

Wild Mountain Skies

Words & Music by John Denver © 1983 all rights reserved



Wild Mountain Skies

Words & Music by John Denver © 1983 all rights reserved

G *C* *G*
He was born in the Bitterroot Valley in the early morning rain;
D
Wild geese over the water, heading north and home again.
G *C* *G*
Bringin' a warm wind from the south, bringin' the first taste of the spring,
D *G*
His mother took him to her breast and softly she did sing:

CHORUS:

G C D G
Oh, Montana, give this child a home.
G C D G
Give him the love of a good family and a woman of his own.
G C D G C
Give him a fire in his heart, give him a light in his eyes,
G D G
Give him the wild wind for a brother and the wild Montana skies.

G C G
His mother died that summer and he never learned to cry.
D
He never knew his father and he never did ask why.
G C G
He never knew the answers, that would make an easy way;
D G
But he learned to know the wilderness and to be a man that way.
G C
His mother's brother took him in to his family and his home.
D
Gave him a hand that he could lean on and a strength to call his own.
G C G
He learned to be a farmer and he learned to love the land;
D G
And he learned to read the seasons and he learned to make a stand.

CHORUS

G *C* *G*
On the eve of his 21^s birthday, he set out on his own.

D
He was 30 years and runnin' when he found his way back home.

G *C* *G*
Ridin' a storm across the mountains and an achin' in his heart;

D *G*
Said he came to turn the pages and to make a brand new start.

G *C* *G*
Now he never told the story of the time that he was gone.

G *D*
Some say he was a lawyer, some say he was a john.

G *C* *G*
There was something in the city that he said he couldn't breathe;

D *G*
There was something in the country that he said he couldn't leave.

CHORUS

G *C* *G*
Now some say he was crazy and some are glad he's gone.

D
But some of us will miss him and we'll try to carry on.

G *C* *G*
Giving a voice to the forest, giving a voice to the dawn;

D *G*
Giving a voice to the wilderness and the land that he lived on.

CHORUS 2X

History and Commentary

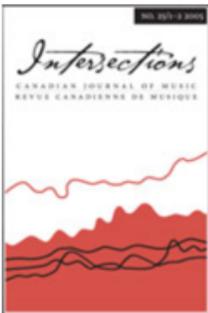
"**Wild Montana Skies**" was the single from John Denver's 1983 *It's About Time* album.

It contains the following dedication from John Denver: "This album is dedicated with great love and respect to the memory of my father, Lt. Col. (Ret.) H.J. "Dutch" Deutschendorf."

Wikipedia

'Wild Montana Skies' is not a genuine Momma 'n' Daddy song; it's just about a guy who comes to feel at home in the wilds of Montana. But in a crushing riposte by Sam Garroner (CJMP forthcoming)

Petna is shown to have overlooked the thematic complexity of 'Wild Montana Skies'. Garroner doesn't limit himself to pointing out that both the mother and the father of the child being sung about figure centrally in the early part of the song. He emphasizes the linked facts that it is the boy's momma who appeals for him to be given a home in the natural habitats of Montana and that she then promptly dies so that her lapsed parenthood immediately passes into that quarter ('he learned to know the wilderness'). In case there should be any further doubt about the song's meaning, we are told that the momma's appeal calls for her son to be given 'the wild wind for a brother'. Garroner's conclusion brooks no further quibble - and I quote - 'If his brother is to be the wind, his momma 'n' daddy surrogates can only be those wild Montana skies themselves, or if not them, then something quite as elemental, like the clouds, or rain, or snows, or rocks, or other stuff like that.'



Drummond Petna's footling objections, cause him to overlook the dialectical intelligence in the lines:

There was somethin in the city that he said he couldn't breathe

And there was somethin in the country that he said he couldn't leave

The contrasting attitudes to the city and the country are clinched by that final near-rhyme.



Photo from Fanpop

Canadian Journal of Musical Purism (Spring 2003, Volume XXXVIII, pp. 45-53) Dr D. Petna