

# CASH



AMERICAN V: A Hundred Highways

HELP ME (Jerry Garcia)

GOD'S SONNA CUT YOU DOWN (Traditional)

LIKE THE 308 (Johnny Cash)

IF YOU COULD READ MY MIND (Gordon Lightfoot)

FURTHER ON UP THE ROAD (Bruce Springsteen)

ON THE EVENING TRAIN (Mark Williams)

I CAME TO BELIEVE (Johnny Cash)

LOVE'S BEEN GOOD TO ME (Rod McKuen)

A LEGEND IN MY TIME (Don Gibson)

ROSE OF MY HEART (Hugh Moffat)

FOUR STRONG WINDS (Jan Tyson)

I'M FREE FROM THE CHAIN GANG NOW

(Lois Hanscar and Saul Kane)

### **The Singing was Impeccable.**

I was having a late dinner at Don Tere with some artist friends when the phone call came. One of them had just performed at a memorial concert as it was the anniversary of 9/11. It was a charged night politically, and the post-performance dinner had a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from the knowledge of participating in a positive event. There was also a light sense that the pressure of the evening had passed, and now it was time to celebrate our friendship and our shared interest in the power of music.

About halfway into the meal, I saw two messages on my blackberry pager that my assistant Lindsay was urgently trying to reach me. We have a fair number of situations that arise that need immediate attention, but rarely at 1 a.m. on a weeknight. Earlier, while in the studio, I had been told that Johnny had gone back into the hospital and he was in first critical, then stable condition. In spite of the fact that Johnny had just spent several weeks in the hospital, I had a sense that he was feeling much better than he had been in the last year or so. So good, in fact, that earlier in the week he said how would you see me the following Tuesday. He planned to come to Los Angeles to put some finishing touches on our new studio album, American V, which we had started working on the day American IV was finished.

I quietly called Lindsay from the table and heard the news. My head was swimming and I had no idea what to do. I didn't want to ruin my friends night, so I chose not to share the information at that moment. I can't remember much of what happened afterward, other than feeling lost and detached from what was going on around me. I went home as quickly as possible to digest the information in the peace and silence of my bedroom. I spent several hours talking with Johnny both internally and out loud, and listening to and feeling his part of the conversation. I also remember feeling an urgency to do something immediately, although not knowing what in particular that was.



For the last six months or so, we had been working together on the box set *Unearthed*. Just that morning, the last mix was completed and I happily reported to John that the box set was virtually done and he would be hearing ods over the weekend. He said he looked forward to hearing them and that he was happy to be home from the hospital but feeling tired. It was a fairly short conversation, which was not unusual considering how often we spoke. We had a ritual to speak every day since just before June had passed.

One of the reasons for the ritual was actually Dr. Gene Scott, the outrageous televangelist who did a show explaining how he cured his own cancer by doing communion every day. His argument for how it worked was thought provoking. I told Johnny about it on the phone one afternoon, and the next time we were together in person we discussed it further. I had never taken communion before, so he had someone find his old communion kit. He hadn't used it in many years but he did that day and Johnny gave me my first communion. We spoke about doing it every day, and that's when the ritual began. Each day we would speak on the phone and Johnny would perform the communion rite. We would both visualize and internalize, eyes closed. It was performed as a meditation. A moment to connect deeply to spirit. Every call always ended the same way.

"I love you, John."

"I love you, Rick."

I could always tell how Johnny was feeling each day from the sound of his voice and his breathing. Some days his voice was weak and he sounded like he was panting, trying to get enough air. Other days his voice boomed with power and gravity. You can hear the difference on some of these songs. Sometimes he booms and other times he sounds weaker and more vulnerable, but in the end his ability to convey words in a way the listener can truly feel and believe them is amazingly consistent. He was the master storyteller of our time.

Johnny's depth and wisdom always left me filled with enthusiasm and wonder. My life was made immeasurably better for knowing him. I hope you are as moved by Johnny's storytelling on this collection as I am...

"I love you, John." ...Rick Rubin, Malibu, California 2006

**PRODUCED BY RICK RUBIN**

Associate Producer: John Carter Cash

Recorded by David Ferguson; assisted by Jimmy Tittle

Mixed by David Ferguson and Greg Fidelman; assisted by Dan Lefler and Paul Figueroa

Album Production Coordinator: Lindsay Chase

Recorded at Cash Cabin Studio, Hendersonville, TN and

Akademie Mathématique Of Philosophical Sound Research, Los Angeles, CA

Mixed at Akademie Mathématique Of Philosophical Sound Research, Los Angeles, CA

Mastered by Vlado Meller at Sony Mastering, NY, NY; assisted by Mark Santangelo

**Musicians:**

Mike Campbell – Guitar

Smokey Hornel – Guitar

Matt Sweeney – Guitar

Bertram Tanch – Piano, Harpsichord, Organ

Jonny Polonsky – Guitar

Randy Scruggs – Guitar

Pat McLaughlin – Guitar

Additional musicians who offered invaluable contributions: Marty Stuart, Mark Howard, Pete Wade, "Uncle" Josh Graves, Laura Cash, Mac Wiseman, "Cowboy" Jack Clement, Larry Perkins, Dennis Crouch

Art Direction/Design: Christine Cano

Photography: Martyn Atkins

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