

## Mp3 Brad Creel - Reeveled



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Highly original folk, bluegrass, and country to make you laugh, cry, and laugh again. 12 MP3 Songs

FOLK: Alternative Folk, COUNTRY: Bluegrass Show all album songs: Reeveled Songs Details: Before

Brad Creel began creating smart and funny folk music, he was churning out smart and funny cartoons.

Like the music he would later write, Brads comics have a friendly immediacy, a punch-in-the shoulder freshness and a big dose of self-deprecation. Brads songs will make you laugh, shed a tear, and be glad to be where you are. Heartbreak drove Brad to turn to the uncharted waters of songwriting in 2000.

Coping with a tough divorce, he found new meaning in the work of classic tears-in-your-beer country singers like Tom T. Hall, Merle Haggard, and Conway Twitty. He was moved by the way classic country songwriters tempered their sorrows with upbeat melodies, creating what he calls dark music with a happy sound. Inspired, Brad began hosting acoustic jam sessions and devouring the Portland Public Librarys collection of Americana music. He developed a body of narrative-based country, bluegrass and folk songs, balancing tongue-in-cheek lyrical fun with an undertone of complexity and raw emotion. As his listening expanded beyond his honky-tonk heroes, Brads music took on an additional, whimsical flavor reminiscent of cosmic jokers like John Prine, Loudon Wainwright III, and Todd Snider. Through his bustling musical social life, Creel found friends in the worlds of sound engineering and music production, and a team was born. Work began in 2004 on his debut record. Creels music attracted some of the best musicians in Portland to contribute, including session maven Tim Ellis on guitar, Three Leg Torsos Bla Balogh on fiddle, local legend Peter Schwimmer on banjo, Eric West on pedal steel and Higher Ground leader Alan Glickenhause on mandolin. Producer Vicki Ambinder also enlisted fiddle legend Darol Anger (Yonder Mountain, Tony Rice, Bela Fleck). Brads wheels are hitting the ground hard in 2008. He is having the CD release party this winter, followed by an acoustic tour to support it. Brad is currently performing as

a solo act, a duo, and with a band whose members include Lincoln Crockett, Chris Kokesh, and Andy Lohr. Brad and his band will be performing in venues throughout the Northwest. The following is Brad's story of how each song came to be:

1. **WHAT WE AINT** This song came about from the idea that we think we're not as great or important as the famous people we adore and idealize, yet we have something special that they can never have. I invited my longtime friend Harris Ambinder over to my house one evening and told him about this concept for a song. I came up with the first two lines, I can't write like Richard Thompson and I can't pick like Doc Watson (because I can't and always wanted to). Harris cleverly came up with the next two lines and the hook, What I got that they ain't got is you. My producer Vicki Ambinder (yes, she is married to Harris) and I decided to make What We Aint the first song on the CD after Darol Anger agreed to play the fiddle part. Vicki wanted to achieve a live sound on this particular track and initially I protested, but after listening to it three million times, I think she did a great job.

2. **ROAD OF DESPAIR** I honestly can't remember why I wrote this song, but it is one of my favorite songs to sing because I can really work the vocal dynamics and have fun with it. People often comment on Eric West's peddle steel playing. It's perfect and really warms up the whole song. It was Vicki's idea to add the djembe (Zach Barjona) which gave the tune some real movement, like driving at 60 mph over evenly-spaced frost heaves. This song represents my alter ego, and I enjoy getting in touch with the character-free-wheeling, driving down the open road with no cares, wind blowing in my hair especially since I'm bald.

3. **WHEN I'M WITH HER I SEE YOU** I wrote this song after Vicki and I decided to make the CD together, so it wasn't in the original line-up. I was bingeing on the late, great Conway Twitty at the time, and I remember that I wanted to write a song just like him. The tune hit me like a ton of bricks when I asked out a woman and suddenly saw the face of another woman on her face. It was a very strange, powerful moment and one worthy of song. When I'm With Her is special simply because Bla Balogh did such a great job on the fiddle part. I'll never forget the tears streaming down his face during the solo and he captured the feeling beautifully.

4. **CAVEMAN SONG** I wrote this song years ago and never quite took it seriously. I always played it at bluegrass jams just to crack people up, and I didn't even think it deserved to be on the CD. Vicki convinced me that it was a fun tune and we should record it straight-up bluegrass style. Ironically, it turned out to be one of my favorite songs on the CD. Listen to Peter Schwimmers banjo opening to see if it reminds you of anything familiar. By the way, Pete is a musical genius.

5. **ME AND GILLIAN WELCH** My friends call this the stalker song. I remember writing this tune after seeing Gillian at

the Bagdad Theater. It was one of those songs where the pen pulls your hand across the page. I probably wrote the whole song in ten minutes, and its definitely my most requested song when I play live. Vicki and I initially wondered if the fiddle and mandolin solos should be as long as they are (making the song almost six minutes), but then we realized that Gillians songs are all pretty long, so we kept the solos. I actually met Gillian Welch once after a show at the Crystal Ballroom, but youre going to have to see me perform live to hear the story of what happened!

6. DOWN AT THE BAR This is probably my second-most requested song. Boy, did we have fun recording this one. We jammed a bunch of my friends into a studio and just pressed record well, actually, it wasnt that easy. I wrote this one when a girlfriend was always complaining about how I wasnt good enough. So I thought to myself, well, you might not think Im rich, handsome, or tall, but there are probably other women out there who might think I am and a song was born! This is a great number to perform at bars when everyone is in the drinking mood. I quit drinking about six months after penning this tune, but I always enjoy getting in touch with my inner drunk when I play it live.

7. SONG ABOUT NOTHING My friend Alison Crosby likes to call this one Song for the Single Person, because thats exactly what it is. I wrote it after seeing a movie about a broken heart and then coming home to an empty house and washing the dishes. I never meant the song to be preachy, but people have said that it has a Buddhist twist to it. I like how Vicki only allowed Albert Redas bass to come in late during the song and leave early. Ill never forget watching Albert play this. The guy was moving all over the place with his eyes closed, just totally getting into it.

8. DEAR JESUS I wrote this one years ago when I was leaving my therapists office, and he mentioned to me that he saw this funny bumper sticker on the way to work that said, DEAR JESUS PLEASE PROTECT ME FROM YOUR FOLLOWERS. I guess this makes the song part of the bumper sticker genre. People really laugh when they hear this one, and it really rocks when my band plays it live. The fiddle intro to the song was written by Vicki. She hummed the parts to Bla and he interpreted her humming noises. It was fun watching them figure it out.

9. I DID IT FOR SOME REASON I wasnt sure if I wanted to record this tune, simply because its so self-deprecating (even though thats part of my shtick). But now when people ask me why I chose to include this song on the CD I say, Well, I did it for some reason. The phrase comes, again, from my therapist, who pointed out that I always said it while trying to explain my actions. The verses about stealing stuff at the office and waking up with my underwear on my head are made up (sorry to disappoint). The last verse is true, though.

10. YOUR WELLS ARE RUNNING DRY I wrote this song

while running in Forest Park. I actually wrote most of my songs while running in the woods. I'd get in touch with the rhythm of my stride and then put words to it. This one came to me like a bolt of lightning, so I sprinted back to my van in the parking lot, opened up my glove box, and scribbled the words of the song on the back of my DMV registration so I wouldn't forget them. My friend Lincoln Crockett sings backup vocals on this one, and he was able to nail it in a few takes. Now when I sing this live with Lincoln I always think about that day in the studio, because his vocals were the last tracks we recorded for the CD, and it took us two years to get to that point from when I first started recording.

11. WERE BEFORE This song came about when I got divorced and moved into an empty house in the middle of the winter (talk about depressing). Actually, Were Before means a lot to me because it started me down the path of writing songs. At the time, I found that writing had a healing quality, and creating many of these songs helped me get through some tough times. Tim Ellis came up with the cross-picking guitar arrangement, and he really captured the feeling of the song. In addition to being a top notch guitar player, Tim is also really funny and a great storyteller. He had us cracking up regularly throughout the recording session.

12. INTO THE DUST I love Tim's guitar work and, especially, Alan Glickenhauss mandolin solos on this song. This tune was written while I was driving out to eastern Oregon to, well, visit a friend. It's sort of a breakup song, even though I wrote it before we actually broke up. Nothing like trying to stay ahead of the game. Vicki does a nice job on the backup vocals on this one, as she does with all the backups throughout the CD. I definitely owe a lot to the people behind the scenes, but especially to Vicki, who arranged all the songs, found all the musicians, and took the time to make my dog Mazama feel welcome in the recording studio.

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