



THE GIRL FROM THE GREAT DIVIDE

Words & Music © Josh Joffen

She was tall and dark and slender, and she said that she loved the dance
There was something unspoken between us, but I dared not take the chance
We were something more than strangers when the hour of parting arrived
And she went west to her new life, she was bound for the Great Divide

Word came that she had married, and we all did wish her well
I swore to profit from my mistake and to heed the tolling belle
If a girl should capture my fancy, not to let that girl go by
And I raised a glass in a sad salute to the girl from the Great Divide

Now fruits are for the picking and I picked till I had my fill
But alone I'd find her photograph, and her face it stayed with me still
Till the night in the crowded tavern, where I made ready to play
She stepped up to me smiling, and the years just fell away

Then later, over coffee, we talked of the things we'd done
She threw back her head in laughter, it was like she never had gone
Then she spoke about her marriage, and the ways of compromise
And I saw how time had touched her face and the sadness around her eyes

We talked the moon down from the sky and I brought her to my home
I laid a pallet down on the floor for her to sleep upon
But in the silence that followed our singing, she came into my arms
And the dawn was sweet and quiet, and the morning sun was warm

The sea was cold at sunset and I pressed her to my side
We could not speak so we looked away, our feelings for to hide
Her hands were strong and her lips were soft and her eyes a smile did pass
But the rising tide, it drowned our steps, and the sand was smooth as glass

And her dark hair hid her face from me as I saw her to her plane
That would carry her west to her husband, to whom she would explain
She'd decide if she wanted her freedom, she would write if she wanted to stay
And I dream at night of the Great Divide, and her voice so far away

She was tall and dark and slender, and she said that she loved the dance

I was walking in the Village one day when a gorgeous rendition of a beautiful song floated out the open doors of a club on Bleeker Street and stopped me in my tracks. What I'd heard was Maggie and Terre Roche singing an Irish-American classic, "The Banks of Ponchartrain." I fell in love on the spot, and couldn't resist borrowing the song when the occasion arose...