



**CHARLIE
PARR**

Little Sun

DANKERT



Little Sun

Charlie Parr - Little Sun

SFW CD 40262

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PRODUCED BY Tucker Martine

1 **Portland Avenue** (4:30)

2 **Little Sun** (3:57)

3 **Bear Head Lake** (7:20)

4 **Boombox** (3:55)

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All songs written by Charlie Parr /
Little Judges Music, ASCAP

INTRODUCTION

by **Charlie Parr**

DURING THE 1980s I lived on the West Bank of Minneapolis where I mostly kept to myself, played pinball, read books and practiced guitar in a rooming house where a lot of students and a handful of old beatniks lived. I saw live music nearly every day— everything from punk rock to folk-blues—but I rarely missed seeing Dave Ray, Tony Glover, Willie Murphy or Spider John Koerner when any of them played. I'd take in as much as I could then hustle home to my room to try and play some of those licks and usually find myself frustrated and exhausted around 4:30 in the morning. I didn't have any records at that time, any records I might have had were at my parent's house in Austin (Minnesota, not Texas) and I listened to the local community radio station hoping to hear old blues and folk records. Music was live to me then, it existed where and when it was being played, whether at a nice concert venue or around the sidewalks of the West Bank and Dinkytown.

When I started my own journey playing music, that feeling never left me

and I treated recording opportunities as I would a live show. Up until this very album my recordings have always been done live, with few if any overdubs and I nearly always used the first take, leaving all the mistakes, missed lyrics, extraneous noise and whatever else might happen there for the ages. Most records have been recorded in roughly the time that it took to play the songs. And that's been fine actually. Here's a new way for me, though, here's an album that was basically recorded live but in collaboration with producer Tucker Martine, who's become a friend and trusted musical ally. You'll hear what happened, so I don't need to describe it to you, but I'm very grateful for the opportunity to work with this very talented group of musicians. It all felt like a show to me — living in Portland Oregon, walking to the studio every day to listen to and hang out with amazing and inspiring musicians and turn what had been a collection of songs that resisted my usual solo-guitar approach into songs that woke up under the attention of these folks, in this band which isn't a band now but was for a great long moment during the worst snowstorm that Portland has seen in decades. Welcome to Minnesota, Portland.

MUSICIANS

CHARLIE PARR vocals / guitars / harmonicas

MARISA ANDERSON electric guitar

VICTOR KRUMMENACHER electric bass / upright bass / bass VI

ANDREW BORGER drums / percussion

ASHER FULERO piano / Hammond / keyboard

ANNA TIVEL backing vocals

MARY DuSHANE fiddle (“Ten Watt”)

LIZ DRAPER Bass (“Ten Watt”)

MIKKEL BECKMEN percussion (“Ten Watt”)



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
Victor Krummenacher
Marisa Anderson
Andrew Borger

SONG NOTES AND LYRICS

1. Portland Avenue

Do you know your neighbors? How big is your neighborhood? A city block? A cul-de-sac? A town? County? State? Can a neighborhood be a whole country? Continent? World? Mom uses the word “neighbor” as a verb, as in: “we don’t neighbor like we used to.” It’s fluid now, though, isn’t it? Can we have cyber-neighbors? Lend support and care like we used to lend cups of sugar?

*Don't you wonder where Annie went
After the third time they picked her up
No one here has seen her since
And I've got an apartment full of her stuff
It feels like yesterday since we saw her face
And her dimples popping out of her smile
Does anyone else here miss her laugh
Didn't think she'd be gone all this while*

Chorus

*It's a late night it's an early in the morning theme
You don't know if you're awake or else
you're asleep
By the time the sun catches you alone in
your room
You're all tangled up in all those bad dreams*

*Last time I saw Annie she looked so good
Riding downtown on the train
She was the loudest person in the neighborhood
What I wouldn't give to hear her holler again
Tell me when you're ready and I'll start the car
And help you get into your coat
We can take the long way it ain't that far
And we'll be home before you know it*

Chorus

*Annie dear, can you hear my voice
Do you recognize my face
We've been sitting here for so many years
You wouldn't believe how much I've aged*

2. Little Sun

Watching Tony Glover play the harmonica was mystical to me. He folded himself around the instrument, it looked very personal, and sometimes I wondered if we should even be watching. It felt intimate. He was in the pocket all the time, holding the rhythm all the way down the line—even as Dave Ray orbited the planet riding sublime jazz phrases, watching the snow falling onto Nicollet Avenue outside the windows.

*I can see the city in February
I remember Little Sun's wail
Sliding in the slush on the avenue
To get to the Times Hotel*

*The music it plays everywhere
Did you hear better when you were young
The tones are getting quiet
Come back home, Little Sun*

*The last time we got together
And our ears were wearing out
And preoccupied by finance
And unable to hear the shout*

*Of a hundred-year-old melody
The rattling of worn-out reeds
It's a matter for perception
The music we choose to hear*

*The music it plays everywhere
Was it better when we were young
Or have we lost our focus
We need you here, Little Sun*

*The music it plays everywhere
Even when we're old and undone
We just have to listen louder
It's time to come home, Little Sun*

3. Bear Head Lake

Go north. Find a quiet place where you can't hear the engines anymore, can't smell the cigarette smoke or diesel fumes, where you can't see the neon lights or get a signal on your cell phone. Go for a walk and look at the sky, lie down and look at the ground, submerge yourself in cold, iron-colored water, then sit on the rocks and breathe.

*Look, there's a shooting star
It's a wave in the sea
Moving close to where we stand
And breaking on the shore*

*I can't feel the sand
Beneath my feet where it landed
And pushed its way into the earth
Razing our sandcastle to the ground*

*The receding plumes of ash
Like water ripple through the sky
And bring chaos to the radio waves
Deafening our information*

*I remove my shoes
To accept the cool October
Water as it rushes back to the lake
And pools in the sky above*

*We turned away from the blinding light
To look at one another
But the reflection off the water
Was preoccupying your eyes*

*I remove my shoes
To accept the cool October
Water as it rushes back to the lake
And pools in the sky above*

4. Boombox

In this neighborhood music is eternal and transcendent and surrounds us at all times, whether we're listening or not. And it affects each of us differently, and that's a gift. Listening to music can be

interactive, even if you're alone. I want to listen intentionally.

*There's a woman next door out on her porch
With a boombox blasting at full force
And she dances real slow in her woolly socks
And slides on the wooden floor through
the dust*

Chorus

*(Says / singing) When I'm dancing
This is how I dance
I let the music move me
This way and that
If you have a dance
I can appreciate that
But when I'm dancing
This is how I dance*

*There's a bar downtown where they play
the blues
On a tiny stage in a corner booth
Where I can close my eyes and feel the groove
And you can dance even if you don't move*

Chorus

*I got a friend who can't play a single note
But the music gets right down into their soul
They hear it play no matter where they go
You'd hear it too if you'd just listen now*

Chorus

*I'm alone now and that's alright
I've done what I've done and it feels just fine
I can dance these memories all in my mind
And I can take a turn in my own time*

Chorus

5. Pale Fire

I'm driving somewhere out on a highway
in New Mexico and I'm tired and not in a
hurry and I stopped to watch the sunset
and I fell asleep and woke up in time to
watch the same sun rising. That was it.

*I seen the sunset
For the longest while
At the edge of my sight
It burned in pale fire*

*But when the sun was gone—the fire burned on
And when the sky was
Finally dark
And the air was quiet
And holy*

*But when the sun was gone—the fire burned on
I could be anywhere
The only sound is
My scraping footsteps
On the surface of the world*

*But when the sun was gone—the fire burned on
The ground grew beneath me
I could feel it
Through the soles of my shoes
It was clinging to my skin*

But when the sun was gone—the fire burned on

*I fell and surrendered
On damp fallen leaves
I stared through the branches
To the sun—climbing
But when the sun was gone—the fire burned on*

6. Ten Watt

Another neighborhood in another part of town. Another long afternoon when there's a lot to do and there's only this day away from doing the work of others, and there's just not much left in the tank.

*I can feel my energy getting dimmer
This generator won't quite light up the road
My engine only fires on 5 cylinders
Straining to pull up this heavy load
About 20 watts is what's needed
I'm generating about 7 on a good day
Everybody's just gonna have to be patient
Cuz I really don't need to come outside anyway
And I guess it's always been that way*

*My room is situated in the corner
I can see three directions from my chair
It's a box canyon apartment in the city
And no one can sneak up on me there
And I guess it's always been that way
There's no need for you to be lonely
I'm just sitting around here all day
You can stop by when you wanna*

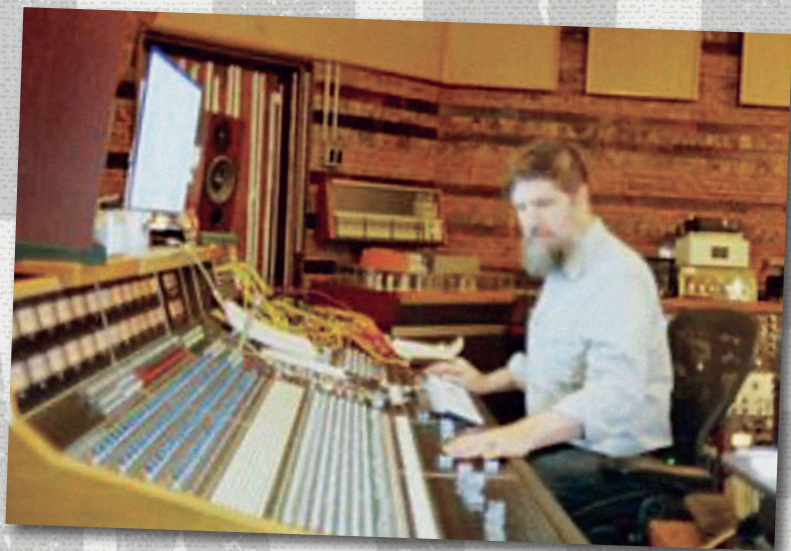
*And sit down with your violin and play
I took a long walk this morning
Just to get outside and take the air
October reminds me of my childhood
Kicking leaves and starting fires everywhere
And I guess it's always been that way
I tried to walk the way the birds fly
Cutting over all of the neighbors' lawns
Climbing fences? at my age?
Yeah, but I'm just an old man when the cops
are called
And I guess it's always been that way*

*Now 20 watts is what's required
And I think I might be up to 10
I'm gonna sit on the stoop and watch the traffic
And I might never get up again
And I guess it's always been that way*

7. Stray

Some of our neighbors are experiencing the very worst of hard times.

*How can you say he's gone astray
The days find him alone
Always miles from anywhere
Never finding his way home
How can you say he's always dirty
Well, he's got nowhere to wash
Everyone avoids him
No matter what the cost*



Tucker Martine

*To his damaged ego
To his worn-out shoes
Thin clothes against the cold
Thin hearts against his own*

*Let the rope out easy
Bring everyone on board
Mend the broken hearts
Take on their heavy loads*

*He hears about your religion
All about his sinful ways
All about the god who loves him
But will punish him anyways*

*But he already knows the lake of fire
He swims in it every day
He's beaten down with neglect
And burned with hypocrisy*

*How can you say there's a stray
In the middle of your town
He can feel the anger in your eyes
Where empathy should be found*

*I hear he's lost his family
Or they let him wander away
Can anyone speak on his behalf
Or has someone rigged the game*

*Let the rope out easy
Bring everyone on board
Mend the broken hearts
Take on their heavy loads*

8. Sloth

There's a part of the world that exists only in my mind, that exists only for me and possibly doesn't exist at all in any conventional sense of the word. I live there a lot, though, in this neighborhood of me and the imaginary versions of my friends and family, and it's ok. Expectations are low in this neighborhood, and it's probably not good for me to spend too much time there.

*I did my best
But I came up short
She asked me what time it was
I answered "just about four"
She said "you going out"
I said "I don't know"
She looked disgusted
But that's just the way it goes*

Chorus

*It feels like I'm moving awfully slow these days
So don't bother to wait just go on your way
And I'll catch up or either stay behind
Don't let my plans worry your mind*

*My ambition is suited
To a non-industrial epoch
My desire to succeed
Is based on a subjective metric
My career goals are a little patch of sun
Or maybe that little bit of shade*

Chorus

Liz Draper, Mary DuShane



Mikkel Beckmen



Charlie Parr



*Pass me on the freeway
What do I care about that
My car is slow
But it's good on gas
I'll get to where I'm going
Or maybe change my mind
And make a detour
Whatever happens gonna be fine*

Chorus

*I did my best
But I came up short
She asked me what time it was
I answered "just about four"
She said "you going out"
I said "I don't know"
She looked disgusted
But that's just the way it goes*

CREDITS

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Engineered and mixed by

TUCKER MARTINE

at Flora Recording and Playback

COLE HALVORSEN, assistant engineer

RYAN BRIDENSTINE, studio intern

Mastered by JEFF LIPTON and MARIA RICE
at Peerless Mastering

"Ten Watt" basic track recorded at Creation
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and JOHN SMITH

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St. Paul polaroids by ANDREA WEBER

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The song “Little Sun” is dedicated to the memory and legacy of Tony “Little Sun” Glover.

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Charlie Parr





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(ABOVE)
Charlie Parr

(GROUP LEFT TO RIGHT)
Marisa Anderson
Tucker Martine
Charlie Parr
Victor Krummenacher
Andrew Borger



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PRODUCED BY

TUCKER MARTINE

Over the last couple of decades, Charlie Parr has crisscrossed the world on tour more times than one can count. He also has released over a dozen albums of his songs, acclaimed for their poetic simplicity. *Little Sun*, his most ambitious album to date, was recorded with Tucker Martine (The Decemberists, Sufjan Stevens, My Morning Jacket) and features Parr augmenting his raw and affecting songs with stunning full-band arrangements. The remarkable backing band here includes Marisa Anderson, Victor Krummenacher, Andrew Borger, and Asher Fulero. Masterfully channeling the philosophical and transcendental qualities of the blues, Parr takes us on a journey through the winding streets of his imagination.

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