Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

1. **Since You Asked Me** (by Jan Krist)

Since you asked me, I’d say
Religion’s done some damage
For some it’s been a bandage
For some it’s been a blade

And since you asked me , I’d say
I’ve watched it covering its eyes
While cruelty’s justified
And indifference holds sway

And if you asked me, I would say
Love would bless the lost
Those suffering the cost
While mercy turns away

And I’ve been thinking for a while
There are forces in the dark
They are pulling us apart
And everybody pays

And I’ve been thinking for a while
The ones we’ve turned into the others
Are our sisters and our brothers
All reason’s been betrayed

What kind of blindness have we embraced
We bite the hands that feed us
Demand ransom from those who need us
And forsake all sense of grace

And I’ve been thinking for some time
The God we knew has been replaced
A golden calf put in God’s place
And truth was redesigned

And I won’t argue anymore
You can’t claim the higher ground
When you’re pushing people down
And barring heaven's door

What are we thinking, we can’t just pray
For God to bless those sacrificed
So guns could keep us warm at night
And darken all our days

I’ve been thinking
I've been praying
Since you asked me

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

2. **Hemingway's Wood** (by Jan Krist)

I was sitting on the galaxy watching stars fall
Trying my best to understand it all
My dad and brother were lost on the river
Didn’t know what news the search would deliver
Hope and fear bounded together
And hinged on what they’d find

In Hemingway’s wood
Beneath the Northern Crown
Sixty stars an hour falling down
The Milky Way breaking like a wave
And we're trying to be brave

Those were anxious hours wrestling the unknown
And it was deep in the night when the sheriff brought them home
And, my mom buckled up in tears of relief
From being so close to the edge of her grief
Even holding them close she couldn’t release
Her fear and just let go

In Hemingway’s wood
Beneath the Northern Crown
Sixty stars an hour falling down
The Milky Way breaking like a wave
And we're trying to be brave

Tonight we're watching the stars spin while the world stalls
Watching the hard times coming for us all
And, I feel like that kid on the galaxy ford
My whole world hanging by a fraying chord
No way to tell just what’s in store
Or if we can answer the call

In Hemingway’s wood
Beneath the Northern Crown
Sixty stars an hour falling down
The Milky Way breaking like a wave
And we're trying to be brave

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

3. **Praying for Rain** (by Jan Krist)

There are forty years of holidays
I could never scrub away
Old juice stains and crayon marks
Where grandkids colored paper hearts

Half our life’s been stored away
In cellars where it has to stay
The blankets and the old crochet
I'll live without it anyway

But here at my dining room table
The alter of the sacred mundane
I’m praying, I’m praying for rain

Coffee ring 'round linen rose
I’ll soak it later, I suppose
If the wind doesn’t blow and the bow doesn’t burn
It’s not really a big concern

A suitcase and my dad's guitar
Are ready to toss in the car
You know you can’t bring everything
May just be what your heart can bring

Here at my dining room table
Alter of the sacred mundane
I’m praying, I’m praying for rain

The tipping of the mercury
Heat pressing in unmercifully
There’s not a cloud up in the sky
The grass is brown, the sun is high

And, tere at my dining room table table
Alter of the sacred mundane
I’m praying, I’m praying for rain

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

4. **Nothing is Too Damn Hard** (by Jan Krist)

White noise, cold beer, hum and drum of the profiteer
Late news, early alarm, I'm feeling old but I've got my charm

On a worn couch, in a dark room on a cold night with a rose moon
Deep in shallows 'cause I’m trying hard to find my place at the sand bar

Some people wanna build a house, some people wanna build a home
Some people build communities so they don’t have to be alone
Me, I wanna build a world right here in my own yard
Where everything’s sacred and nothing is too damn hard

Tumble darks, bleached whites, Netflix on a date night, date night
Thick air, thin hope, world spinning like a gyroscope

Make peace, stand for reason, look for things I can believe in
Move the earth and plant the seed to grow a place where I can breathe

Some people wanna see the light, some people wanna breathe the dark
Some people wanna be the moon, steal the light of a blazing star
Me, I wanna build a place right here in my own yard
Where everything is sacred and nothing is too damn hard

Some people wanna shine the light, some people wanna lord the dark
Some people wanna live and let live unless those people are
Those people, you know who those people are

Me, I wanna build a world right here in my own yard
Whatever that means, we’ll just start from where we are
Me, I wanna build a world right here in my own yard
Where everything is sacred and nothing is too damn hard
It is too damn hard

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

5. **Bonus War, 1932** (by Jan Krist)

We may look ragged now, this loyal regiment
Fine sons of the great war who heard your call and went
To those God forsaken trenches, apocalyptic fields
Came home, the markets crashed and now we need that bonus deal

We hopped on trains and busses for Washington DC
Twenty thousand men marching in the streets
We camped out on the flats , raised our flag pole in that mud
Built a Hooverville of broken cars, news papers and rugs

We were not begging for a handout
We were not asking for a loan
Just give us what you owe so we can go

Tempers simmered in the streets 'til bricks and bullets flew
Then Hoover pulls the trigger, sends MacArthur and his troops
They came out of the darkness in a fog of smoke and flames
Filled the air with tear gas and drove us with their blades

We were not begging for a handout
We were not asking for a loan
Just give us what you owe so we can go

They found an infant in the ashes, our children bleeding in the streets
On silver screens across the nation and the people flocked to see
Then July gives way to August and October to November
People gave old Hoover a lesson he'd remember

We were not begging for a handout
We were not asking for a loan
Just give us what you owe
Just give us what you owe

We were not begging for a handout
We were not asking for a loan
Just give us what you owe, so we can go

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

6. **Hold On** (by Jan Krist)

You keep your troubles in a closet
Bad dreams underneath your bed
You been pushing through the heartache
Now it’s coming to a head

We’re not Thelma and Louise
I’m not driving off this cliff
You’re just a painter's wayward daughter
I’m that crazy friend your with

And it’s never perfect, but it’s okay
You just gotta keep your stubborn pride out of the way
And hold on
Hold on, hold on

There’s no trick to being human
Most people walk around
Draggin all their hopes behind them
Somewhere on the ground

So I brought some doctor Bronners
And some yellow rubber gloves
We’ll pull you back together
That’s just what love does

It’s never perfect, but that’ll be okay
You just gotta keep your stubborn pride out of the way
And hold on
Hold on, hold on

Now If your heart could use some mending
I’ll bring a needle and some thread
And a broom to sweep those dark dreams
From out under your bed

Hope needs a little faith
Faith needs a little trust
And it’s gonna be okay
If only we can just
Hold on, hold on
Hold on, hold on
Hold on

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

7. **Selfies** (by Jan Krist)

Send me a selfie of you
Wrapped in your blanket view
Doing all you can to resist the spring

Your magazines outdated
Your novels thumbed and faded
Drifting on the thoughts that you’ve been wrestling

Safe inside your tight cocoon
Your four walls will open soon
Take your time and sort it out
We’ll be here waiting for you

Here it's is oils and clays and watercolors
Sun setting on another
Day just like a thousand other ones before

Feels like the arctic here
Blue and white and cold and clear
Far from any place that ever felt like home

Safe inside your tight cocoon
Your four walls will open soon
Take your time and sort it out
We’ll be here waiting for you

TV news can get me down
I turn it off and walk around
And listen to the clutter of a quiet room

I brew a cup of lavender
Seems just the thing to cure
The melancholy hermitting in frozen gloom

Stay safe inside your tight cocoon
Your four walls will open soon
Take your time and sort it out
We’ll be here waiting for you

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

8. **Complicated** (by Jan Krist)

Mom in the basement smoking cigarettes
Drinking Vernors on the hottest day yet
Sprinkles water on a cotton dress
And it steams like a kettle with the iron on it

Mom in the kitchen making bacon and eggs
Three kids and a baby scrambling 'round her legs
Mom dressed up for the PTA
I’m tryin on lipstick from her dresser tray

Its complicated, complicated
These postcards stuck inside my head
These pictures that I can’t forget

Mom with a suitcase in her hand
Reminding dad that he’s a married man
Mom tearing out a cupboard with a litany
Saying, "You son of a bitchin kids are killing me."

Mom makin' the bed, me lyin there
Sheets floating down through the cool summer air
Hospital corners then it’s time to pray
Now I lay me at the end of my day

Complicated, complicated
These postcards stuck inside my head
These pictures that I can’t forget

She was strong in hard places
Only ever fell apart
When the storms were over
The clouds were partin'

She said I love you so strong, love you so deep
Whatever you ever think of me
In those postcards stuck inside your head
The things I did, the things I said
Do be kind, it’s complicated

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

9. **Black Sheep Boy** (by Jan Krist)

A friend of mine is burying her black sheep boy today
Beneath the sky of white and clouds of gray
Black dress and a limousine, cars flagged for his parade
A hearse to bear his body to the grave

She did all she could to keep him safe
She did all she could to change his fate

Coffee in her morning cup to pull her outta bed
To the voices of the living and the dead
A hundred thousand mothers mourn, she feels their grief today
In the ground where her little boy will lay

She did all she could to keep him safe
She did all she could to change his fate

Another friend is burying her own dear girl today
Despite the prayers she said and love she gave
And when her daughter laid that money down and found the perfect vein
She never knew how deep a hole that needle made

You do all you can to keep 'em safe
You do all you can to change this fate
You do all you can to keep 'em safe

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

10. **Mighty Hard Row** (by Jan Krist)

Sometimes I want to go back to bed
Find a way to turn off my head
Burry my heart and hide my face
Remember when my world felt safe

I turn my face to the window pane
I feel the sun, I feel the rain
I feel for the people I love, the people I know
Sometimes life is a mighty hard row

I talk all day to the universe
I recite the worries I rehearse
And the question marks rising overhead
There my own cloud of witnesses

I turn my face to the window pane
Feel the sun, I feel the rain
I feel, I feel for the people I love, the people I know
Sometimes life is a mighty hard row

I prayed the prayer of serenity
I still wanna change the things I see
We loose the forest for the trees
The thread of love in this band of thieves

I tilt my face to the window pane
Feel the sun, I feel the rain
I feel, I feel for the people I love, the people I know
Sometimes life is a mighty hard row
Sometimes life is a mighty hard row

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

11. **I Believe** (by Jan Krist)

When you tell me that you love me
Say you’ll never let me go
I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe you
In the bottom of my soul
I believe that you love me, but I don’t know

I’ve been anchored to this paradox
Converging and diverging thoughts
And over and over and over and over
It’s the same old stubborn bridge we cross
I believe that you love me, but I don’t know

From this corner of the universe
We watch the dangling stars rehearse
Pair off into constellations
Leave us to our speculation
What is it we ask of love
Do we just expect too much
From heart and hand and faith and trust
And everything we need more of

So I sit here in the quiet
With my hand cupped to my ear
And I listen and I listen
And I never, never, never, never hear
I believe that you love me, but I don’t know

My head is full of questions
But my heart is fairly sure
That it’s you and me and me and you and you and me forever-ever-ever evermore
I believe that you love me, but I don’t know.
I believe that you love me

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

12. **Crazy** (by Jan Krist)

She’s locking up early with a cardboard to go
Car caked in ice and a new coat of snow
Wipers are cracking out a steady tempo
And she’s singing crazy, maybe

Says the pachyderms are coming into bloom
They're in the middle of her living room
She doesn’t wanna face it as she’s coming in on fumes
Thinking she’s crazy, maybe

She’s weary to the marrow of her bones
Sick and tired of feeling so alone
Here she is full knowing he’s always gonna roam
Welcoming the prodigal home

Another chance to feel the old familiar ache
Another chance to hold her bittersweet mistake
That keeps her in the dark while keeping her awake
Thinking she’s crazy, maybe

She’s weary to the marrow in her bones
Sick and tired of feeling so alone
And here she is full knowing he’s always gonna roam
Welcoming the prodigal home

She’ll throw another log on that fire in her head
Clean sheets and warm blankets on her queen-sized bed
Here she is full knowing he's always gonna roam
Welcoming the prodigal home
Welcome home

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

13. **Tattoo** (by Jan Krist)

There are words that print themselves on you
In beautiful and bright tattoos
Images and memories
Of justices and of travesty

Your story wraps around your spine
The heartaches and the valentines
Touchstones and reminder notes
Cover you just like a coat

They show your genesis, your exodus
Your revelations etched into your wings
The substance of your hopes
Evidence of all you’ve seen

You tell the person who is holding you
The best and worst that you’ve been through
An embrace they’ll read a million times
To know the heart that beats between the lines

They show your genesis, your exodus
Your revelations etched into your wings
The substance of your hopes
Evidence of all you’ve seen

They show your genesis, your exodus
Your revelations etched into your wings
The substance of your hope
Evidence of all you’ve seen

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

14. **American Dream** (by Jan Krist)

There are sailors out here drunk on leave
Ordering shots of gasoline
They slam it like gin and light cigarettes
The dream just started, it’s not done yet

There’s a lamppost talking at the end of the block
Holds a loaded flag on a white sidewalk
Wears a vapor halo and a barbed wire crown
He's preaching, he’s preaching to his hometown crowd

I fell asleep counting sheep
Now they’re sheep in wolves clothing
I was walking in empty halls
And, now they're full of foreboding
Full of foreboding

I saw the rich got rockets while the poor got rocks
To throw at each other while the world got lost
Saw an ax get laid to the family tree
And a satellite blow through the American dream

I fell asleep counting sheep
Now they’re sheep in wolves clothing
I was walking in empty halls
And, now they are full of foreboding
Full of foreboding

Then caught in a corner Lady Liberty
They’re pawing at her assets, pulling on her sleeves
Telling her how they’re gonna have their way
And rigging all the rules so they’ll never pay

I fell asleep counting sheep
Now they’re sheep in wolves clothing
I was walking in empty halls
Now they’re full of foreboding
Full of foreboding

Whatever happens

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

15. **The Moth** (by Jan Krist)

Once a moth beat his wings, sent embers out across the sea
In the hope that he’d set fire to his enemies
A million cinders blowing, rising on an angry wind
Just the tip of the tip of the place where the hate begins

These days, a lie can travel round the world
Before the truth gets outta bed
Trace the lines of disenchantment
Split the cracks and watch 'em spread
So you really gotta ask your self
Should you give in to his war
Who’s it gonna profit
When the wolf is at your door

Now the moth beat his wings, sent ripples through the satellites
Incendiary words all ready to ignite
And shine up through a forest of eager glowing screens
Into the shining eyes of a reckoning

These days, a lie can travel round the world
Before the truth gets outta bed
Trace the lines of disenchantment
Splits those cracks and watch them spread
So you really gotta ask yourself
If you give in to his war
Who’s it gonna profit
When the wolf is at your door

The Moth beats his wings as if they were the drums of war
And every one opposing him gets drilled down to the core
Without a bullet fired, he’s taking everything in sight
Into the darkest heart of the darkest night

It's true lies can travel round the world
Before the truth gets outta bed
Trace the lines of disenchantment
Splits those cracks and watch 'em spread
So you really gotta ask yourself
If you give in to his war
Who’s it gonna profit
When the wolf is at your door
Who’s it gonna profit
When the wolf is at your door

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

16. **Hope** (by Jan Krist)

Lets talk about fear, being afraid
And the toll that it takes on us every day
Pain grief and doubt and the way
That it pulls us inside out
When you think that nothing ’s gonna change
It just leaves you prisoner to your pain

But what makes the abused refuse to back down
What makes the broken stand their ground
What makes the heart start to believe
What is the gift that faith receives
What is the soul of the mystery
And what breaks the hold of brutality

Hope, eyes wide open
Hope, will unbroken
Hope

And lets talk about truth and what has become
Of the faith that we gave and the things that were done
And faith in something bigger than us
More real than the people who vie for our trust
‘Cause trust can be abused, truth can be betrayed
So how is any thing ever gonna change?

What makes the abused refuse to back down
What makes the broken stand their ground
What makes the heart start to believe
What is the gift that faith receives
What is the soul of the mystery
And what breaks the hold of brutality

Hope, eyes wide open
Hope, will unbroken
Hope

What makes the abused refuse to back down
What makes the broken stand their ground
What makes the heart start to believe
What is the gift that faith receives
What is the soul of the mystery
And what breaks the hold of brutality

You and me and
Hope, eyes wide open
Hope, will unbroken
Hope
It's hope, eyes wide open
Hope, will unbroken
Hope
It's hope, eyes wide open
Hope, will unbroken

Jan Krist: “Since You Asked Me”

17. **Ghandi and Teresa** (by Jan Krist)

Gandhi’s in the kitchen
Working on his major 7th chords
His wife the saint Teresa
Is scraping the old paint off the back porch

He tells me just how hard it's been
To build a peace while other men build war
How hard he tries to make a dent
Though he is not a young man any more

And while he can he’ll labor
He’ll pray for peace and favor
Spend his life never wavering
He'll spend his life never wavering

Teresa’s in the dining room
Spread sheets on the old oak table
She’s writing grants for cleaner air
Caring for the lost and the disabled

And when she has a moment
She paints the peace that she longs to see
While watching watercolor YouTubes
On her living room TV

And while she can she’ll labor
She’ll pray for peace and favor
Spend her life never wavering
She'll spend her life never wavering