



THE DECEMBERISTS

THE CRANE WIFE

1. THE CRANE WIFE 3
2. THE ISLAND: - COME AND SEE - THE LANDLORD'S DAUGHTER - YOU'LL NOT FEEL THE DROWNING
3. YANKEE BAYONET (I WILL BE HOME THEN)
4. O VALENCIA!
5. THE PERFECT CRIME #2
6. WHEN THE WAR CAME
7. SHANKILL BUTCHERS
8. SUMMERSONG
9. THE CRANE WIFE 1 & 2
10. SONS & DAUGHTERS

Produced by Tucker Martine and Christopher Walla with The Decemberists

The Crane Wife 3

And under the boughs unbowed
All clothed in a snowy shroud
She had no heart so hardened
All under the boughs unbowed

Each feather it fell from skin
'Til threadbare while she grew thin
How were my eyes so blinded?
Each feather it fell from skin

And I will hang my head low

A gray sky, a bitter sting
A rain cloud, a crane on wing
All out beyond horizon
A gray sky, a bitter sting

And I will hang my head low



The Island

1. Come and See

There's an island hidden in the sound
Lapping currents lay your boat aground
Affix your barb and bayonet
The curlews carve their arabesques
And sorrow fills the silence all around
Come and see

There's a harbor lost within the reeds
A jetty caught in overhanging trees
Among the bones of cormorants
No boot-mark here nor fingerprint
The rivers roll down to a soundless sea
Come and see

*The tides all come and go witnessed by no waking eye
The willows mark the wind
And all we know for sure amidst this fading light
We'll not go home again
Come and see*

In the lowlands, nestled in the heath
A briar-cradle rocks its babe to sleep
Its contents watched by Sycorax and Patagon in parallax
A foretold rumbling sounds below the deep
Come and see

Chorus



2. *The Landlord's Daughter*

As I was a-ramble down by the water
I spied in sable the landlord's daughter

I produced my pistol, then my saber
Said, "Make no whistle or thou will be murdered!"

She cursed, she shivered, she cried for mercy
"My gold and silver if thou will release me!"

"I'll take no gold, miss. I'll take no silver.
But I'll take those sweet lips and thou will deliver!"



3. You'll Not Feel the Drowning

I will dress your eyelids
W' dimes upon your eyes
Lay you close to water
Green your grave will rise

*Go to sleep now, little ugly
Go to sleep now, you little fool
Forty winking in the belfry
You'll not feel the drowning
You'll not feel the drowning*

Forget you once had sweethearts
They've forgotten you
Think you not on parents
They've forgotten too

Chorus

Hear you now the captain
Heave his sorrow'd cry
The weight upon your eyelids
Is dimes laid on your eyes



YANKEE BAYONET



I Will Be Home Then

Soldier: Heart carved tree trunk, Yankee bayonet
A sweetheart left behind

Girl: Far from the hills and the sea-swaled Carolinas
That's where my true love lies

Soldier: Look for me when the sun-bright swallow
Sings upon the birch bow high

Girl: But you are in the ground with the wolves and the weevils
All a-chew on your bones so dry

*But when the sun breaks to no more bullets in Battlecreek
Then will you make a grave? For I will be home then
I will be home then.*

Girl: When I was a girl how the hills of Oconee
Made a seam to hem me in

Soldier: And there at the fair when our eyes caught, careless,
Got my heart right pierced by a pin

Soldier: But O did you see all the dead of Manassas
All the bellies and the bones and the bile?

Girl: No, I lingered here with the blankets barren
And my own belly big with child

Chorus:

Soldier: And stems and bones and stone walls too
Could keep me from you
This skein of skin is all too few
To keep me from you

Soldier and Girl: But O my love though our bodies may be parted
Though our skin may not touch skin
Look for me with the sun-bright sparrow
I will come on the breath of the wind





You belong to the gang
And you say you can't break away
But I'm here with my hands
On my heart

Our families can't agree
I'm your brother's sworn enemy
But I'd shout out my love
To the stars

Pre-chorus:

So await for the stone on your window, your
window
I'll await by the car and we'll go, we'll go

When first we laid eyes
I swore to no compromise
'Til I felt my caress
On your skin

How soon we were betrayed!
Your sister gave us away
And your father came all
Unhinged

Pre-chorus

But O Valencia!

*With your blood still warm on the ground
Valencia!*

And I swear to the stars I'll burn this whole city down

All I heard was the shout
Of your brother calling me out
And you ran like a fool
To my side

Well, the shot it hit hard
And your frame went limp in my arms
And an oath of love
Was your dying cry

Pre-chorus

Chorus



The Perfect Crime #2

Sing, muse, of the passion of the pistol
Sing, muse, of the warning by the whistle
A night so dark in the waning
A dawn obscured by a slate-sky raining

Five and twenty burglars by the reservoir
A teenage lookout on the signal tower
The mogul's daughter in hog-tie
The mogul fingers the wrong guy, all right

It was the perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect crime

The bagman's quaking at the fingers
The hand-off glance a little lingers
A well-dressed man in the crosshairs
A shot rings out from somewhere upstairs

Chorus

It was like a ticker-tape parade
When the plastique on the safe was blown away
And we all gazed from eye to eye
As we mouthed our silent goodbyes

The valley's sleeping like a bastard
It stinks of slumbering disaster
Two words are spoke on the tap-wire
The agents' ploy finds a sure-fire backfire

Chorus

W.P. The War Came

With all the grain of Babylon
To cultivate, to make us strong
And hidden here behind the walls
Our shoulders wide and timber long
 'til the war came
 'til the war came

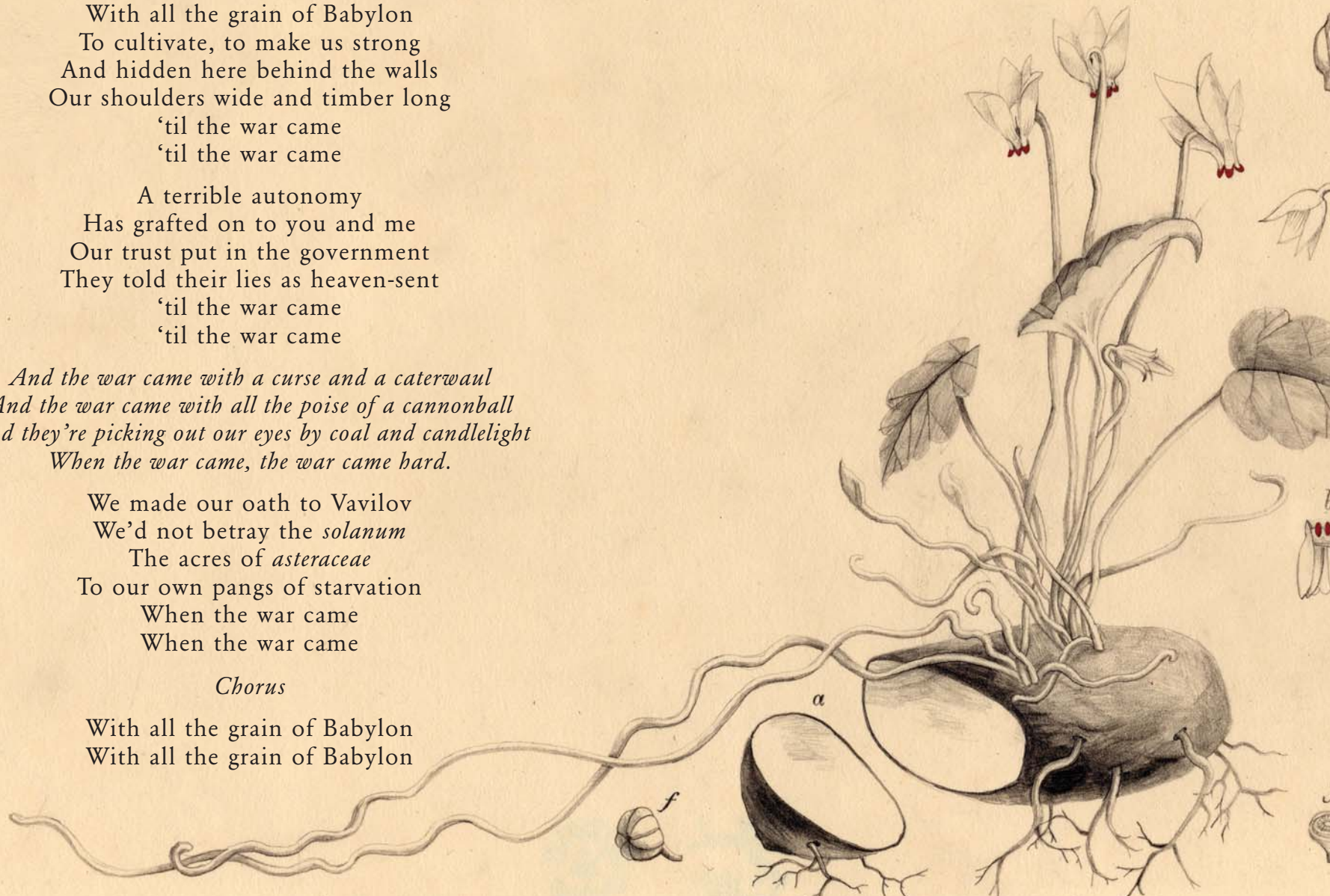
A terrible autonomy
Has grafted on to you and me
Our trust put in the government
They told their lies as heaven-sent
 'til the war came
 'til the war came

*And the war came with a curse and a caterwaul
And the war came with all the poise of a cannonball
And they're picking out our eyes by coal and candlelight
When the war came, the war came hard.*

We made our oath to Vavilov
We'd not betray the *solanum*
The acres of *asteraceae*
To our own pangs of starvation
When the war came
When the war came

Chorus

With all the grain of Babylon
With all the grain of Babylon



Shankill Butchers

The Shankill Butchers ride tonight
You better shut your windows tight
They're sharpening their cleavers and their knives
And taking all their whiskey by the pint

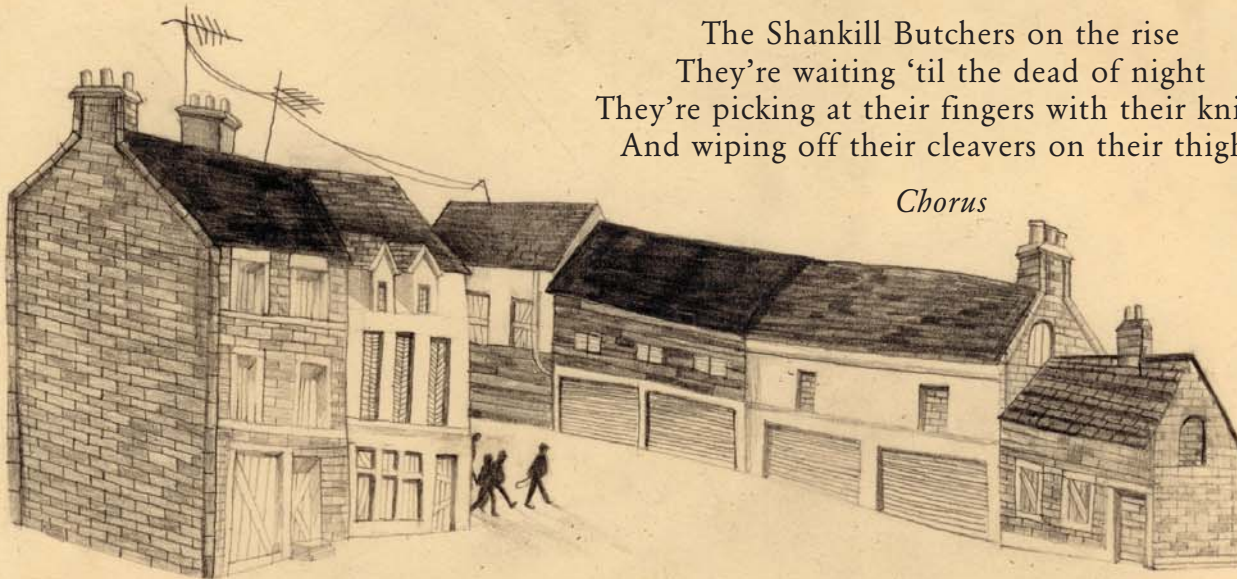
*'Cause everybody knows
If you don't mind your mother's words
A wicked wind will blow
Your ribbons from you curls
Everybody moan, everybody shake
The Shankill Butchers want to catch you awake*

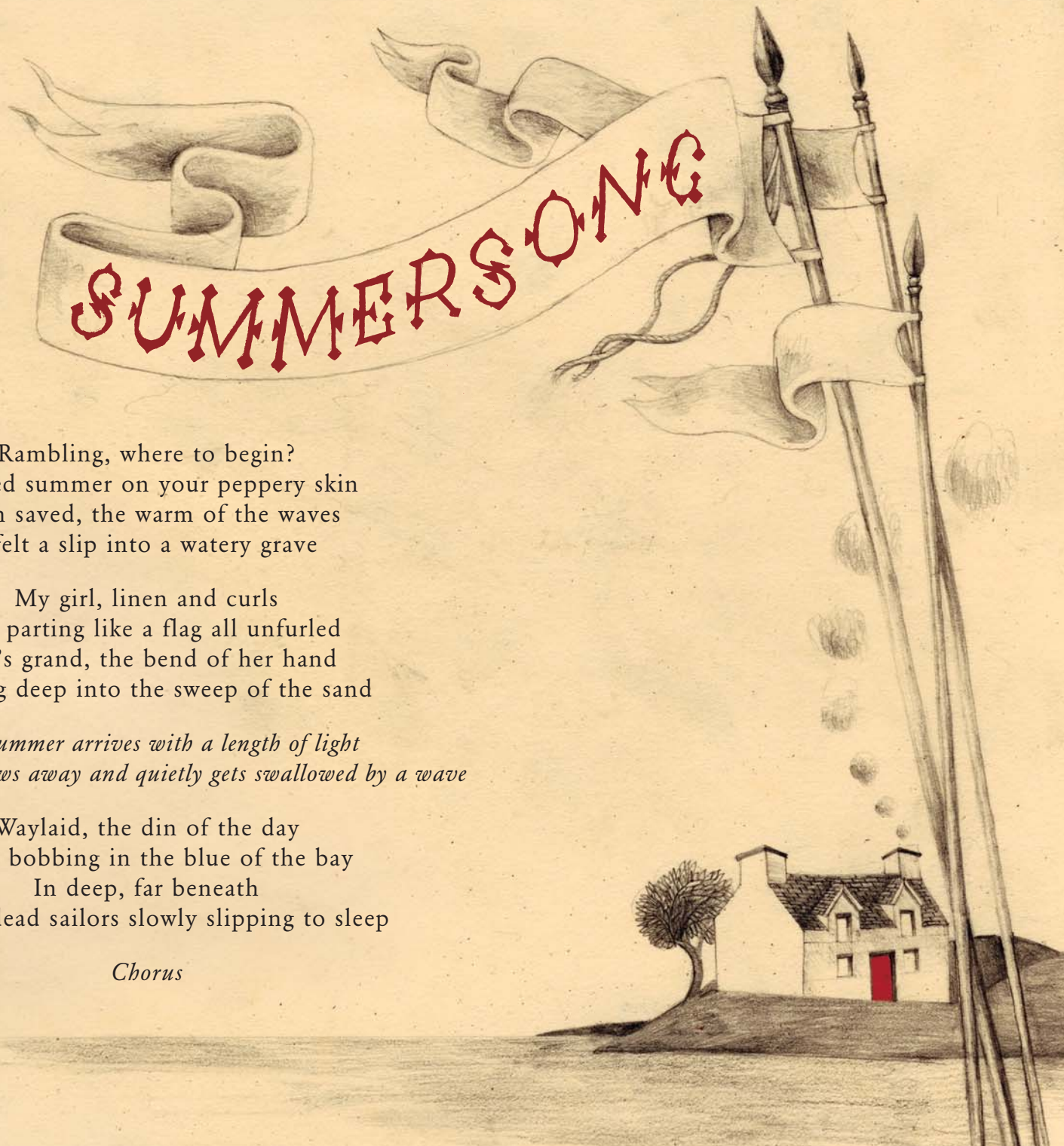
They used to be just like me and you
They used to be sweet little boys
But something went horribly askew
Now killing is their only source of joy

Chorus

The Shankill Butchers on the rise
They're waiting 'til the dead of night
They're picking at their fingers with their knives
And wiping off their cleavers on their thighs

Chorus





Rambling, where to begin?
I tasted summer on your peppery skin
Been saved, the warm of the waves
I felt a slip into a watery grave

My girl, linen and curls
Lips parting like a flag all unfurled
She's grand, the bend of her hand
Digging deep into the sweep of the sand

*And summer arrives with a length of light
And summer blows away and quietly gets swallowed by a wave*

Waylaid, the din of the day
Boats bobbing in the blue of the bay
In deep, far beneath
All the dead sailors slowly slipping to sleep

Chorus

The Crane Wife 1

It was a cold night and the snow lay 'round
I pulled my coat tight against the falling down
And the sun was all
The sun was all down

I am a poor man, I haven't wealth nor fame
I have my two hands and a house to my name
And the winter's so
The winter's so long

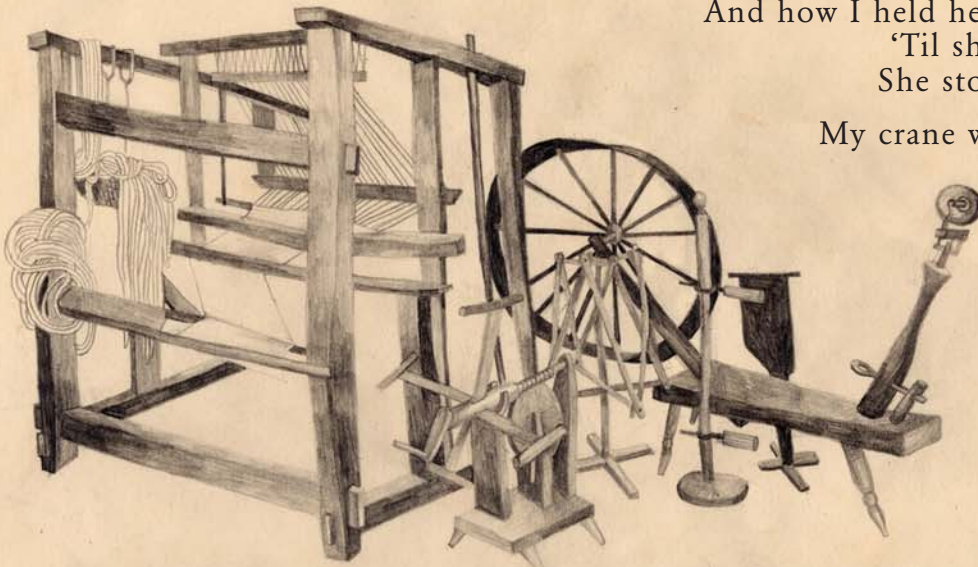
*But all the stars were crashing 'round
As I laid eyes on what I found*

It was a white crane, it was a helpless thing
On a red stain with an arrow in its wing
And it called and cried
It called and cried so

Chorus

And how I helped her and how I dressed her wounds
And how I held her beneath the rising moon
'Til she stood to fly
She stood to fly away

My crane wife, my crane wife





The Crane Wife 2

My crane wife
Arrived at my door in the moonlight
All star-bright and tongue-tied
I took her in

We were married
And bells rang sweet for our wedding
And our bedding was ready
When we fell in

*Sound the keening bell
And see it's painted red
Soft as fontanel
The feathers in the thread
When all I ever meant to do was to keep you
My crane wife*

We were poorly
Our fortunes fading hourly
And how she vowed me
She could bring it back

But I was greedy
I was vain and I forced her to weaving
On cold loom in closed room
With down wove

Chorus

There's a bend in the wind and it rakes at my heart
There is blood in the thread and it rakes at my heart
Rakes at my heart





When we arrive, sons and daughters
We'll make our homes on the water
We'll build our walls of aluminum
We'll fill our mouths with cinnamon

These currents pull us 'cross the border
Steady your boats arms to shoulder
'Til tides all pull our hull aground
Making this calm harbor now home

Take up your arms, sons and daughters
We will we arise from the bunkers
By land, by sea, by dirigible
We'll leave our tracks untraceable

*Hear all the bombs, they fade away
Hear all the bombs, they fade away*



Nate Query
Upright bass, electric bass,
cello, backing voice, percussion



Colin Meloy
Voice, acoustic guitar, electric
guitar, bouzouki, percussion



Jenny Conlee
Hammond organ, accordion,
Wurlitzer, piano, pump organ, Moog,
glockenspiel, backing voice, percussion



John Moen
The Drums, backing voice,
percussion



Chris Funk
Electric guitar, bouzouki, banjo, square neck
guitar, hurdy-gurdy, pedal steel guitar,
hammered dulcimer, percussion, backing voice

"The Crane Wife" As performed by The Decemberists

With

Laura Veirs Voice of the Girl on *Yankee Bayonet (I Will Be Home Then)*

Eyvind Kang Viola, violin

Ezra Holbrook Backing Voice

Christopher Walla Backing voice, some keyboardy bits

Steve Drizos Hand drums

All songs written by Colin Meloy, Published by Osterozhna! Music (BMI)

Recorded at Kung Fu Bakery in Portland, Oregon between April and June, 2006

Produced by Tucker Martine and Christopher Walla with The Decemberists

Mixed by Tucker Martine

except

Summersong, O Valencia! and *When the War Came* mixed by Christopher Walla and Tucker Martine

And *Yankee Bayonet (I Will Be Home Then)* mixed by Christopher Walla at BJB

Assistant engineer: Rich Hipp

Mastered by Roger Seibel at SAE Mastering in Phoenix, AZ

Design by Carson Ellis, Colin Meloy and Mike King

Illustrations and lettering by Carson Ellis

Layout by Mike King

Band portraits drawn from photographs by Autumn de Wilde

Laura Veirs appears courtesy of Nonesuch Records

Christopher Walla appears courtesy of Atlantic Records

A&R: Ron Laffitte and Laurel Stearns

Management: Dawn Barger for Big Hassle Management

Legal: Gillian Bar for Carroll, Guido & Groffman

Booking: Kevin French for Big Shot Touring

Thank you: Tucker Martine, Christopher Walla, Dawn Barger, Sarah Smith, Kevin French, Rich Hipp, Carson Ellis, Mike King, Ron Laffitte, Laurel Stearns and all at Capitol Records, Autumn de Wilde and crew, Rachel Demy, Deborah Orr, Tim Ellis, Slim Moon, Maggie Vail and everyone at KRS, Chad Crouch, Rob Jones, Corrina Repp, Mark Staben, Wade Holmes, Paul Dalen, Adam Katz, Stef Zagorski, Kong, Marcel Cacdac, Ian Perkins, Joe Cunningham, Victor Paul, Sean Nelson, Bob Stark, Allen Garren, Laura Veirs, Alela Diane, Eyvind Kang, Ezra Holbrook, Petra Haden, Eugene and everyone at Eugenio's, Marissa Maier, Sarah Dykes, Kendrick Brown, Maile Meloy, Paul Montagne, Hank Meloy, Scout Funk, Rachel Blumberg, Steve Drizos, Lewi Longmire, James Beaton, Seann McKeel, Fang, Dave "Chronic Freeze" Friedlander, Connie Wohn, Bernadette Spear, John Burch, Gillian Bar, Rosemary Carroll, Phil Sarna, Patrick Templeman and everyone at PSBM, Cascade Media, D'Addario Strings, AKG Acoustics, Universal Audio, John Blasioli, Scott McCaughey, Wesley Stace and all our Friends and Family.

Dedicated to Henry Ellis Meloy, Scout Fahey McKeel Funk, and the memory of Harriett Meloy and Louise Query

