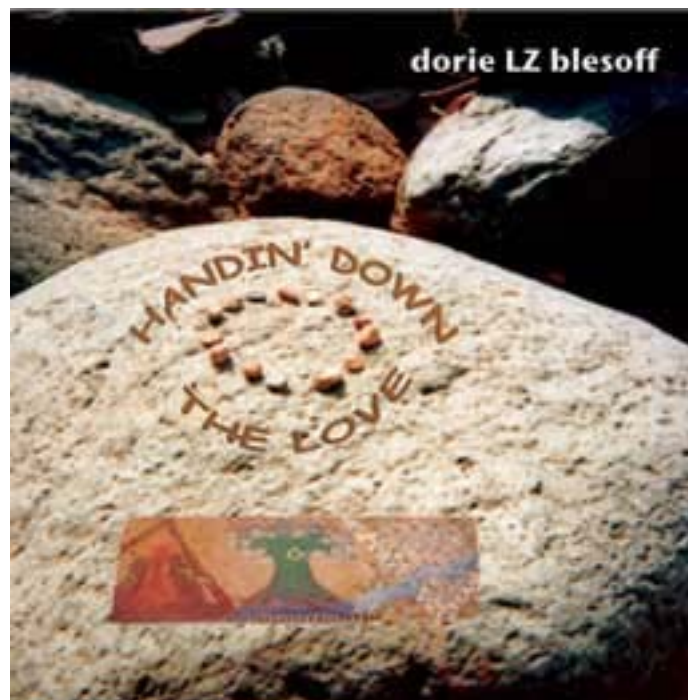


**Dorie LZ Blesoff**

***“Handin’ Down the Love”***



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## **BOOMERANG**

BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, baby  
BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, baby

Life's a BOOMERANG, baby,  
Haven't you heard it said: "What you sow, you shall reap."  
It's time to sow seeds of justice, seeds of peace,  
If you want to sing a righteous song, if you want to have a joyful heart.

BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, baby.  
BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, baby.

What goes around, comes around.  
Can you hear the sound of the New World cryin' to be born, laborin' in birth.  
That's the sound of the people stretchin' from their sleep,  
Wakin' from the web of fear, binding their humanity, binding their divinity.

BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG, BOOMERANG

Sitting in the henhouse watching while the chickens come home to roost.  
What'll you do? What'll you do?  
Caught in the belly of the beast while it's eating folks alive.  
What'll you do? What'll you do?

History's clock is ticking, like a time-bomb it is ticking, ticking  
Precious chances spinning in God's gracious game.  
Old orders are cracking, like a brittle shell they're cracking, cracking  
New things are emerging in Creation's name.

BOOMERANG, throw that BOOMERANG, baby.  
BOOMERANG, catch that BOOMERANG, baby.

Repeat first verse.

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*Dorie's notes: Although I haven't been to Australia, I am drawn to this symbol and find it a good way to convey a growing sense of urgency about all of our intentions and our actions. What we believe, think, and do, really matters.*

# HANDIN' DOWN THE LOVE

## CHORUS:

<sup>D</sup> I'm handin' down the love that was handed down to me <sup>G</sup>

<sup>D</sup> Ain't no doubt about it it's the richest legacy. <sup>A maj</sup>

<sup>D</sup> We all come and go, help each other on the way, <sup>G</sup>

<sup>D</sup> I'm so grateful for the blessing of this love that's here to stay. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

## Verse #1

<sup>D</sup> One thing I can tell, you'll be special in your time. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> Got to take your chances, just like I took mine. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> This ole' world keeps spinnin' 'round a sun that always shines. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> Open up your hearts, sweet children, you won't miss the signs. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

## CHORUS

### Verse #2

<sup>D</sup> You'll do things I never did, you're brave enough to try. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> You'll say things I never said, you'll laugh when I would cry. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> You'll be stronger than I was, my strength flows to you. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

<sup>D</sup> Love me still, but let me go, and peace will come to you. <sup>G</sup> <sup>D</sup>

## CHORUS

### **Chorus Double Time**

(Handin down the love (3x) that was handed down to me.

Handin' down the love (3x) it's the richest legacy.

## CHORUS

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*Dorie's notes: Written in memory of Berthella (Bert) Reeves (Feb 2, 1928-Oct 28, 1988), this song carries a favorite message: life goes on, and the legacy of love is everlasting. On the CD, Bert's daughter, Kathy Reeves, who shares her mother's spirit, sings with me on the verses. I now sing this for my father, Charles H. Ellzey (Jan 25, 1924-Dec.3, 2001), in appreciation.*

## SEEDLINGS IN A STORM

Will he love poetry, will he learn to paint with words?  
Will she love history, question why these things occurred?  
And will they find their voices in time?  
And when he cries for help will he feel no shame?  
And when she makes mistakes, will she try again?  
And will they find their choices in time?

### CHORUS

*SEEDLINGS IN A STORM, grow against the odds,  
Bend with the wind, reach for the sun.  
Each child that is born, life's chance to carry on.  
Precious gifts to us, the many and the one.*

Will he be sensitive, use hands with gentle pride?  
Will she be confident, laugh, and take the world in stride?  
Will they find their graces in time?  
Will he name galaxies, and wish upon a star?  
Will she cure disease, light a candle from afar?  
Will they find their places in time?

### CHORUS (x 2)

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*Dorie's notes: Although this song often reminds me of my own precious children, I often dedicate it to all the children of the world who are growing up in the midst of war conditions, literally and figuratively. I hope you join me in recommitting to build a world that is healthy, full of choices, and loving, for all the world's children.*

## THIS DAY

When you wake, may you face the sun and gladly greet each day.  
When you rise, may you touch the earth and know that you belong.  
When you walk, may you find the path that's truly meant for you.  
When you sleep, may your dreams unlock the secrets of your song.

### CHORUS

*THIS DAY, my child, marks the journey you've begun,  
Your whole life waits to be known,  
May you grow in strength and wisdom, in compassion and in love,  
May you walk in the ways of Shalom.*

When you work, may your heart and mind be present in your hands.  
When you laugh, may the magic of your joy spread far and wide.  
When you speak, may your words bring truth and healing to the world.  
When you cry, may your tears repair whatever hurts inside.

### CHORUS

When you dance, may you find the footsteps of your ancestors.  
When you breathe, may you take in all the power of the wind.  
When you study, may your soul recall the lessons from the past.  
When you pray, may you always hear the still, small voice within.

### CHORUS

©1995 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: This was the song I wrote and sang for my son, Evan, at his Bar Mitzvah in 1994. I sang first the lullaby I wrote for him when he was a baby, and then this song, full of my wishes for him as a soon-to-be-man. He continues to amaze me, and make me proud, as he finds his path.*

## ANGELINA'S SONG

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she went running through the fields of Queen Anne's lace,  
Making faces at the sun and chasing clouds away  
And coaxing shadows from their hiding place.

### CHORUS

*There is a song, there is a song, it's ANGELINA'S SONG,  
But I've heard it somewhere before.*

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she was counting every single drop of rain,  
Matching each with passing fantasy and daydream,  
Watching each one slowly melt away in vain.

### CHORUS

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she took nightly restless walks over the land.  
Searching deep within the darkness for a key  
To help her see her changes and to understand.

### CHORUS

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she was braiding up her hair to be a bride,  
Catching glimpses in the mirror of the days to come  
And wondering at the stirring things inside.

### CHORUS

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she was waiting for the birth of her first child.  
Hearing echoes of a lullaby and underneath it  
Voices of her spirits running wild.

### CHORUS

There is a song that Angelina used to sing  
When she went running with her young ones in the spring.  
Teaching them the music of the mountain streams  
And how the early morning breezes laugh and sing.

### CHORUS

There is a song that women sing when they are young,  
There is a song that women sing when they are grown.  
There is a song that women sing when they are changing.  
There is a song that women sing, it's all their own.

### CHORUS

©1974 Dorie Ellzey (Blesoff)

*Dorie's notes: The humpback whales add their timeless song to the cycle of many women's lives. Learning, teaching, learning – staying young and growing old all the time.*

## LEGENDS

Mother Demeter you're a gypsy in your wanderin',  
Searchin' for the daughter who was lost to you.  
Sower of the fields, you give the seeds their will to grow and  
Harvests come and go at such a cost to you.

### CHORUS

*Come and open up your eyes,  
Cast off your gowns of mourning and arise.  
We've a fire to welcome you, and a dance to keep you warm.  
A new day's comin' and your (daughter's here) at home.*

Sister Llorona, you keep callin' through the rain.  
They call you a demon and children fear your name.  
You gave your sweat and blood so your little ones could grow,  
Then you lost them in a flood, now you've no place to go.

### CHORUS *(last line..."children are")*

Queen Agotime, they took you from your land,  
Thought they'd change you to a slave by giving you a brand.  
Your bondage made you stronger, fed the fire within your soul,  
You gave birth to movements that now seek to make us whole.

### CHORUS *(last line..."people are")*

Liliuokalani, the soldiers stole your crown,  
Locked you in your castle and held your people down.  
Pauahi shared your legacy, gave all the wealth away  
To the children of the Islands, who sing your songs today.

### CHORUS *(last line..."people are")*

### CODA

We are sowers and searchers, like you,  
We are witches and mothers, like you,  
We are healers and bearers of burdens like you,  
We are Daughters of the Night, gifted with the blessing and curse of sight,  
We are Warriors of the Light, opening our hearts to reunite.

©1975, 1983 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: I have always been fascinated with folklore, myths and legends. I wanted the stories of these four women put down in song, perhaps because they represent many themes common to women's lives today.*

## SONG TO THE MOON

In a garden we all know, somethin' happened long ago,  
Takes a few millennia to tell.  
We're not sure what happened there,  
We're not even sure if that's where  
We should begin our journey homeward...

People say there was a tree and stories clothed in secrecy  
Remind us of the mystery there buried.  
Visions of a paradise float by our tired and hopeful eyes,  
On its wings the seeds of truth are carried.

Seeds of truth fall down below where we stand and what we know.  
They lie beneath the ground well-hidden.  
We fear what we can't see, we fear the sacred tree,  
We fear the one who ate the fruit forbidden.

Dark from light you cannot separate them, they're a fruit, she ate them  
So we know we can be the whole, the holy,  
Universal wisdom comes to those who listen, patiently it  
Ripens into fruit of love to set the soul free.

Mother Moon shines in the night, on our fear and our delight,  
She shines on us her holy children.  
With her light she cools the dark, shines the way and shows the mark,  
So when we're lost we can find our true path home again.

Sacred maker of the waves, she cools our nights and rules our days,  
When she's gone we always know she will return.  
Her faces change, her magic lingers, calming oceans with her fingers,  
Her healing power comes to those who yearn.

©1987 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: My favorite metal sculpture was made in Haiti from a steel drum. It portrays a man and a woman standing beside a tree, with a snake at the bottom and an owl at the top. It seems many cultures and religions attach meaning to the story and the symbols presented in this song. The question on my mind when this song came to me was: Who/what is in hiding that needs to be seen and heard? How do we balance and heal the divisions and splits in ourselves, and the world community?*



## SINS OF THE PARENTS

### CHORUS:

*In another time, another dance, another way,  
You and I would both be different than we are today.  
As my heart grows wiser, I start to understand  
As it is with you, it is with me, we all do the best we can.*

I'm learning to forgive you, you don't even know  
All the ways you hurt me, I never let it show.  
I'm learning to forgive myself, for things I couldn't see.  
You took what you needed, I needed your love desperately.

### CHORUS

When I saw a picture of you when you were small,  
I started to unravel the pattern of it all.  
Many painful injuries you buried deep inside.  
You probably never noticed when something in you died.

### CHORUS

Just like a broken record, scratching every turn,  
Every generation has something old to learn.  
When we break the cycle, and make peace with the past.  
The Sins of the Parents are put to rest at last.

### CHORUS

©1988 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: Many younger people don't recognize the term "like a broken record," because a CD or DVD doesn't scratch when it repeats. But whether recognized or not, old patterns affect all of us, growing and grown. I believe that when one person heals old injuries, one more heart is cleared of pain and anger, and more love can shine through. Ending a cycle and forgiving takes hard work, but opens up many windows, for all of us.*

## DO WHAT SHE WOULD DO

Another precious sister slain  
Her heart now free of earthly pain,  
Her final battle, she controlled the odds.  
We're trying not to take it wrong,  
To keep our loving spirits strong,  
It helps to know her soul's at peace with God's.

### CHORUS

*And what is there for us to do,  
But pick up where her life left off  
And DO WHAT SHE WOULD DO.*

Reduced to playing solitaire,  
A Church that mocked with "double-dare,"  
The demon of despair had lots to say.  
We're angry at a world that drives  
Folks to the edge, to take their lives,  
We're sorry that she lost her will, her way.

### CHORUS

How many of us never know,  
The suffering that lies trapped below,  
A pain too great to speak of or to claim.  
And when the world is cold to touch,  
The journey seems to cost so much,  
It's hard to answer "yes" and play the game.

### CHORUS

Her life was like a shooting star,  
It radiated deep and far,  
She sorta took this old world by surprise.  
Her strident walk, her ready smile,  
She did her thing in shameless style.  
She burned her blessed vision in our eyes.

### CHORUS

(Repeat 1<sup>st</sup> verse)

### CHORUS

©1988 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: This song was written soon after I heard of the suicide of Phyllis Jean Kinheart Athey (Jan 23, 1957-May 23, 1988). Phyllis tried twice, unsuccessfully, to become ordained within the United Methodist Church. Because she was an open lesbian, she was not allowed to serve in the capacity she felt called by God to do.*

## PROMISES

Lifetimes ago, I wondered, could I stand up to the testing?  
One thing I know, your love for me has been a place of resting.  
I humbly come to you in this time and place,  
To speak of things between us and to promise face to face.

### CHORUS

*I'll try my best to meet you halfway  
On the path to growing whole together.  
If I should lose my will or lose my way,  
Please remind me of the promises we made here today.*

I give to you myself in all my splendor and despair.  
You give to me a way to become more than what I am.  
We're joining hands and building a dream day by day.  
Without it we are empty, without us, it fades away.

### CHORUS

I've heard it said that patience is the key to growing wiser.  
That may be true but divine creation calls us to choose life.  
To love with all our hearts, be true to one another,  
And understand that learning still takes time.

### CHORUS

©1986 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: Although I have sung this song to honor the commitment between two people, including at my own Renewal of Vows Ceremony in 1987, I have also sung it to celebrate commitment among a community of people. Both community, and commitment, are important values to me and I enjoy celebrating them with others.*

## IT TAKES COURAGE

When you came into my life I had no idea  
How to teach you all the things you'd need to know.  
Funny thing, you taught me just as much as I taught you,  
And now, each of us has so much more to show.

As a little girl you claimed the center of the stage  
With your energy and wild, dramatic ways.  
Everyone adored you with your bright and sparkling eyes,  
Your smile was the sunshine of our days.

### CHORUS

*IT TAKES COURAGE to grow and be who you are,  
IT TAKES COURAGE to know you're as special as a star,  
IT TAKES COURAGE to live and strive for your ideals,  
IT TAKES COURAGE to love, and learn to trust what you feel.*

Sensitive by nature, your feelings got hurt easily, and  
Every time you cried my heart would break.  
But you learned how to defend yourself, and how to show compassion,  
How to dish it out, and how to take.

When you made mistakes you took the consequences bravely,  
I could see that you were learning right from wrong, and  
When you hit homeruns I was proud as I could be  
To have a daughter so purposeful and strong.

### CHORUS

I've tried to change the world for you, I'm doin' the best I can,  
I won't pretend that caring has no cost.  
But nothing's quite as thrilling as to see Creation happening,  
And in the end, I've gained much more than lost.

My wish for you today is to learn to love yourself,  
To bless your shadow and make friends with your fears.  
To see yourself through my eyes, you're growing and you're beautiful,  
To carry this special moment through the years.

### CHORUS

©1991 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: Written for my oldest daughter, Jamine, and sung during the Parents' Blessing portion of her Bat Mitzvah. I still wish all these things for her, and she is still growing and beautiful.*

## **GAIL'S GIFT**

Your given name was "Violet," a sassy girl from Alabam'  
Most folks they just called you, Gail,  
Some just said, "Yes, Ma'am."  
So many stories in so little time,  
But just like you taught us we're goin' to speak our mind.

### *CHORUS*

*You made a difference in our lives,  
Much more than words can ever say.  
So as we struggle through goodbyes, it helps to realize,  
That those who give the gift of heart are never far away.*

You raised so many people here, you raised hell 'most every day.  
Passionate and honest you lived life in your own way.  
The lessons you gave us are timeless and true,  
Your legacy's strong as we learn to live like you.

### *CHORUS*

You called us all your family, a title we will proudly claim.  
Giving and receiving love, through sunshine and through rain.  
We're grateful and blessed by the seeds you have sown.  
We're happy you're happy 'cuz now you're goin' home.

### *CHORUS*

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*Dorie's notes: When I met Gail McMillan (Sept 25, 1941-Jan 9, 1998), she easily told me that she had ovarian cancer and had been told she had 14 months to live – "and that was five years ago!" Gail taught me the meaning of "live each day to the fullest." We sang this song at her Retirement Party (6/28/97) and again at her funeral. I am honored that the chorus to this song is carved on her tombstone in Alabama. She's never far away.*

## ONES WHO'VE GONE BEFORE US

There are times we reach the edge of a turning point, a breaking through,  
And we know the situation calls for something new.  
There are times we cannot see what's just ahead, but still we know  
We have a course that's clear, a path to follow, and we must go (and we must go)...

### CHORUS

*And the ONES WHO'VE GONE BEFORE US will show us the way.  
And the ones who follow after will welcome the new day.  
And the Ones Who've Gone Before Us will join in the chorus,  
When we do, when we make it through.*

There are times the burden's heavier than we can bear, but we hold one  
Because we know there is a task at hand which must be done.  
There are times our problems build up and start to shake us, threaten to break us,  
'Til we remember it's only dancin' through that will remake us (that will remake us)...

### CHORUS

There are times it's almost easier to despair, to close our eyes  
But when we look around and see we're not alone, our spirits rise.  
There are times we get so tired of waiting any longer,  
But we know we're building as we grow, we're getting stronger (we're getting stronger)...

### CHORUS

*(repeat Chorus)*

©1975 Doris Ellzey

*Dorie's notes: This song was conceived while I was traveling in a car headed into dense fog. On the other side of the highway, the cars emerging from the fog were turning off their lights, serving as witnesses that one could travel through and make it. How many times I have counted on that message – during childbirth, during difficult challenges, during tragic losses. In many older cultures, a sacred ceremony begins with an invocation of the ancestors, the cloud of witnesses, those who've gone before.*

## **NO WAY TO STOP THIS MIRACLE**

Every day, the more we see, we see there's more, there's more to do.  
The more we do, the more we learn, we learn there's more, there's more to see.  
We're like a puzzle, the pieces joining, painting a picture part by part.  
We're like a garden, the flowers blooming, when one is fading others start.

### *CHORUS:*

*There is NO WAY TO STOP THIS MIRACLE  
We're not afraid now to reach for the skies.  
There is no way to steal our thunder.  
The tougher the challenge, the stronger we rise.*

All the ups and downs remind us, no such thing as an easy win.  
There is no rain without the thunder, when we fail we must try again.  
We may not get all that we pay for, but we must pay for what we get.  
Something worth having is worth working hard for, pick up your spirits, get ready-set-go!

### *CHORUS*

Take your place, we're moving forward, we're not the first, we're not the last.  
If we don't move, the rhythm's broken, dancing the future from the past.  
We hear a birthing cry resounding, echoing through these troubled times.  
Our lives are just a flash in history. This is our time to shine!

### *CHORUS*

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*Dorie's notes: I was inspired to write this during Black History Month in 1982, after reading a quote by Frederick Douglass (an eloquent and dedicated abolitionist). The second verse draws directly from his message. The overall theme is my own statement expressing hope for our times.*

## KEEP THE FAITH

When you hear another call, and it's time to move along,  
Sometimes your heart isn't ready.  
Just think of an end as a way to begin,  
It might help you keep yourself steady.

### CHORUS

*KEEP THE FAITH, good friends, we're together 'til the end,  
Just like we've been all along.  
Our roots are down deep, and our fruits are bitter-sweet, and  
Our branches will keep growing strong.*

If you're stuck in a place where there's pain at every turn,  
And your soul is cryin' out to be healed.  
Just think of the pressure that makes crystal from the sand  
And the fire that tempers the steel.

### CHORUS

Every livin' thing has a story to be told,  
A patch in the quilt we are weaving.  
So sing out your song, don't be afraid to try,  
Choose life and keep on believing.

### CHORUS

It's time to say goodbye, let's say "aloha-oy,"  
Let's say "adios" and "shalom."  
Let's say we shared a lot, let's say we'll never stop,  
Let's say, "My home is your home."

### CHORUS

©1985 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: When leaving a special community or situation, I find these words to help. I've sung this song to mark the leaving of a job, a town, or a congregation.*



## **GIMME THE LIGHT**

Sometimes, I don't mind, sitting in the dark.  
Darkness has potential in its own way.  
Other times, I am so drearified, tearified, a voice inside,  
Bubbles up to say:

GIMME THE LIGHT, all right,  
Somethin' warm and bright to guide my way.  
GIMME THE LIGHT, all right,  
Help me see the signs of a brand new day.

Sometimes, by design, silence speaks to me.  
In the precious stillness stirs creation.  
Other times, I am so uninspired, righteous tired,  
Without desired relaxation.

GIMME THE MUSIC, all right,  
Notes and rhythms, joyful sounds of victory,  
GIMME THE MUSIC, all right,  
Harmonies resolving in a brand new key.

Sometimes, I find I'm holding back, afraid.  
Hiding 'neath the covers is so comfy...  
Other times, I start to suffocate, stagnate, can't move/can't wait,  
Longing to run free...

GIMME THE JOURNEY, all right,  
Passages and crossroads mark my way.  
GIMME THE JOURNEY, all right,  
Driven by a vision...driven by a vision,  
Driven by a vision, driven by a vision, driven by a vision  
Of people – growing, changing, moving, building, laughing, loving  
Driven by a vision of a brand new day!

©1987 Dorie Ellzey Blesoff

*Dorie's notes: Balancing – appreciating the journey – can you see the brand new day?*