MUSIC'S BEEN A FRIEND TO ME

THE SINGER:
Music's been a friend to me
A lover and a family
Something to believe in
Music is my friend
Mom and Dad were always fighting
She was crying, he was leaving
I'd keep trying to get through
But there was no one to get through to
So I'd go up in the attic
write a poem, sing a song
I'd pretend up in the attic
Life was happy
Long as I was singing
Nothing was wrong

THE HORN PLAYER:
Music's been a friend to me
A lover and a family
Something to believe in
Music is my friend
Kansas City 1961, poor as dirt and not much fun
Except when I'd sneak out at night, to hear my Daddy play
He'd always act like he was mad, but he'd always let me stay
There were times when Daddy'd disappear, then I'd walk until I'd hear
The sound of someone blowin', I could recognize his tone
Then I'd feel happy once again, how I loved that saxophone
I remember when my Daddy died, Momma never even cried
He didn't leave no money, but he left a memory
And I made up my mind that day, I'd grow up to be just like my Daddy

THE BASSIST:
I never fit in
I never connected
Kids my own age I rejected
Suspected there was something
More important than
Parties or dating
I took up the violin
And started creating
A world of vibrations, tones, colors, sensations

The music changed me
I felt a whole range of feelings I had
Never felt before
I wanted to growl and groan and soar
I wanted more
I was growing up, finding my way

And I learned I had something to say
That couldn't be said with a violin
That's when I fell in love with the bass
Twenty-five pounds of vibrating wood
Feels so good, feels so good

THE DRUMMER:
Corn batter cakes and pumpkin butter
Mama's in the kitchen again
Back in the Crescent City
Where the Mississippi River bends

North of Canal Street, Congo Square
Where the rhythm of life is in the air

Women
Dark skinned women
Drumming in the Baptist church on Sunday
I'd be sitting
Sitting and thinking
One day, one day
One day, one day
Magical, mythical rhythms around me
Demons and gods and spirits surround me
Calling the ghost of Marie Laveau
I can hear you drumming and I wanna follow

The heart of the world
The sound of the soul
Drumming connects me to
The whole
Universe
THE PIANIST:
Up at dawn, coffee on, feed the family
When they’re gone, do the laundry
Sweep the floor, never finished
Always one more chore
Nurse the baby, sing her a lullaby
And when she’s sleeping
I finally find some time in the day to play
My piano
That’s how it was not long ago
For those of you who didn’t know
Music’s been a friend to me
Another kind of family
Something to believe in
Music is my friend

— Diane Snow Austin, CMT

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