

To the Artist

Jerry Jeff Walker

This song is a letter sung to a special friend of mine
One who stopped his singing somewhere back along the line
I wondered if he'd had enough of the rip-offs and the jive

Or did he sing his song one night and lose the will to write
It never was a business deal, this thing with your
guitar

It always seemed more a dance done deep inside your heart
Tonight I wonder if it's true, like we felt it at the start

That an artist truly does it best when he does it from the heart
It seems to be much more than an art when the art
you sell is you

Be careful how you play the game or else the game plays you
In the old days we'd stay up nights and laugh until
we cried

You said songs don't belong to us we just bring some thoughts to light
The rule of thumb is never give the truth
away to rhyme

And a man can't lie when he tries to sing it betrays him every time
We really write to understand more about ourselves

And if we're lucky maybe then we touch someone else
Well, I just got back from Europe friend where they hung
on every word

It made me feel a little better about my chosen line of work
They asked me if I knew you wrote a lot these days
I told 'em all I know is that you rarely ever play
We start out singing what we like and just give it all away
And wind up hating what we play and sit begging to be paid
So let me say in closing friend, I want you to know

I understand how hard it was to let your music go
An artist must decide which parts to leave in and take out
And if he no longer plays the game that's what the game's about

Songwriters

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