was blown off the map, but landed thank goodness unharmed in my lap

Such things are unusual here
But the weather's been funny, this year

I watch'd all the creatures retreating like moles; the ants down their hills & the worms down their holes
While those that could fly fluttered off in a swarm putting three or four feet between them & the storm
The twister was cranking for all it was worth, and wrestled whole marigolds out of the earth
It flung them as far as the mulberry tree, then climbed up my lawnchair and twirled on my knee

I still wouldn't call it severe
But the weather's been funny, this year

The spider hung in there from what I could tell, however my novel did not do so well
The last couple chapters were vacuumed right up, and all of my coffee was sucked from the cup
But just as I hollered "For crying out loud," the twister untwisted back into the cloud
Which finally moved on into Jones's front lawn, and though I like Jones, I was glad it was gone

The rest of the day should be clear
But the weather's been funny, this year

The pattern of damage was hard to assess; my shoes were okay but my socks were a mess
Tho I doubt autumn will be this bizarre, I do think the weather's been funny, so far
That night on my pillow, upset as we lay, the spider and I thinking over the day
We watched from the window alongside my bed as a 14 foot snowflake buzz-sawed through the shed

I said to the spider, "Oh dear;
But the weather's been funny, this year."

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Strong like rope, cheap like string • You can tie up anything
Tie your dog, tie your boot • I have sisal, I have jute
Cash is good, trade is fine • Twine

You want twine, you're in luck • I've got cases in the truck
Twine tha's soft, twine that's strong • Some is thin but eight miles long
Some is thick, like a vine • Twine

Tie your box, tie your sack • Tie your branches on your back
Tie your brooms, tie your clothes • Tie that feedbag on your nose
Here's my card, read my sign • Twine

I don't sell thread, don't sell string • Don't sell wire or anything
Don't sell yarn, don't sell rope • Do I sell shoelace? Answer: nope!
I'll run down my entire line: Twine

There's no tape that ever sold • Holds your stuff like twine can hold
Using glue? Hit or miss • There's no Velcro good as this
And there's no twine, good as mine • Twine

Butchers twine, sold on spools • Baker's twine for cooking schools
Christmas twine, wrap your tree • Tie it on your SUV
Balsam fir, Norway pine • Twine

Twine is strong, twine is light • Play cat's cradle every night
Twine is light, twine is strong • Play cat's cradle all night long
Standing, sitting or supine • Twine

Liquid soap, Styrofoam • Basics for the modern home
Etch a Sketch, sleeping pills • Liquid Wrench & living wills
Dish TV, turpentine • Twine

You in love? Well okay • Choc'late candy's tres passe
Scented candles turn to smoke • Rings are steep, flowers croak
Give your sweet valentine • Twine

Gettin tired of trav'lin' round • Need someone to tie me down
Tho I should make one thing plain • I'm not talkin ball and chain
I mean something soft and fine • Twine

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Wisconsin whose motto was "Forward"
Was populist as it could be
But now the new motto is "Backward"
Oh bring back Wisconsin to me

CHORUS: Bring Back, bring back
Oh bring back Wisconsin to me, to me
Bring back, bring back
Oh bring back Wisconsin to me

They're trying to stifle our voices
They're trying to keep us derailed
They'll find it's not easy to do tho
McCarthy once tried and he failed

Tho we may be "God's frozen people"
We bask in the warmth of our plea
Don't bury our rights in a snowbank
Oh bring back Wisconsin to me

Our Mother Wisconsin is fragile
It's very upsetting to see
She wandered away with a Walker
Oh bring back Wisconsin to me

Wisconsin's employers are hiring
It's just like the governor says
And soon there'll be no unemployment
In Beijing, Mumbai or Juarez

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