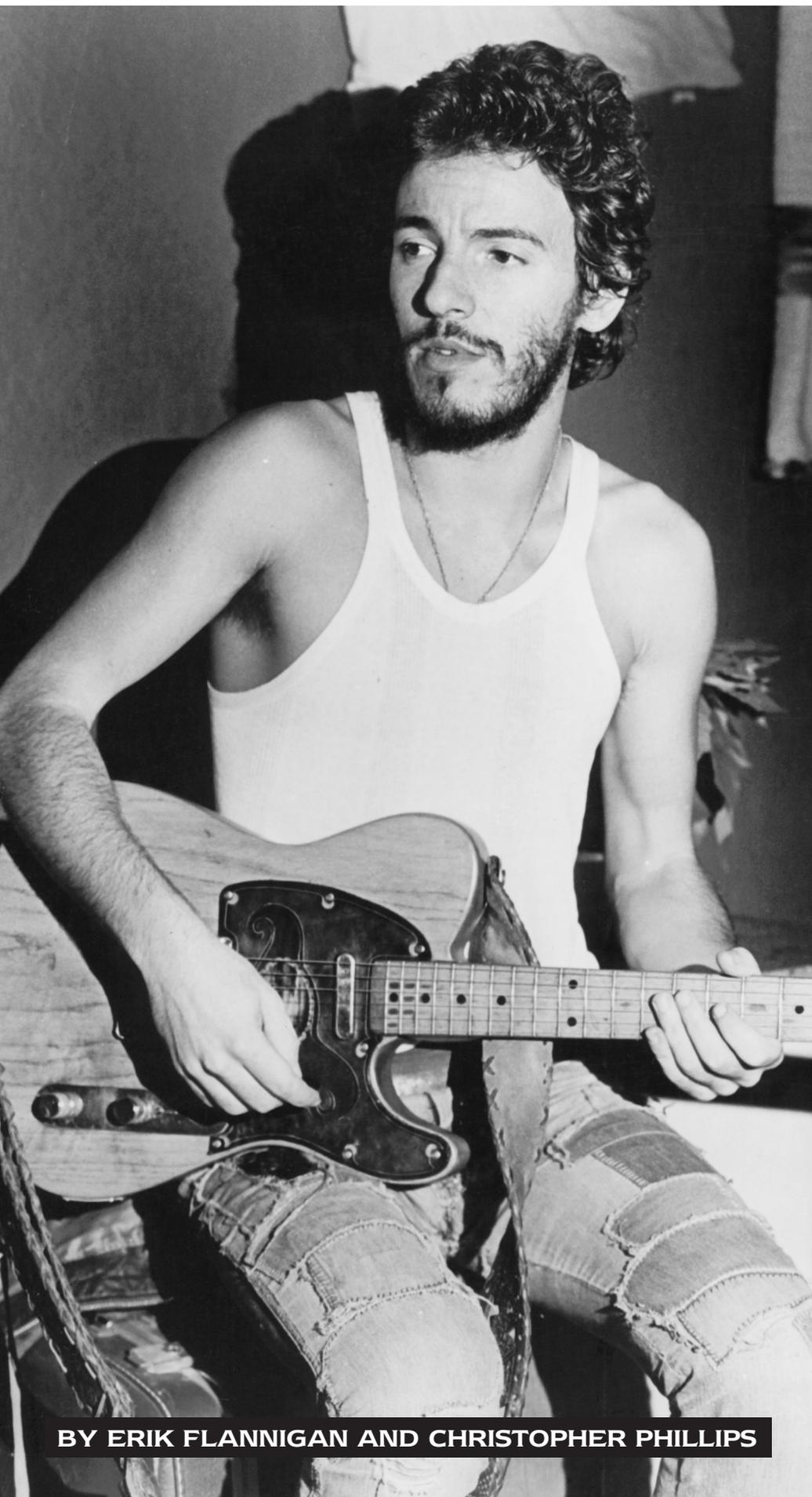


# the backstreets liner notes



BY ERIK FLANNIGAN AND CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

**B**eyond his insightful introductory note, Bruce Springsteen elected not to annotate the 66 songs included on *Tracks*. However, with the release of the box set, he did give an unprecedented number of interviews to publications like *Billboard* and *MOJO* which revealed fascinating background details about these songs, how he chose them, and why they were left off of the albums in the first place. Over the last 19 years that this magazine has been published, the editors of *Backstreets* have attempted to catalog Springsteen's recording and performance history from a fan's perspective, albeit at times an obsessive one. This booklet takes a comprehensive look at all 66 songs on *Tracks* by presenting some of Springsteen's own comments about the material in context with each track's researched history (correcting a few *Tracks* typos along the way) and the editors' contemporary analysis. It is in no way intended to replace the *Tracks* booklet, nor is it meant as our statement as to what kind of liner notes should have been included in *Tracks*. In the purest sense of the word it is a supplement, one which we hope will broaden our readers' understanding and interest in 66 fascinating songs recorded over 27 years. If *Tracks* itself presented "the alternate route," consider this booklet the alternate road map.

—The Editors of *Backstreets*

# 1

1. Mary Queen of Arkansas
2. It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City
3. Growin' Up
4. Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street?

**RECORDING LOCATION:** CBS Studios, New York, NY  
**RECORDING DATE:** May 3, 1972

**HISTORY:** Four of the 12 songs performed at Bruce's Columbia Records audition for legendary A&R man John Hammond. The session was assigned the job number 79682, and it is Hammond's voice heard giving this information at the start of the CD. "Mary Queen of Arkansas" was the first song performed that day; "Cowboys of the Sea" the last. Of the remaining eight songs which constitute the Hammond demos, only one, "The Angel," would be released on a future album. Some have wondered whether Springsteen's ongoing legal battle over early recordings prevented him from including any of the unreleased songs from this session such as "I Was the Priest"—which, legend has it, impressed Hammond the most. Springsteen recently told Mark Hagen in *MOJO* magazine, "I think the record John Hammond would have liked would have been one that the first four or five cuts from *Tracks* sound like. Maybe that exact thing, and, listening back, he may have been right." Bruce was offered a contract with Columbia the day after this audition.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "It was a big, big day for me.... I was 22 and came up on the bus with an acoustic guitar with no case which I'd borrowed from the drummer for the Castiles. I was embarrassed carrying it around the city. I walked into his office and had the audition and I played a couple of songs and he said, 'You've got to be on Columbia Records. But I need to see you play. And I need to hear how you sound on tape.' Me and Mike Appel walked all around the Village trying to find some place that would let somebody just get up on stage and play. We went to the Bitter End, it didn't work out. We went to another club. And finally we went to the old Gaslight on McDougal Street and the guy says, 'Yeah, we have an open night where you can come down and play for half an hour.' There were about ten people in the place and I played for about half an hour. John Hammond said, 'Gee, that was great. I want you to come to the Columbia Recording Studio and make a demo tape.' A demo I made at Bill Graham's studio in San Francisco in '69 was the only other time I'd ever been in a real recording studio. Columbia was very old-fashioned: everybody in ties and shirts; the engineer was in a white shirt and was probably 50, 55 years old, it was just him and John and Mike Appel there, and he just hits the button and gives you your serial number, and off you go. I was excited. I felt I'd written some good songs and this was my shot. I had nothing to lose and it was like the beginning of something. I knew a lot about John Hammond, the work he'd done, the people he'd discovered, his importance in music, and it was very exciting to feel you were worth his time. No matter what happened afterwards, even if it was just for this one night, you were worth his time. That meant a lot to me. He was very encouraging—simply being in that room with him at the board was one of my greatest recording experiences."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

## 5. Bishop Danced

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Max's Kansas City, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as February 19, 1973, but there is some confusion about this date. Most assign the performance to August 30, 1972, the date given by the King Biscuit Flower Hour broadcast (see below), while a bootleg release of the complete Max's set, including "Bishop Danced," dated the show as March 7, 1973. Based on the known tour chronology and on comments Bruce made during the show, the date of this performance is most likely January 31, 1973.

**HISTORY:** One of two live cuts on *Tracks*, "Bishop Danced" was also aired on the inaugural King Biscuit Flower Hour and reprised in the pre-show special to the 1988 *Tunnel of Love* radio broadcast from Stockholm. The same live version was also used as a publishing demo by Laurel Canyon. Performed by Bruce with Danny Federici's accordion accompaniment.

## 6. Santa Ana

## 7. Seaside Bar Song

## 8. Zero and Blind Terry

**RECORDING LOCATION:** 914 Sound Recording, Blauvelt, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 28, 1973

**HISTORY:** These three songs, along with "Thundercrack" and "The Fever," were cut the same day at the start of the sessions for the second album, about a week after pianist David Sancious joined the E Street Band. All five were eventually passed over for *Wild & Innocent*, but the recordings went on to be used as publishing demos. A six-song acetate (adding "Bishop Danced" and substituting a live "Thundercrack") was pressed for use by Springsteen's British publishing agency, Intersong; material from that disc was eventually bootlegged on the LP *Fire on the Fingertips* (which got all the titles wrong) and later on the CD *Forgotten Songs*. Springsteen performed all three songs on the Chicago tour. While "Seaside Bar Song" and "Santa Ana" might both be called "bar songs," "Zero and Blind Terry" was the first of Springsteen's romantic epics, paving the way for "Incident on 57th Street," "Backstreets," and "Jungleland."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "These really long, strange stories, these kind of funky epics—I don't know what they were!"

—*Rolling Stone* interview, 1998

"I just wrote what came out and the songs work on an abstract basis, but that's what makes them fun. 'Santa Ana' is just a series of images, but it works, there's a story being told. But later I turned away from that kind of writing because I received Dylan comparisons.... Many of the songs we played early in concert—we played 'Santa Ana' all the time. When I went on the road, I took the point of view I developed on my first record and I began to just write with the band in mind, with



Charlie Frick Photo

the idea of mixing those two things. We cut them all and at the time they didn't get on, probably because there was a limited amount of time you could put on a record, only about 36 or 40 minutes tops, and so things just didn't get on because there wasn't enough room, or you didn't think you sang that one that well, or the band didn't play that one that well, or you wanted to mess around with the writing some more. 'Zero & Blind Terry' was a big song we played live all the time and 'Santa Ana,' 'Seaside Bar Song,' 'Thundercrack' were all from that particular period.

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** "French cream won't soften those boots, baby/ French kisses will not break your heart" from "Santa Ana" would later be rephrased for use in "She's the One." "The highway is alive tonight," from "Seaside Bar Song" became one of the defining phrases in "The Ghost of Tom Joad" 22 years later.

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** "Santa Ana" was also known as "Contessa" and "The Guns of Kid Cole." "Seaside Bar Song" was listed as "Coup Deluxe" on early set lists. "Zero & Blind Terry" was short-listed for Bruce's third album, and was even considered early on as a possible title (*The Legend of Zero & Blind Terry* appears on a list of potential album titles Bruce wrote in 1974). An early version with alternate lyrics, then known as "Phantoms," was recently released on the bootleg *Deep Down in the Vaults*. The song was also known early on as "Over the Hills of St. Croix."

**ERRATA:** The lyrics to "Santa Ana" listed in the *Tracks* booklet mistakenly print "Kid Cole" as "Kid Colt."

## 9. Linda Let Me Be the One

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 28, 1975

**HISTORY:** One of the last tracks—if not the last—recorded for *Born to Run*, which was released a mere two months later. "Linda" was likely considered for the record until the eleventh hour. The *Tracks* version conatins less saxophone and a much stronger vocal than previously bootlegged takes. Other unreleased tracks believed to be considered for BTR include "Walking in the Street," "Lonely Night in the Park," and "Janey Needs a Shooter."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "There were two outtakes from Born to Run: 'Linda Let Me Be the One' is on *Tracks*, and there was another one called 'Walking in the Street' which I would have liked to have put on but I couldn't find the master. We searched and searched. It might have been simply recorded over, because in those days, if something wasn't going to make it, you're going to need that tape so you recorded something else over the top."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

**MIKE APPEL SAYS:** "I won my way on things. When [Jon Landau] and Bruce would say, 'Here's 'Lonely Night in the Park' or 'Linda Let Me Be the One'." They came in and they thought that was going to be a commercial song. And I won my way. I said, 'These are such dogs and the lyrics are so bad... [they] aren't staying on the record—over my dead body.' I told him this stuff was 'shit.' And nobody today would talk to him like that. Oh, no, they sure wouldn't."

—*Backstreets* interview, 1990

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** Called "Wendy Let Me Be the One" on an early lyric sheet.

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** The rhyming couplet of "spare parts" with "broken hearts" would be used again on 1987's "Spare Parts."

## 10. Thundercrack

**RECORDING LOCATION:** 914 Sound Recording, Blauvelt, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 28, 1973

**HISTORY:** This song held the role of show-stopper until Springsteen wrote "Rosalita," and the live version was frequently bootlegged. But *Tracks* marks the first appearance of a studio cut of this outtake from the second-album sessions. Given that as early as 1975 a live recording was being used as a publishing demo (see "Seaside Bar Song"), "Thundercrack," as Bruce said in recent interviews, simply never got finished. As such, Bruce added new overdubs with help from Vini Lopez (see below) for its inclusion on *Tracks*. Harmony vocals and guitar parts were definitely added, and comparisons between the many live versions and the *Tracks* cut suggest that the entire lead vocal may be new given the distinct differences in phrasing and even key.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "The song 'Thundercrack' was something that we wrote as the showstopper. It ended three or four different times—you didn't know where it was going to go. It was just a big, epic show-ender that was meant to leave the audience gasping a little bit for their breath—'Hey, who was that guy? That was pretty good.' That was 'Rosalita's' predecessor;

later on, 'Rosalita' began to fill that spot in the show and held it for many, many years; probably the best song I ever wrote for that particular job. Before that, 'Thundercrack' had the same function. It was meant to make you nuts, and that's why I wanted to get that song on this record.... It was one of the few songs that actually was [not] finished when I went and found it. I listened to it, and it seemed like it was so long and the guitar didn't sound right; I just said, 'This is going to be too much work.'... But I found a version which was actually pretty good, called up Vini Lopez and I said, 'Vini, I have some singing for you to do'...."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

**VINI LOPEZ SAYS:** "Bruce called me up and said, 'Hey, I have some music from the early days. One of the songs needs vocals, and I was wondering if you wouldn't mind coming in after all this time and doing it.' I said, 'No, I'd be glad to.' So I went to his studio by his house and did the vocals. It took 40 minutes. We had a good time, just like the old days... We did 'Thundercrack.' He wanted the original guys to sing on it, so me and Federici went in.... I knew all my parts like there wasn't any time in between, like we were just there again, like a time warp."

—*Backstreets* interview, 1998

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** Listed on some early set lists as "Her Brains They Rattle." Early bootlegs called the song "Heart of a Ballerina" and "Angel From the Inner Lake."

## 11. Rendezvous

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** December 31, 1980

**HISTORY:** This perfect pop song made its live debut in August 1976; the *Tracks* recording comes from the legendary New Year's Eve 1980 marathon gig, curiously the last time Springsteen ever performed the song in concert. "Rendezvous" was one of the first tracks recorded for *Darkness on the Edge of Town* during sessions at Atlantic Studios in the summer of 1977. Apparently, however, no suitable studio version was available, which is why Springsteen chose to make it one of but two live performances on *Tracks*, along with "Bishop Danced." Bruce's fondness for the song prompted him to give it to Greg Kihn, Gary U.S. Bonds, and the Knack. While the Knack went with "Don't Look Back" instead, Kihn and Bonds wound up covering the song on the albums *With the Naked Eye* and *On the Line*, respectively.

**ERRATA:** The *Tracks* booklet gives Mike Appel a production credit for "Rendezvous"—Appel was long gone by this point.

## 12. Give the Girl a Kiss

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** November 10, 1977

**HISTORY:** A previously unknown outtake from *Darkness* and a wonderful showcase for the E Street Band, as most of its members step out for a moment in the spotlight—even Springsteen, who introduces his guitar solo with the words "Boss time." Also shining are the Horns of Love, the horn section from 1988's *Tunnel of Love* tour (Ed Manion on baritone sax, Mark "The Love Man" Pender on trumpet, Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg on trombone and Mike Spengler on trumpet, with newcomer and Max Weinberg 7 member Jerry Vivino, stepping in for Mario Cruz on tenor sax), who overdubbed the brass parts sometime in 1998. The song is loosely based on the Shangri-Las' "Give Him a Great Big Kiss."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "The editing on *Darkness* was based around creating a record that had a seriousness of tone. Meanwhile, there were all these bar-band records that we had cut, [such as] 'Give the Girl a Kiss' and 'So Young and in Love.' So I had all this music that I couldn't use at the time."

—*Billboard* interview, 1998

## 13. Iceman

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** October 27, 1977

**HISTORY:** This melancholy *Darkness* outtake first surfaced in the mid-'80s and, unlike "Give the Girl a Kiss," fits the album thematically and stylistically. Springsteen didn't even remember the song until a friend assembled a few box set suggestions from bootlegs and gave them to Bruce.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Bob Benjamin sent me a tape with about three songs on it, and 'Iceman' was one of them. I had forgotten I had even written it and I had no idea what it was, and I went back and it was a pretty nice song. Finding some of the things you'd forgot you had done, that was fun.... 'Iceman,' like 'Born in the U.S.A.," was just something that I didn't get at the time that I did it."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** "I wanna go out tonight, I wanna find out what I got" would become one of the core declarations of "Badlands."

**BRUCE SAYS II:** "That line [I wanna go out tonight...] is what I was thinking about at that time. I hadn't recorded in a couple of years. I was stuck in that big lawsuit [with former manager Mike Appel] in the early part of my career, and there was a tremendous amount of 'whatever happened to'-articles at that time. That whole record was a record where I felt like I was going to have to test myself and that was what I wanted to know, so that line ended up in a few different songs."

—Los Angeles Times interview, 1998

## 14. Bring on the Night

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 13, 1979

**HISTORY:** Originally recorded in late 1977 for *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, this urgent rocker feels more like a *Darkness* track than a *River* track, so it is somewhat surprising to learn the song was cut for both albums. "Bring on the Night" holds the unique distinction of being the only song in the Springsteen canon to reference the '70s disco movement.

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Several lines and themes from "Bring on the Night" would reappear in the 1983 *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake "My Love Will Not Let You Down," found on disc three of *Tracks*.

## 15. So Young and In Love

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as January 6, 1974, but this would contradict musician credits in the *Tracks* liner notes which mention Roy Bittan and Max Weinberg. The song was probably recorded soon after Max and Roy joined the band, most likely October of 1974 at 914 Sound Recording in Blauvelt, NY.

**HISTORY:** Springsteen often performed his rewritten version of the Chiffons' "A Love So Fine" prior to the release of *Born to Run*, including the legendary February 5, 1975 Main Point radio broadcast gig. The live "A Love So Fine" and this studio version of "So Young and in Love" share almost identical verses, but different choruses which reflect the songs' titles. An instrumental version of the song was included on the early bootleg LP *E Ticket* and is widely assumed to be the first track cut by Max and Roy with the E Street Band. The melody of "So Young And in Love" is also a close cousin to that of the 1978 tour instrumental "Paradise by the C."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "...a full band, beautiful ensemble club playing, very exciting. Meant to blow your head off."

—MOJO interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** "Rat traps filled with soul crusaders" would later turn up in "Night."

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** Known as "A Love So Fine" circa 1974-75.

## 16. Hearts of Stone

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** October 14, 1977

**HISTORY:** Springsteen at his most soulful. The night before this session, Bruce joined Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes at the Stone Pony and played five cover songs, so he almost certainly had Johnny in mind when he cut this version. He eventually gave the song to his friend, who graciously accepted it and made it the title track of his third album. This wonderful take is Steve Van Zandt's shining moment on *Tracks*, as his background vocals weave a deep blue hue behind Springsteen's impassioned delivery. The Horns of Love are also featured, this time with Mario Cruz back in place on tenor sax.

## 17. Don't Look Back

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as July 2, 1977, but this take, indistinguishable from the frequently bootlegged version, has historically been credited to 3/1/78, though given that Springsteen began performing in concert in March 1977, the July date may be accurate.

**HISTORY:** How close did "Don't Look Back" come to appearing on *Darkness*? It was included both on the earliest acetates of the album and on track lists which appeared in promotional materials predating the LP's release. At the eleventh hour, as the legend goes, "Don't Look Back" was dropped. We can assume Springsteen himself considered the song completely finished, given that it is the *only* outtake on *Tracks* to still bear the original mixing credit (of Chuck Plotkin and

Jimmy Iovine, in this case). "Don't Look Back" is one of several power-pop tracks circa 1977-79 which appear on the box, and is another song Bruce offered to The Knack, who cut it in April, 1979. Their cover wound up an outtake, too, though it was eventually released. In the liner notes to *One Step Up/Two Steps Back: The Songs of Bruce Springsteen*, which contained the cover, The Knack's Bruce Gary wrote, "The tune was originally scheduled to appear on the Get the Knack album, but was pulled at the request of Springsteen's management in order to allow him to release the song first." More than a decade later, on the 1992 anthology *Retrospective: The Best of the Knack*, they still beat him to it.

# 2

## 1. Restless Nights

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** April 11, 1980

**HISTORY:** One of the many songs Bruce wrote and recorded after scrapping the proposed 1979 album *The Ties That Bind* in favor of what would eventually stretch to a double LP. A number of the outtakes from these sessions are accurately described as pop songs, but they fall into two distinct categories, light romantic fare ("Ricky Wants a Man of Her Own," "Be True," "I Wanna Be With You") and romantic tales of a darker nature ("Loose Ends," "Take 'Em as They Come"). "Restless Nights" falls into the latter category, describing a world of "whispering trees," "dark rivers" and "gray" streets.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "There's an entire album of tracks from *The River*: 'Restless Nights,' 'Roulette,' 'Dollhouse,' 'Where the Bands Are,' 'Loose Ends,' 'Living on the Edge of the World,' 'Take 'Em as They Come,' 'Be True,' 'Ricky Wants a Man,' 'I Wanna Be With You,' 'Mary Lou,' all three-minute, four-minute pop songs."

—MOJO interview, 1998

## 2. A Good Man is Hard to Find (Pittsburgh)

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 5, 1982

**HISTORY:** A previously unknown *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake, recorded the same day as "My Love Will Not Let You Down" (though at a different studio), during early album sessions which also yielded "Wages of Sin," "This Hard Land," and "Frankie." Presumably, full-band attempts at *Nebraska* songs were also cut at these sessions. The sound, however, is more reminiscent of *The River* than it is of *Born in the U.S.A.* Given the joined-in-progress, fade-out-before-ending nature of the song, this may be a one-off performance, with the E Streeters following Springsteen's direction as he sings from a lyric sheet. Offering yet another perspective on isolation, the song is thematically kindred to *Nebraska* and, by its mention of Saigon, to "Born in the U.S.A." and "Shut Out the Light." But "A Good Man is Hard to Find" paints an alternate portrait, of the resulting isolation when a man did *not* come home from the war. Curiously, Steve Van Zandt is not credited on the track, though he does play on the other three songs from the May 1982 sessions.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "There are things that make sense of life for people: their friends, the work they do, your community, your relationship with your partner. What if you lose those things, then what are you left with? The political aspect wasn't something that was really on my mind at the time, it was more just people struggling with those particular kinds of emotional or psychological issues."

—MOJO interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Adds new context to lines that would eventually appear on *Nebraska*: "across the Michigan line" references the fate of another returned vet in "Highway Patrolman," and "the meanness in this world" also turned up in "Nebraska," which offered a completely different response.

## 3. Roulette

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** April 3, 1979

**HISTORY:** Reportedly written within days of Three Mile Island incident, "Roulette" was Springsteen's first true topical song, a powerful tale of legitimate paranoia, the intensity of which is matched by a driving E Street Band performance. Originally released in 1988 as the B-side to "One Step Up" and performed in concert on the *Tunnel of Love Express* tour, "Roulette" was remixed for *Tracks*, and this version differs slightly from the B-side, most notably in the snare drum, which is toned down considerably from the '88 mix



and restored to its original sound. Fans' appetites for this one were whetted prior to its release by a detailed description of the song in the second and later editions of Dave Marsh's book *Born to Run*.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "It was the first song we cut for [*The River*] and maybe later on I thought it was too specific, and the story I started to tell was more of a general one. I may have just gotten afraid—it went a little over the top, which is what's good about it. In truth it should have probably gotten put on. It would have been one of the best things on the record and it was just a mistake at the time—you get oversensitive when you're going to release the things."

—MOJO interview, 1998

#### 4. Dollhouse

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATES:** August 21, 1979

**HISTORY:** Written in June 1979, "Dollhouse" belongs to a family of urgent and edgy rockers cut during the *Darkness* and *River* sessions but largely left off of the finished albums. It is lyrically significant in that the first-person narrator is speaking directly to the woman with whom he is having a relationship, something Bruce hadn't done much up to this point.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "*Tracks* consists of an enormous amount of material that was just out on its own. The interesting thing about the early stuff from CD 2 is that I thought I hadn't really written about men and women until *Tunnel of Love*. Then I found 'Dollhouse,' plus a lot of other things that began to address those issues, even in the early '80s."

—MOJO interview, 1998

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** The early demo was referred to as "Living in a Doll House."

#### 5. Where the Bands Are

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** October 9, 1979

**HISTORY:** This longtime fan favorite (presented here at its proper speed and pitch unlike previous bootleg releases) captures the E Street Band in maximum pop mode, peppering the infectious, upbeat rocker with hand claps, harmony vocals, and inventive drum fills. For his part, Springsteen seems to be having a great deal of fun with this celebration of pop music itself and how good it makes us feel; his guitar solo sends that message home.

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Three straight lines, beginning with "I get off from work and I grab something to eat," reappeared in "Jackson Cage."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "When you get into the second CD, that's when we really learned how to record the band in the studio dynamically for the first time. On those sessions for *The River* album—when Stevie Van Zandt came in and joined the production team—we were committed to capturing some of that excitement. You hear the band tightening and there was a sort of very controlled chaos on songs like 'Roulette,' 'Dollhouse,' and 'Where the Bands Are.'

—*Boston Globe* interview, 1998

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLES:** Referred to for years by fans and bootleggers as "I Wanna Be Where the Bands Are."

#### 6. Loose Ends

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as July 18, 1979. The tape box reproduced on *The Ties That Bind* bootleg appears to credit the track to 9/23/79, but the inconsistency could mean that the September date is for mixing, not recording.

**HISTORY:** Fans have been calling for the release of this one since the very first batch of *River* outtakes circulated in 1981. Another early and, until *Tracks*, unreleased example of Springsteen exploring male-female relationships. "Loose Ends" was to have been the final track of *The Ties That Bind* had Bruce elected to release the single album in 1979. *Tracks* uses the same take as the aborted LP, in a new mix which emphasizes organ and glockenspiel over guitar.

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:** Bruce called the song "Loose End" on an early handwritten lyric sheet.

#### 7. Living on the Edge of the World

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** December 7, 1979

**HISTORY:** This track explodes the myth that all of the *Nebraska* material poured out of Springsteen's pen in late 1981 and early 1982. On November 28, 1980, a performance of "Ramrod" included some lyrics that would later be used in "Open All Night," but "Living on the Edge of the World," cut with the E Street Band in late 1979, is the real eye-opener. Two years later he would transplant four of these verses into "Open All Night," only leaving behind a light-hearted chorus about trying to make a connection to a girl. Musically, the song is yet another *River*-sessions foray into power pop; rockabilly would replace pop as the genre of choice when Bruce next convened the E Street Band for *Born in the U.S.A.* During acoustic home demo sessions for his sixth album in 1981, Bruce attempted this song in the musical style of "Used Cars" and weaved in two lines he would later use to open "This Hard Land."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "If you have a good line, you don't like to throw it—you don't write that many. If I came up with a line that I liked I always tried to use it because writing was hard and, for one reason or another, things would begin here and end up there."

—MOJO interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Bruce took these verses, wrote several more and threw out the chorus entirely to create "Open All Night"; identical lines also appeared in "State Trooper."

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:** Springsteen's hand-written song lineup for *Nebraska* pictured in *Songs* calls the rewritten version "Wanda (Open All Night)."

#### 8. Wages of Sin

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 10, 1982

**HISTORY:** A yearning, moody burner from the early *Born in the U.S.A.* sessions, and a beautifully restrained performance by the E Street Band. Springsteen's first attempts at the song in acoustic demo form were upbeat and along the same musical lines as "Glory Days." But the tone would shift dramatically, and Bruce knew what mood he wanted by the

time the E Streeters got hold of the song. Imagine the dramatically different album that would have resulted had Bruce opted for songs like "Wages," "Murder Incorporated," "Frankie," and "This Hard Land." One more example of Springsteen's lost relationship songs.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "That was a real find. I forgot I wrote it. It may have been one of those songs that cut too close to the bone at the time, so I put it to the side. [Laughs] It was actually cut for *Born in the U.S.A.* What happens is very often you have your own personal sensitivities about a particular piece of music or you may be uncomfortable with the way you've sung or what the song is about and you steer away from that a little bit, and I think that's what happened on that one."

—Los Angeles Times interview, 1998

## 9. Take 'Em as They Come

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** April 10, 1980

**HISTORY:** One of the first *River* outtakes to circulate among collectors, though the final verse heard on *Tracks* is different from the long-circulated version. Like "Restless Nights" (recorded the very next day), "Take 'Em" matches a blistering E Street performance with another "wide awake dream" lyric. The song's greatest moment may be its false ending, as Max Weinberg keeps the beat going when the band drops out, only to have them kick back into a memorable reprise. Garry Tallent uses the song's conclusion to pay homage to Paul McCartney, playing a part reminiscent of the Beatles' "Rain."

## 10. Be True

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** July 21, 1979

**HISTORY:** A romantic tale rife with cinematic metaphors and originally slated for inclusion on *The Ties That Bind* in 1979, "Be True" was relegated to the B-side of "Fade Away" in the U.S. ("Sherry Darling" overseas) for its eventual release in 1981. The *Tracks* remix sounds essentially identical to the B-side. The song received one live airing on the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour (Landover, MD, August 26, 1984) before becoming a cornerstone of the *Tunnel of Love* Express tour set lists (U.S. legs) in 1988. A live version of "Be True" from Detroit, MI, March 28, 1988 was released on singles for "Tougher Than the Rest" and on the *Chimes of Freedom* EP.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Well, it's partly about romance. Any piece of work can be looked at through a lot of different veils. Talking about that particular song I'd say, 'Yeah it seems to be a romance song'—what this fellow's doing, he's trying to say, Hey, don't sell yourself cheap. It's saying be true to yourself in some fashion. He's talking to a woman he's interested in but actually that's a device to address, just how do you find yourself through the falseness of some of those things and not sell yourself short and try to get the most out of yourself? In that particular song I think there's a lot of cultural metaphors whether it's in the films or whatever, but I suppose that's what that song was about.... At the time, maybe I was [conscious of that layering.] The scrapbook's filled with pictures of all your leading men, so baby don't put my picture in there with them.' You're saying, 'Don't lock me into this particular box, I wanna reach you in a different way maybe, if I can find it within myself. It's a love song, and then it's a dialogue on remaining true to the things that are important. Good songs work on many different levels; that's what makes them good, that's what makes them last. The other thing was I was trying to write something that was really catchy, a three-minute pop tune, that moved lyrically, that linked together in a certain way. And I was having fun using the film metaphor. To me it almost sounds like it was a hit single; it never was but it feels like one—it's accessible, the singer is open, he's revealing something about himself and he's asking the person he's addressing to do the same and trying to lay out terms for a relationship of some sort. And it all happens in about three minutes and Clarence plays the sax at the end and the glockenspiel plays that riff and it's just light and sort of sweet."

—MOJO interview, 1998

"['Be True' and 'Roulette'] should have been on *The River*, and I'm sure they would have been better than a couple other things that we threw on there."

—Rolling Stone interview, 1988

## 11. Ricky Wants a Man of Her Own

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as July 16, 1977 in the *Tracks* booklet, but this is clearly a typo as the song is a known *River* outtake and the '77 date would also make the studio The Record Plant and not The Power Station (Neil Dorfsman

wouldn't get recording credit either). Assume this should be July 16, 1979, in the middle of the *River* sessions.

**HISTORY:** Another slice of *River* session pop (the light romance variety) about a little girl getting all grown up. The *Tracks* version, a different take from the long-circulating outtake, features two new lines in the second-to-last verse as "Daddy's pullin' out his hair, he says, 'The girl ain't got no direction/She don't care to bring her boyfriends home to pass Daddy's inspection'" is replaced by: "She used to like me to take her to a ball game or a movie show/She used to make daddy take his little girl where she wanna go."

## 12. I Wanna Be With You

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 31, 1979

**HISTORY:** First recorded for *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, and later re-cut during the *River* sessions when Springsteen's power-pop obsession was at its peak. In title alone, the song is an homage to the Raspberries, whose own song of the same title is the opening track of their debut album. Vocally, Bruce has never sounded more exuberant.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "It was a funny time, cause I'd gotten into Woody Guthrie for the first time. I'd come off *Darkness* and felt I'd really found the characters and the type of writing that I wanted to do. But one of my favorite records that summer was The Raspberries' *Greatest Hits*: they were great little pop records, I loved the production, and when I went into the studio a lot of things we did were like that. Two-, three-, four-minute pop songs coming one right after another. So there was an extra album of those things that got left off, just because I wanted a record that balanced the two things that I was doing, that had a sense of continuity coming out of *Darkness* where you'd recognize the characters."

—MOJO interview, 1998

## 13. Mary Lou

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 30, 1979

**HISTORY:** Though not the best example of Springsteen trying the same lyrics with different music, presumably that's why *Tracks* sequences "Mary Lou" followed immediately by "Stolen Car" and "Born in the U.S.A.": three familiar songs presented in alternative recordings. Coincidentally, Springsteen uses the word "outtakes" in the "Mary Lou" lyrics. Interestingly, in a 1991 interview, Max Weinberg cited "Mary Lou" as one of three songs he'd pick for an unreleased Springsteen box set.

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:**

Two months later, Bruce would record the superior "Be True" with most of these lyrics intact. A third musical approach to these same words is also known from the *River* sessions, titled "White Lies" (AKA "Don't Do It to Me").

## 14. Stolen Car

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as July 26, 1979. Again, this conflicts with *The Ties That Bind* credits (which list September 24, 1979), but that may be the mixing date.

**HISTORY:** This alternate version (one of but two on the set) presents a completely different arrangement to the released *River* take, and two additional verses at the end carry the story line into a provocative dream sequence and stunning *denouement*. Like *Tracks*' other alternate take, the acoustic "Born in the U.S.A." which follows "Stolen Car," both versions of the two songs are masterpieces in their own right, but for different reasons. This "Stolen Car" is a cinematic tale told in a plaintive voice which rides Roy Bittan's majestic piano. When Elliott Murphy covered "Stolen Car," included on *One Step Up/Two Steps Back*, it was this version that he chose. The "Stolen Car" released on *The River* is more about loneliness and isolation, marked musically by the distant, detached sound of Danny Federici's organ, and sung with an almost palpable sense of detachment by Springsteen.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "'Stolen Car' was the predecessor for a good deal of the music I'd be writing in the future. It was inner-directed, psychological; this was the character whose progress I'd soon be following on *Tunnel of Love*. He was the archetype for the male role in my later songs about men and women."

—Songs essay on *The River*.

"['Stolen Car'] was the presentation of that particular guy, of somebody who was concerned with those ideas, for the first time: that if you don't connect yourself to your family and to the world, you feel like you're disappearing, fading away. I felt like that for a very, very long time. Growing up, I felt invisible. And that feeling is an enormous source of pain for people.

To make your life felt, it doesn't have to be in some big way; maybe it's just with your family and with the job, the basic things you live for. So to have somebody who could feel himself slipping away from all that, and who didn't know what to do about it, that idea was related to the heart of almost all my music. The struggle to make some impact and to create meaning for yourself and for the people you came in touch with."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

## 15. Born in the U.S.A.

### RECORDING LOCATION:

Thrill Hill Recording, Colts Neck, NJ

### RECORDING DATE:

January 1982

**HISTORY:** Springsteen's misunderstood anthem can be traced back to multiple sources of inspiration: Ron Kovic's book *Born on the Fourth of July*; his friendship with Vietnam vet Bobby Muller which led to the August 1981 benefit gig in Los Angeles; Jimmy Cliff's song "Vietnam," which was presumably included on the same best-of tape as "Trapped" that Springsteen purchased in an airport gift shop during the 1981 European tour; and Paul Schrader's film script of the same name, which was later re-titled *Light of Day*. Springsteen used a bit of Cliff's melody and his title as a starting point for a song about a Vietnam vet (two lines that would later open "Shut Out the Light" turn up in an early demo version of "Vietnam"). Though recorded along with the rest of the *Nebraska* songs, and presumably considered for inclusion on that album, Springsteen seems to have recognized early on that the song was meant to rock. At the 1986 Bridge School Concert and on the *Tom Joad* tour, he reclaimed the misinterpreted song by performing an acoustic arrangement closer to this original form (the *Joad* tour versions took an even bluesier approach). But the impact of the E Street Band-powered released take remains undeniable. "Over the years I've had the opportunity to reinterpret 'Born in the U.S.A.' many times in concert," he writes in *Songs*. "Particularly on the *Tom Joad* tour, I had a version that could not be misconstrued. But those interpretations always stood in relief to the original and gained some of their new power from the audience's previous experience with the original version. On the album, 'Born in the U.S.A.' was in its most powerful presentation. If I tried to undercut or change the music, I believe I would have had a record that might have been more easily understood, but not as good."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "You sent me the Paul Schrader script which I did not have a chance to read yet, but I did whip up this little ditty purloining its title....song should be done very hard rockin'. This song is in very rough shape, but is as good as I can get it at the moment & might have potential."

—Springsteen's summary of the *Nebraska* tape sent to Jon Landau as reprinted in *Songs*

"[Paul Schrader] wanted me to come up with some music for the film. But the script sat on my writing table until one day I was singing a new song I was writing called 'Vietnam.' I looked over and sang off the top of Paul's cover page, 'I was born in the U.S.A.'"

—*Born in the U.S.A.* essay in *Songs*

"I recorded this acoustic version, but then I started on *Born in the U.S.A.* almost as soon as I finished *Nebraska*, so that before either record was released I had an electric version of the song and the acoustic one. In the end, the electric one just seemed to make more sense. I think I was unsure if I had completely gotten it acoustically."

—*Los Angeles Times* interview, 1998

"When I went back and listened I realized that the reason I left it off *Nebraska* was partly because we'd already cut the band version, and this one I felt hadn't really nailed it. But it came off pretty well, when I went back and I listened to it."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

## 16. Johnny Bye-Bye

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Los Angeles, CA

### RECORDING DATE:

January 1983

**HISTORY:** The first of two songs on *Tracks* which originate from several months of solo recordings cut in the Hollywood Hills, about which very little is known. In the first few months of 1983, Springsteen transplanted himself to California and set up a recording studio in a converted garage. Unlike the four-track cassette deck used for *Nebraska*, the Hollywood set-up was a more professional eight-track recorder, which allowed Springsteen to, for the first time, complete an entire song, recording every part by himself with the help of a drum machine and keyboards. This elegy to Elvis Presley evolved from a *Darkness on the Edge of Town* outtake called "Let's Go Tonight" and was first performed on the European leg of the *River* tour, introduced as "Bye Bye Johnny." It is one of the few Springsteen songs with a shared songwriting credit; co-authorship goes to Chuck Berry, whose own song "Bye Bye Johnny" provided Bruce with his first two lines ("Well

she drew out all her money from a Southern Trust / and put her little boy on a Greyhound bus") and the core of his song structure. The title was turned around to "Johnny Bye Bye" for release as the B-side to "I'm on Fire" in 1985. The *Tracks* version differs from the released B-side and sounds for all the world like it is the original unaltered solo recording. It begins with a count-in not found on the 1985 issue, and lead guitar and keyboard overdubs heard on the end of the B-side have disappeared. Most significantly, the *Tracks* version uses a drum machine, which was replaced on the B-side by a simple snare, bass, and hi-hat part, presumably overdubbed by Max Weinberg circa 1984-85. Mighty Max still gets a credit for the song on the box set (as does Steve Van Zandt) but his live drumming is nowhere to be found.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "I cut ['Johnny Bye-Bye'] for a record after *Nebraska*. I enjoyed making *Nebraska* so much, I pursued it before I went back to making [*Born in the U.S.A.*], and I did a series of songs with a small, little rhythm section, but they were still basically acoustic. 'Johnny Bye-Bye' and 'Shut Out the Light' both came from sessions that I did in my garage in California. There was almost a whole record that I ended up not putting out, and these are the best things from that."

—*Los Angeles Times* interview, 1998

## 17. Shut Out the Light

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Los Angeles, CA

### RECORDING DATE:

January 1983

**HISTORY:** One of Springsteen's finest B-sides—for that matter, songs—and an appropriate story to put on the flip side of "Born in the U.S.A." in late 1984. The original version of "Shut Out the Light" included two additional verses which flesh out the story considerably and make an allusion to the main character's possible drug addiction—lying awake until morning in a back bedroom, "Just him and a few bad habits he brought back from over there." Springsteen cut out the verses for the released take heard here and on the single, making the song's story more universal. One of the more noticeable remixes of a released song, the *Tracks* version's vocal has much less reverb, and Soozie Tyrell's wonderful violin part is even clearer and up-front. Performed at 23 shows on the 1984-85 world tour, and resuracted for 11 solo acoustic sets in 1996.

**ED THACKER SAYS:** We all recall [Springsteen's] vocals as being very big and sitting in the track surrounded by reverb. But in several instances he asked me to make the vocal drier than they might have been 20 years ago; make them a little more personal. We weren't trying to recreate the past with this project; the songs and the music do that themselves."

—*Mix* interview, 1998

# 3

## 1. Cynthia

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

### RECORDING DATE:

April 20, 1983

**HISTORY:** Following the release of *Nebraska*, the E Street Band reconvened in the spring of 1983 to continue work on an electric, full-band rock record. The tone of the material from these April-to-September sessions is lighter than the May '82 sessions, as evidenced by this delightful tale of female appreciation and worship. Springsteen tried "Cynthia" at a snappier tempo and with a rockabilly flavor on his original demos of the song. Based on the musician credits, Steve Van Zandt was still involved in the sessions at this point. Curiously, Danny Federici does not play on the track.

## 2. My Love Will Not Let You Down

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

### RECORDING DATE:

May 5, 1982

**HISTORY:** One of the three earliest credited recordings from a three-week session during which a lot of the key *Born in the U.S.A.* period material was recorded. The unanswered question is whether it was during these sessions that electric versions of the *Nebraska* songs were attempted or if there was another full-band session to that end in early 1982 ("Lion's Den" dates from January '82, but appears to have been cut as part of the Gary U.S. Bonds *On the Line* sessions). If the former is true, then May was one of the most productive months in Springsteen history. According to the *Tracks* credits, "A Good Man is Hard to Find (Pittsburgh)" was recorded the same day as "My Love Will Not Let You Down." The next couple weeks brought "Wages of Sin," "This Hard Land," "Frankie," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Downbound Train," and one or two other songs released on *Born in the U.S.A.* According

to Marsh's book *Glory Days*, this song opened side two of Jon Landau's first suggested track sequence for the album.

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Shares several lines with 1979 outtake "Bring on the Night" on Disc Two of *Tracks*.

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:** *Glory Days* referred to the song as "My Love."

### 3. This Hard Land

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 11, 1982

**HISTORY:** An unexpected but welcome addition to *Tracks*, as Springsteen and the E Street Band re-recorded the song in 1995 and released it on *Greatest Hits*. This original version from 1982 has long been favored by fans (specifically for Roy Bittan's wonderful piano playing), and its inclusion here suggests Bruce has come around to this opinion as well. Springsteen would resurrect some elements of this story for "Seeds." The pacing and performance captured here and on "Frankie" show the E Street Band at its most effortless, sympathetically supporting their singer as he spins his dusty story.

**MAX WEINBERG SAYS:** "We recorded about 80 songs for *Born in the U.S.A.* Some of them are great. 'This Hard Land,' which didn't make it on the record, is just fantastic. That's probably my favorite song we've done."

—*Backstreets* interview, 1984

**BRUCE SAYS:** "'This Hard Land' has always been one of my favorites, and I don't understand how I could let it be unreleased for so long. I really wanted to write music about You, and Your friends, so that you really could feel it when you stood there among thousands of others in the audience. When people think back on their closest friends, the friends they had when they grew up, those friendships always go hand in hand with the music and all the strong feelings that the music brought, feelings which were even stronger if you shared them with somebody. It was an essential part of what rock 'n' roll was about and I really tried to write songs that captured that. 'This Hard Land' was one of those."

—*POP* (Sweden) interview, 1998

### 4. Frankie

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY.

**RECORDING DATE:** May 14, 1982

**HISTORY:** The only Springsteen song considered for three albums, "Frankie" was first performed live in April of 1976 and was assumed by many to point towards a cinematic-meets-romantic direction for Bruce's *Born to Run* follow-up. The song was cut early in the *Darkness* sessions, but didn't make the short list for the album. "Frankie" was resurrected with a few slight lyric variations five years later for *Born in the U.S.A.* in the version heard here. Had Springsteen chosen to release that album in the summer of 1983, "Frankie" would have likely made the cut, but by the spring of 1984, newer recordings bumped it off. In 1995, when the Springsteen camp was looking for previously unreleased recordings with which to augment *Greatest Hits*, the 1982 recording of "Frankie" was again considered. This time its seven-minute running time probably kept it off. Perhaps the best example on *Tracks* of a song Springsteen always favored but couldn't fit in.

### 5. TV Movie

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 13, 1983

**HISTORY:** Along with its close cousin "Stand on It," "TV Movie" is a lively rockabilly workout recorded during a short-lived jag into the genre Bruce took in the middle of the *Born in the U.S.A.* sessions (see Max Weinberg's comments below). The song was probably never seriously considered for the album, but it was perfect B-side material (we'll assume Bruce flipped a coin between this and "Stand on It") as a semi-serious pop-culture commentary wrapped in an appealing, old-fashioned rocker. Neither Danny Federici or Steve Van Zandt plays on "TV Movie" or "Stand on It." Clarence Clemons is credited on "TV Movie," but his saxophone parts virtually disappear in the *Tracks* remix.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "The way it came about was we were in the studio and someone was talking about some episode that had happened to them, and someone else said, 'Look out, man, they are going to make a TV movie out of you.' And that became kind of a running gag whenever anyone came in with a story. 'Hey, you are going to be a TV movie next week.' Then when I went to write about it, it became a mixture of things... That idea that your entire identity can be co-opted and twisted around and reinterpreted and then accepted as fact because it is the most visible presentation of yourself at a particular moment. It was a joke, but it had some ironic undertones."

—*Los Angeles Times* interview, 1998

**MAX WEINBERG SAYS:** "I remember one night when we were completely packed up to go home and Bruce was off in the corner playing his acoustic guitar. Suddenly the bug hit him, and he started writing these rockabilly songs. We'd been recording all night and were dead tired, but they had to open up the cases and set up the equipment so that we could start recording again at five in the morning. That's when we got 'Pink Cadillac,' 'Stand on It,' and a song called 'TV Movie.' Bruce got on a roll, and when that happens, you just hold on for dear life."

—*Rolling Stone* interview, 1989

### 6. Stand on It

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 16, 1983

**HISTORY:** Rockabilly numbers, take two. The most pleasant surprise about "Stand on It" is that the take included on *Tracks* is not the one released as the B-side to "Glory Days" in 1985. This one is longer, with an extra verse (bringing the story line back to the auto race), chorus, and full ending in the place of the original single's fade-out. One gets the feeling Springsteen could write two or three "Stand on It's" or "TV Movie's" a day if he were so inclined. In January of 1999, Springsteen told the Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* that he should have put "Stand on It," "This Hard Land" and "Frankie" on *Born in the U.S.A.* in place of "Downbound Train" and "I'm Goin' Down."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "A lot of my favorite rock performers were clowns. When you see Little Richard or the Coasters or Jerry Lee [Lewis], there was some element of that in all of them. I loved the desire to make your audience laugh on some level. Onstage I had the physical ability to incorporate that in what I did, but I found it a lot more difficult to write into my music. If I did come up with it, very often when I was making the final cut, that's what I'd leave off."

—*Los Angeles Times* interview, 1998

### 7. Lion's Den

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Power Station, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** January 25, 1982

**HISTORY:** At first glance, "Lion's Den" appears to be the earliest credited recording cut for *Born in the U.S.A.*, and it is possible that this January session was where the E Street Band gave the *Nebraska* songs an electric try. However, the more logical explanation is that the song was cut during sessions for Gary U.S. Bonds' second album, *On the Line*, which was recorded at the Power Station with *River* recording engineer Neil Dorfsman and co-produced by Springsteen and Van Zandt (though weirdly, Van Zandt gets no production or performance credit on the song; Dorfsman is credited). It is certainly easy to imagine Bonds singing this biblically themed ditty. If "Lion's Den" were a *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake, we would expect it to bear credits for the Hit Factory and engineer Toby Scott like the rest of the 1982-84 sessions. Another credit curiosity is the omission of Clarence Clemons. If *Tracks'* credits are to be believed, the prevalent tenor sax part on the song apparently isn't played by the Big Man, but was added by Mario Cruz when the Horns of Love (Cruz, Manion, Pender, Rosenberg, and Spengler) overdubbed their parts in 1998.



James Shrive Photo

**BRUCE SAYS:** "I should have put that out! Why didn't I put that out? It sounds like a hit now. The band is playing great and the horns come in and it has a great chorus. It was just too much fun to put out, I guess."

—*Boston Globe* interview, 1998

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:** Demo version was called "Daniel in the Lion's Den."

## 8. Car Wash

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 31, 1983

**HISTORY:** Previously unknown *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake and Springsteen's first known composition with a female narrator. Opens with the same "My name is" statement previously employed on "Highway Patrolman" and the *Nebraska* outtake "Losin' Kind." Springsteen's early '83 stint living in Los Angeles is reflected in the "Car Wash" lyrics, which specifically mention the "Astrowash on Sunset and Vine." For the record, "Astro" is a popular prefix for businesses in L.A. Bruce could have set his story at Astro Burger on Santa Monica Boulevard, Astro Liquor on Avalon Blvd., or Astro Pharmacy on Hollywood Blvd. "Pink Cadillac" was also cut this day.

## 9. Rockaway the Days

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** February 3, 1984

**HISTORY:** In *Songs*, Springsteen writes that he intended *Born in the U.S.A.* to take the songwriting approach of *Nebraska* and "electrify it." "Rockaway the Days," cut in the waning days of the *Born in the U.S.A.* sessions, is a good example of that approach, as it tells a *Nebraska*-style story (reminiscent of *The Ghost of Tom Joad*'s "Straight Time," as well as "Man at the Top" and "Shut Out the Light" in its final verse) above a lush musical bed that hints at the melody Bruce brought to "Seeds" in its 1986 Bridge School concert arrangement. "Dancing in the Dark" and "No Surrender" also date from these early '84 sessions.

## 10. Brothers Under the Bridges ('83)

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** September 4, 1983

**HISTORY:** Not so much an early version of "No Surrender" as previously believed, but a parallel, nostalgic story about teenage friendships and finding one's place in the world. Springsteen couldn't have put both songs on the same album because of their shared sentiment. Like "No Surrender," the E Streeters' elaborate arrangement gives the song an anthemic groove. A decade later, Springsteen would take this title, drop the final "s," and write a completely different song, "Brothers Under the Bridge," a *Ghost of Tom Joad* outtake recorded in May 1995 and now the closing track of *Tracks*.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "I didn't like 'Brothers Under the Bridges' musically, it sounded too much like something that I was done with, and I was pretty tired of writing lyrics about cars and highways. I wanted to move on. But as a young teenager I really looked up to these guys in 'Brothers Under the Bridges' that are present in every small town. They hung out on street corners with their flashy cars and I really thought that my dream was to be like them. This song takes place in 1963 somewhere in New Jersey, I guess, just before the Vietnam war became part of that town, when rock 'n' roll and the will to live like that, spending the whole weekend in your car, were very strong.... I wanted to be a part of it, but I was too young."

—*POP* interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** The final verse mentions "Signal Hill," presumably the same mythical place first named in the evocatively titled "Summer on Signal Hill," the sublime, Springsteen-penned instrumental released as a Clarence Clemons and the Red Bank Rockers B-side in 1983.

## 11. Man at the Top

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** January 12, 1984

**HISTORY:** Another late candidate for *Born in the U.S.A.* Springsteen performed the song in a simple and stunning, gospel-inspired arrangement twice on the 1984-85 tour. The studio version is faster and less majestic, but does provide a showcase for Clarence Clemons' saxophone. The wistful lyric, however, is no less moving. While Springsteen is still waiting for a single "in the number-one spot," by the end of 1984, he was truly the man at the top.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "There is a certain frightening aspect to having things you always dreamed were going to happen happen, because it's always more—and in some ways always

less—than what you expected. I think when people dream of things, they dream of them without the complications. The real dream is not the dream, it's life without complications. And that doesn't exist." —*Rolling Stone* interview, 1987

## 12. Pink Cadillac

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** May 31, 1983

**HISTORY:** Arguably the most successful of Springsteen's rockabilly creations in 1983, "Pink Cadillac" began life as the sparest of acoustic numbers when Springsteen recorded it for *Nebraska*. "Self-explanatory," wrote Bruce of the song in his notes to Jon Landau about the *Nebraska* material reprinted in *Songs*. In 1984, "Pink Cadillac" became the B-side to Springsteen's best-selling single ever, "Dancing in the Dark." No wonder it was such a fan favorite. Danny Federici is M.I.A. on this and the other '83 rockabilly numbers. Performed 95 times on the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, and once in 1996 with Melissa Etheridge. Also covered by Natalie Cole, Southern Pacific, and Carl Perkins among others.

## 13. Two for the Road

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** February 1987

**HISTORY:** Graduating from the four-track recorder he used on *Nebraska* and the eight-track recorder employed on the 1983 solo demos, Springsteen had a 24-track digital recording studio installed on his New Jersey estate in late 1986 or early 1987. This allowed him the flexibility to write and record simultaneously, even to bring in additional musicians, without ever having to enter a bricks-and-mortar recording studio. He had sought this kind of freedom for years. "I'd grown tired of expending so much energy in professional recording studios," Springsteen writes in *Songs* of his mindset following the River tour, "where I rarely got the right group of songs I was after without wasting a lot of time and expense. I found the atmosphere in the studio to be sterile and isolating...." He plays every instrument on the sweet "Two for the Road," a song which could be viewed as the sequel to "Two Hearts." Now that the character has found his "special one," he is pledging his commitment, something certainly on the mind of Springsteen, writing for the first time as a married man. "Two For the Road" was the B-side of "Tunnel of Love" in late 1987. Springsteen has to date not performed the song in concert.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "I set up my recording equipment above my garage in Rumson, New Jersey, and began demoing. I wanted to go back to the intimacy of home recording. I started to write about something I'd never written about in depth before: men and women. . . . I cut the songs like to a rhythm track, which provided the stability and the sense of a ticking clock. The passage of time was a subtext of my new stories. My characters were no longer kids. There was the possibility of life passing them by, of the things they needed—love, a home—rushing out the open window of all those cars I'd placed them in."

—*Songs* essay on *Tunnel of Love*

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** "When this world treats you hard and cold" is a minor rephrase of "Though the world turns you hard and cold" from "Two Hearts."

## 14. Janey Don't You Lose Heart

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** June 16, 1983

**HISTORY:** "Janey," the last song from the *Born in the U.S.A.* sessions on *Tracks*, was cut in June of 1983 with Steve Van Zandt on guitar and background vocals. Like "My Love Will Not Let You Down," this was also on side two of Landau's suggested track listing for *Born in the U.S.A.* When the song was being readied for release as the B-side to "I'm Goin' Down" in 1985, new E Streeter Nils Lofgren went into a studio and replaced Van Zandt's vocal track. Another likeable, mid-tempo rocker in the vein of "Be True," "Janey" has only appeared in concert twice, first on September 27, 1985 at the opening night of Springsteen's record-setting four-night stand at the L.A. Coliseum, and eight years later in the much smaller confines of the Count Basie Theater in Red Bank, NJ on March 23, 1993, at the warm-up show for the European tour.

**ERRATA:** *Tracks*' musician credits must be called into question with another omission of Clarence Clemons' name for a song on which he so obviously, and magnificently, plays.

## 15. When You Need Me

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** January 20, 1987

**HISTORY:** The earliest *Tunnel*-era recording on *Tracks*. "When You Need Me" is another declaration of love and commitment; like "Two for the Road," it is more black and white in its sentiment than most of the songs on the album, in which the nature (and future) of relationships is more ambiguous. With Max Weinberg the only credited drummer on the *Tunnel* LP, it is safe to assume that Gary Mallaber, long-time drummer for Van Morrison, recorded his drum part on "When You Need Me" relatively recently; that is likely the case as well with Soozie Tyrell's violin.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Both 'When You Need Me,' which once again borrowed a lot from both country and gospel, and 'Lucky Man' were very close to making it onto *Tunnel of Love*, but in the end it felt like the story I was trying to tell was complete, so they were left off."

—POP interview, 1998

## 16. The Wish

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** February 22, 1987

**HISTORY:** "The Wish" debuted at the Christic Institute benefit concert in Los Angeles, November 17, 1990, preceded by a long, touching introduction about what it means, psychologically, to write a song about your mother. This truly autobiographical story sweetly encapsulates Springsteen's relationship growing up with his mother (including the fateful day she took money ear-marked for bill-paying and bought Bruce his first guitar) and stands in stark contrast to the sometimes sobering portrait painted of his father in several songs. What makes this reminiscence so effective is its specificity and detail, the "pink curlers and Matador pants" that bring Adele Springsteen to life. Again, Gary Mallaber's drum part is presumably a recent addition. Bruce resurrected "The Wish" for 18 performances on the *Tom Joad* tour.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "That's a song I wrote for *Tunnel of Love*, and it's probably as directly autobiographical as I've ever gotten. That may be why it didn't get on the record. It was a combination of having recently gotten married and thinking about my mom. I wrote a lot about my dad at particular times, but she was also very central in my life. . . . Her attitude, the pride with which she always carried herself, the incredible sense of resiliency during extremely difficult situations: never having money, having to borrow to make it to the next month and then having to borrow again. I think at the time the album had taken a slightly different turn and there wasn't a place for it."

—Los Angeles Times interview, 1998

"It was a very divining moment, standing in front of the music store, with someone who's going to do everything she can to give you what you needed that night, that day, and having the faith that you were going to make sense of it—or not: that it was just what you needed and desired at the moment. It was a great sacrifice on her part. It was \$60, but that was finance company money. And so I finally got a song out about it. I gave it to her many years ago, but it's the first time it's been out on record."

—Charlie Rose interview, 1998

**ERRATA:** In the fourth verse of the lyrics printed in the *Tracks* booklet, "hatred" should be "hot rod."

## 17. The Honeymooners

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** February 22, 1987

**HISTORY:** Another previously unknown *Tunnel of Love* outtake, "The Honeymooners" was recorded the same day as "The Wish." Its story is basically 24 hours in the life of a young man getting married, moving from ceremony to reception to honeymoon night to morning after with the new in-laws. If there was any doubt that Springsteen recorded *Tunnel of Love* at home, it is dispelled at about 1:52 of "The Honeymooners," when the sounds of a barking dog and a car going by can clearly be heard.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Of course it's a true story. But it's not necessarily autobiographical. Not necessarily."

—POP interview, 1998

"I remember the night that I got married. I was standing at the altar by myself, and I was waiting for my wife, and I can remember standing there thinking, 'Man, I have everything. I got it all.' And you have those moments. But you end up with a lot more than you expected."

—Rolling Stone interview, 1987

## 18. Lucky Man

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** April 4, 1987

**HISTORY:** A late cut from *Tunnel of Love*'s final track list, "Lucky Man" strikes a distinct mood with its brooding rhythm

track, desolate guitar and portentous vocals. The song made for a stark B-side to "Brilliant Disguise" in 1987. Springsteen has not yet performed "Lucky Man" in concert.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "The loner is an archetype and just a deep part of the American character. Who were all those people who took off out West? Who were all those guys who took off on their own? It's that sort of a character type that's at the core of a lot of my characters who struggle. It manifested itself in some fashion on almost every record I make."

—Los Angeles Times interview, 1998

# 4

## 1. Leavin' Train

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Oceanway Studios, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** February 27, 1990

**HISTORY:** Another "men and women" song, the main theme that Springsteen carried over from the late '80s into his '90s work. "Leavin' Train" picks up on the motifs of suspicion and "lost faith" from *Tunnel of Love*, while resurrecting the old trick of mixing downbeat lyrics with upbeat music. The song title had circulated among fans after being registered for copyright on September 6, 1995. Though recorded some months after "Viva Las Vegas," Springsteen's first recording without the E Street Band, "Leavin' Train" has the same musician line-up: *Human Touch* mainstay Jeff Porcaro on drums, Ian McLagan of the Small Faces on organ, and Bob Glaub, a member of Jackson Browne's band from 1978-1992, on bass.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "We recorded a lot of music for the *Human Touch* record, and it was just in search of what I was trying to say. I knew I wanted to develop the ideas I'd written about on *Tunnel of Love*. I felt that was where I had something of value to communicate."

—Billboard interview, 1998

## 2. Seven Angels

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Oceanway Studios, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** June 29, 1990

**HISTORY:** With the clever songwriting device in "Seven Angels," Springsteen manages to capture in one song the conflict spread out across much of *Tunnel of Love*. Musically, this is one of the most accessible songs of the '90s outtakes, with the strong riff in the chorus giving way to a beautiful verse. On this and the remaining *Human Touch* sessions cuts on *Tracks*, the "band" is simply Springsteen and Roy Bittan, with others on hand as needed. Shawn Pelton, now a member of *Saturday Night Live*'s house band and a former bandmate of John Eddie, plays drums here. While the remainder of disc four is a quieter affair, the opening one-two punch of "Leavin' Train" and "Seven Angels" demonstrates that Springsteen is still drawn to writing loud rock songs.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Part of putting this set together was a way I felt like reconnecting myself to singing loud and playing loud. That's been a central part of my work since I started."

—Associated Press interview, 1998

"[*Human Touch*] took shape when Roy and I would play together in my garage apartment and make tapes of songs and arrangement ideas I came up with. Then we'd go into the studio and set up what essentially a two-man band. I would sing and play guitar; Roy would play keyboards and bass. Together we'd perform to a drum track. The two of us could create an entire band sound live in the studio. . . . Then musicians would come in and play to what we recorded, or we'd play with them and record the songs live."

—*Human Touch/Lucky Town* essay from *Songs*

## 3. Gave It a Name

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Rumson, NJ

**RECORDING DATE:** August 24, 1998

**HISTORY:** As he did in 1978's "Adam Raised a Cain," Springsteen invokes the biblical figures of Cain and Abel in this sketch of a legacy of violence and shame. Though recorded shortly before the release of *Tracks*, "Gave It a Name" was a *Human Touch* outtake re-recorded out of necessity—the only song on *Tracks* to be recreated from scratch.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "What happened is I cut the original at the time I cut these other songs, but we couldn't find the master tape of it, and I really liked the song. So Roy came out, and we recut it in August."

—Billboard interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Borrows the same lines as "The Big Muddy" from Pete Dexter's novel *Paris Trout*: "Poison snake bites you, you're poison, too."

## 4. Sad Eyes

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Soundworks West, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** January 25, 1990

**HISTORY:** Still another of the “men and women” songs, though an ambiguous and even somewhat ominous one. This “Sad Eyes” is unrelated to the live interlude in 1977-78-era “Backstreets” performances known to fans by the same name (the ‘70s “Sad Eyes” was actually an early version of “Drive All Night”). To fight writer’s block, as Springsteen explained in *Songs*, his work on *Human Touch* “began as an exercise to get myself back into writing and recording. I wrote a variety of music in genres that I had always liked: soul, rock, pop, R&B.” That kind of stylistic jump-start is more evident on some *Human Touch* songs than others; in this case, Springsteen told *Aftonbladet* that he was thinking of Dionne Warwick.

**BRUCE SAYS:** “What I started to do were little writing exercises. I tried to write something that was soul oriented. Or I’d play around with existing pop structures. And that’s kind of how I did the *Human Touch* record. A lot of it is generic, in a certain sense.”

—*Rolling Stone* interview, 1992

## 5. My Lover Man

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Soundworks West, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** December 4, 1990

**HISTORY:** Sounding nearly identical at first to “Brilliant Disguise,” this song soon reveals its own twist (if the title hadn’t already): Springsteen is writing in the first person from a woman’s point of view. While *Tracks* shows that he had done this before with “Car Wash,” that *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake was little more than a character sketch. “My Lover Man” is a full-blown relationship song, told from the other side. There has been speculation that the song was written for Patti Scialfa’s solo album *Rumble Doll*, though this has never been confirmed. In keeping with his writing exercises during this period, Springsteen also tried changing his approach in other ways, composing this and several songs on bass guitar.

**BRUCE SAYS:** “I wrote about half a record on the bass, where you had a note and you had your idea. The only one that made it to release was ‘57 Channels,’ but on this thing there was ‘Over the Rise,’ ‘When the Lights Go Out,’ ‘Loose Change,’ ‘Goin’ Cali,’ ‘Gave it a Name,’ even ‘My Lover Man,’ all these very psychological portraits of people wrestling with relationships and their own isolation.”

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

## 6. Over the Rise

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Soundworks West, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** December 7, 1990

**HISTORY:** Like “Leavin’ Train,” this song title has been on fans’ radar since being registered for copyright on September 6, 1995. Another of the sparse songs written on bass and recorded in the months following Springsteen’s stripped-down acoustic performance at the Christic Institute benefit concerts.

**BRUCE SAYS:** “Initially during *Human Touch*, I thought about putting out a record that was basically a bass, a synthesizer, and rhythm, and it created a very austere context for [the] songs to come forth in. I think that happens on ‘Over the Rise,’ ‘When the Lights Go Out,’ ‘Loose Change,’ ‘Goin’ Cali’.... They were experimental pieces, and they were away from the rock music I was making at the time.”

—*Billboard* interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** Though Springsteen hadn’t used it before, the title phrase appeared in multiple song lyrics from this period: “Lucky Town,” “Real World” and “Roll of the Dice.”

## 7. When the Lights Go Out

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Listed as The Record Plant, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** December 6, 1990

**HISTORY:** Until *Tracks*, “When the Lights Go Out” was the lost track from the Christic Institute benefit concerts. Performed on both nights, November 16 and 17, 1990, it was one of six new songs debuted at the Shrine Auditorium. For an event benefitting an organization that acts as a government watchdog, this may have been the set’s most appropriate selection: Springsteen dedicated the song to “the people at the Christic Institute, who watch what’s going on when the lights go out.” The song was conspicuously absent from *Human Touch*, but three others which debuted at the Christic gigs made it to that album. By late 1995, when “The Wish” turned up in several *Tom Joad* tour set lists, five of the six had resurfaced in one way or another. Recorded just three

weeks after the Christic shows, “When the Lights Go Out” had, perhaps, arrived too early (is it a coincidence that a majority of the outtakes presented on the box set from *Darkness, The River*, and *Born in the U.S.A.* date from early in the sessions for their respective albums?), but with *Tracks*, all six of the songs debuted at the Christic shows have now been officially released. In the studio, Springsteen changed the bridge from third person to second, so that the person coming home late at night is no longer “Billy,” but “you.”

## 8. Loose Change

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Record Plant, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** January 31, 1991

**HISTORY:** Another song written on bass. A series of encounters tied together with a one-line chorus—“loose change in my pocket”—but Springsteen has since made the song’s meaning explicit: the character’s connections with other people wind up meaning nothing more than a handful of pennies and nickels. If this song is a descendant of “Stolen Car,” the last verse serves as a close-up of “waitin’ on that little red light” and places “Loose Change” among Springsteen’s most chilling tales of isolation.

**BRUCE SAYS:** “With ‘Stolen Car’... being able to have an intimate life, [that’s] something that’s essential to filling out your life. He was the guy that started the rest of that idea—the things that I wrote with the bass, whether it’s the guy in ‘Goin’ Cali’ or the guy in ‘Loose Change’ that no matter what he touches it just becomes loose change in your pocket. That’s something that everybody has to learn, to find their way through.”

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

## 9. Trouble in Paradise

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Soundworks West, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** December 1, 1989

**HISTORY:** In the late fall of 1989, as the story goes, Springsteen contacted the members of the E Street Band to let them know that he was going to try recording and touring without them. “Trouble in Paradise,” recorded shortly after the E Street “breakup” and the earliest *Human Touch* outtake on the box, is perhaps understandably the least musically successful. Shortly after the news broke, Nils Lofgren told *Rolling Stone*: “Right now he’s just a little... he’s searching. He’s allowed to be confused. He specifically said, ‘I’m just gonna do some experimenting and try recording some songs with some different players.’” Randy Jackson and Jeff Porcaro, who played on this track, would remain at the core of the musicians on *Human Touch*. Lyrically, the song hews close to *Tunnel of Love* territory, moving slightly beyond the suspicion of “Brilliant Disguise” to look back at a relationship in ruins, interspersing seeds of its demise with “storybook” scenes of domesticity. “Trouble in Paradise” joins “Real World” and “Roll of the Dice” as songs co-written by Roy Bittan, one of only two cuts on *Tracks* with a shared songwriting credit (the other being “Johnny Bye-Bye”).

**BRUCE SAYS:** “One day in L.A. Roy Bittan played me a couple of pieces of music that he’d written. I had never collaborated with another songwriter on any of my other records. I was looking for something to get me going; Roy was enthusiastic and had good ideas. He soon joined the production team of *Human Touch*, with Jon [Landau] and Chuck [Plotkin].”

—*Human Touch/Lucky Town* essay from *Songs*



Debra L. Rothenberg Photo

"Throughout '88 and '89, every time I sat down to write, I was just sort of rehashing. I didn't have a new song to sing. I just ended up rehashing *Tunnel of Love*, except not as good."

—*Rolling Stone* interview, 1992

## 10. Happy

**RECORDING LOCATION:** A&M Studios, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** Listed as January 18, 1992, but more likely January 18, 1991.

**HISTORY:** The only other song recorded at A&M Studios on *Tracks* is "Goin' Cali," which was recorded a year earlier and suggests that this recording date could be a typo. If "Happy" was actually recorded on January 18, 1992, rather than 1991, it may be the only song on the box *not* recorded specifically for an album. The *Lucky Town* sessions took place in the fall and winter of 1991; by January 1992, it would have been too late for this song to be considered for *Lucky Town* or *Human Touch* as the press release announcing both albums, complete with track lists, hit within two weeks of the credited recording date for "Happy." Regardless, the song seems to serve as a summation and distillation of Springsteen's state of mind at the time. As he told *Rolling Stone* in 1992: "I've struggled with a lot of things over the past two, three years, and it's been real rewarding. I've been very, very happy, truly the happiest I've ever been in my whole life. And it's not that one-dimensional idea of 'happy.' It's accepting a lot of death and sorrow and mortality. It's putting the script down and letting the chips fall where they may."

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** With "Let's shed our skins and slip these bars," "Happy" shares imagery with the similarly themed "Living Proof." But lines like the opening couplet "Some need gold and some need diamond rings/Or a drug to take away the pain that living brings," turn up more directly in "My Beautiful Reward."

## 11. Part Man, Part Monkey

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Soundworks West, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** January 1990

**HISTORY:** While this recording is an outtake from *Human Touch*, "Part Man, Part Monkey" was a staple of the *Tunnel of Love Express* tour, debuted on opening night (Worcester, MA, February 25, 1988). Live, the song incorporated Mickey and Sylvia's "Love Is Strange," with Bruce calling, "Sylvia! How do you call your loverboy?" and Patti Scialfa cooing her response. Alumnus David Sancious returned to play keyboards in the studio, but the modern E Street Band's live experience with the song wasn't put to use: this take, also featuring Omar Hakim on drums, was recorded shortly after the band's breakup. The "some poor sucker" of the opening line is John T. Scopes, prosecuted in July 1925 for teaching evolution. Springsteen sometimes mentioned a TV movie based on the Scopes Monkey trial, starring Jason Robards and Kirk Douglas, in his introduction to the song on the *Tunnel* tour. While films have often inspired his songwriting, the movie in question didn't air until March 20, 1988—almost a month after the song's debut. The made-for-TV *Inherit the Wind* was, however, a remake of Stanley Kramer's classic 1960 film of the same name, which may be the original inspiration for this amusing take on man's animal nature—with the narrator as "living proof" of Darwin's theory. First officially released in 1992 as a B-side to "57 Channels (and Nothin' On)."

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Now there's them's that believe that we came from Adam and Eve, and then there's them's that, um... like this."

—concert introduction, May 3, 1988

## 12. Goin' Cali

**RECORDING LOCATION:** A&M Studios, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** January 29, 1991

**HISTORY:** In 1992, Springsteen talked to *Rolling Stone* about his move to Los Angeles: "I've always felt a little lighter out here. I've had a house in the Hollywood Hills since the early '80s, and I'd come out here three, four months out of the year. I always remember feeling just a little lighter, like I was carrying less." One year earlier, he had captured that feeling in this story of moving out west, where the narrator arrives and finds a bar: "Bartender said 'Hey, how's it hangin', tiger?'/He had a shot of tequila, smiled and whispered 'lighter.'" While the driving bass line brings to mind "57 Channels," the song is clearly more personal, talking of his parents making the same trip to California in 1969, and of finding peace in a new place with a new family. If there were any doubt, Springsteen has said that the song is indeed autobiographical.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "Yes, that's me.... 'Goin' Cali,' I suppose, was just an experimental thing I laid down in the studio one day: I don't even remember recording it or how it came about,

but it traces, ironically, my journey at that time out West."

—*MOJO* interview, 1998

**LYRIC CROSS-CHECK:** "A little while later a son come along" harkens back to "Spare Parts," but Springsteen took that image of new life, put it at the beginning of a song and created something new altogether when he raided this *Human Touch* sketch for *Lucky Town*'s superior "Living Proof" later in 1991. The latter song reworked lines like "It could burn out every trace of where you been" and "So he pulled his heart and soul down off the shelf/ Packed them next to the faith that he'd lost in himself."

## 13. Back in Your Arms

**RECORDING LOCATION:** The Hit Factory, New York, NY

**RECORDING DATE:** January 12, 1995

In a documentary with plenty for Springsteen fans to gawk at, this song was the primary attention-grabber. *Blood Brothers* captured the E Street Band's studio reunion at the Hit Factory in 1995, where "Back in Your Arms" and several other new songs were recorded for *Greatest Hits*. The song was seriously considered for the album, but unlike every other new recording seen in the film, it was not issued on either *Greatest Hits* or the subsequent *Blood Brothers* EP. The documentary didn't present a complete version of the song; Tracks not only serves up the song whole, it offers a completely different take. Springsteen's impassioned vocal has been toned down a bit, while more prominent organ and background vocals have been added. Roy's piano solo has been removed, but the piano swells nicely at the end to join Clarence's sax solo. As the only representation of the E Street Band on disc four, it's a powerful demonstration of their balance of soul and restraint.

**JON LANDAU SAYS:** "He cut a version of this by himself for the project he was working on for the last year or so, and it's a terrific version of it, but it always felt sort of like it could really be a great band song. And we're trying to get it right."

—*Blood Brothers*, 1995

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:** *Blood Brothers* titled the song "Back in Your Arms Again."

## 14. Brothers Under the Bridge

**RECORDING LOCATION:** Thrill Hill Recording, Los Angeles, CA

**RECORDING DATE:** May 22, 1995

**HISTORY:** The only outtake to be released from *The Ghost of Tom Joad* album sessions, "Brothers" debuted on the first leg of the *Joad* tour, on December 16, 1995 in Boston. The title was familiar as a *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake, but *Tracks* confirms that the title is the only commonality. Paired nightly from that point on with "Born in the U.S.A."—and occasionally with "Shut Out the Light" as well—"Brothers" became part of a bigger tale of veterans returning home from Vietnam. In performance, perhaps as part of a continuing effort to reduce the number of "Billy"s in his songs, Bruce changed the character from Billy Devon to Jimmy Devon.

**BRUCE SAYS:** "This is a song set in the San Gabriel Mountains, a mountain range in between the San Fernando Valley and the Mojave Desert, just outside of Los Angeles. Los Angeles is a funny town, because you can go about 25 minutes east, and you hit the foothills of these mountains. And you'll go for 100 miles and there might be one little store. There's a little town up around 7,000 feet, and the rest is just pines, takes you down the other side into the desert. There was a group of homeless Vietnam vets that had left L.A. to set up a camp, a camp out there in the mountains. This is a story about one of them who has a grown daughter that he's never seen, and she grows up, and she comes looking for her dad. And what he tells her."

—concert introduction, April 24, 1996

**ALTERNATE SONG TITLE:**

Springsteen regularly introduced the song on tour as "Brothers Under the Bridges."

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*Backstreets* is grateful for the insights provided by recent interviews with Bruce Springsteen, which made the scope of these liner notes possible. *MOJO* magazine's in-depth interview with Springsteen, conducted by Mark Hagen and published in the January 1999 issue, was essential to this project, and we refer you to that issue for the complete interview. Thanks also to articles and interviews by Robert Hilburn in the *Los Angeles Times*; Melinda Newman in *Billboard* (11/7/98); Steve Morse in the *Boston Globe* (11/20/98); Larry McShane for the Associated Press; Dan Daley in *Mix* magazine (January 1999); *POP* magazine (Vol. 2, No. 7); and the *Charlie Rose* program on PBS.

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