
WHICH WAY TO GO
RIGHT
LEFT
Michael Wickham

WHICH WAY TO GO

Michael Wickham

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TENNESSEE YOUNG - INDEPENDENT MUSIC LABEL

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Michael Wickham

Michael Wickham is a songwriter and novelist from the Memphis area whose work draws on real experiences, lasting friendships, family memories, and the turns life takes along the way. Country music is at the heart of his songwriting, with influences that reach into alternative country, rock, and pop.

With approximately one hundred songs registered with the Library of Congress, Michael has built a catalog that moves from humor and everyday life to love, loss, and remembrance. For him, a song begins with a story worth telling—sometimes his own, sometimes one inspired by the people closest to him.

His music carries the Tennessee Young name, chosen in honor of his great-grandmother, Tennessee Young Bynum. That family connection reflects the personal roots behind his work and his belief in keeping memories alive through song.

Michael's storytelling also extends to his novel, The Story of Jimmy Lee, which explores friendship, sacrifice, and the lasting bonds shaped by war. His visit to Omaha Beach in 2002 is one of the personal connections behind that creative journey.

Which Way To Go brings together ten songs about crossroads, old friends, love, longing, and life's simpler pleasures. Whether the setting is a Tennessee gravel road, Riverside Drive, or a quiet beach, Michael writes with the same purpose: to give a lived moment a voice.


WHICH WAY TO GO
RIGHT
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01. Which Way To Go

3:42

In the wooded hills of Tennessee
Mama made clothes, Daddy ran a still
We hunted for food, turned butter by hand
When times got hard, Daddy sold the land
Mama got tired of mending, Daddy got hooked on the shine
I got a job cleaning windows ten for a dime

When we walked out from the hills
To the valley down below
We had no idea which way to go, which way to go

Mama went straight into town
Daddy took a fork in the road
I was left in the middle, fend for my own
Mama got remarried, Daddy got a new headstone
I went on to Nashville to sing on Music Row

When we walked out from the hills
To the valley down below
We had no idea which way to go, which way to go
(Mmm)

Now everyone's got problems, and I'm not short on those
They kicked me out in Nashville, I said goodbye to Music Row
Then I just moved around whichever way the wind blows

When we walked out from the hills
To the valley down below
We had no idea which way to go, which way to go
Mama went straight into town
Daddy took a fork in the road
I was left in the middle, fend for my own
When we walked out from the hills
To the valley down below
We had no idea which way to go, which way to go

When we walked out from the hills
To the valley down below
We had no idea which way to go, which way to go


Old Gravel Road
Michael Wickham
Tennessee Young
Independent Music Label

02. Old Gravel Road

3:45

On a late Tennessee afternoon
The pine trees are a-swaying
Driving down the old gravel road
You can hear the music playing
Old folks are dancing
As the young ones laugh and play
You can feel the romancing
As the light in the sun fade away

There's an old man picking his banjo
Lovers dancing the fandango
There's a long-haired man strumming his guitar
And I am a-singing thinking I'm a rock star
There's a big old dog getting his kicks
Hitting them skins with a pair of broken hickory sticks
There's a rebel who just won't go home
I'm singing to all the loners, the drunks and the stoners
The rest are just folk that I know

Up in the Tennessee hills
Old fellows are a-sipping on a corn liquor jug
A full moon is glowing
As the young ladies are getting tired of being bitten by the bugs

There's an old man picking his banjo
Lovers dancing the fandango
There's a long-haired man strumming his guitar
And I am a-singing thinking I'm a rock star
There's a big old dog getting his kicks
Hitting them skins with a pair of broken hickory sticks
There's a rebel who just won't go home
I'm singing to all the loners, the drunks and the stoners
The rest are just folk that I know
I'm singing to all the loners, the drunks and the stoners
The rest are just folk [vocal sustain] that I know
I'm singing to all the loners, the drunks and the stoners
The rest are just folk that I know


HURRICANE
Michael Wickham

03. Hurricane

3:04

Been gone six weeks
Carryin' load after load all alone
Ridin' these same empty streets
I've got to get off this road
Yeah, I've got heavy-lead feet
I just want you to hold on to me
Stop my heart from goin' cold

Not even a hurricane
Is gonna turn me around
Not even a slow-movin' train
Is gonna make me slow down
I'm gonna ride right through
Every stoplight in this town
Nothin's gonna stop me
I'm comin' home to you

I've been drivin' day and night
Haven't seen one cop in sight
Even if I did I'd keep rollin' on
Ain't nothin' gonna stop me from goin' home

Not even a hurricane
Is gonna turn me around
Not even a slow-movin' train
Is gonna make me slow down
I'm gonna ride right through
Every stoplight in this town
Ain't nothin' gonna stop me
I'm comin' home to you

Baby I'm here
She comes runnin'
Baby I'm here
My truck's out there still hummin'
Baby I'm here
Longin' for your lovin'

Not even a hurricane
Is gonna turn me around
Not even a slow-movin' train
Is gonna make me slow down
I'm gonna ride right through
Every stoplight in this town
Nothin's gonna stop me
I'm comin' home to you

Comin' home to you


The Friend
That I Once Knew
Michael Wickham

04. The Friend That I Once Knew

2:45

The friend that I once knew
I think about all the things that we would do
Going out on the town, riding around acting like clowns
Got jobs at the same places
So many nights on double dates
Walked into the Hyatt hotel 'cause we were bored
You in the water fountain flapping and squawking like a crazy condor
We were told not to come back there anymore
Yeah, those crazy days are gone, that's for sure

The friend that I once knew
I think about all the things that we would do
We Rode for days on our ATVs
Memorize lines from movies on TV
We took trips down to the lake
All the chances we'd take
Crazy jokes that we would make
I find myself sitting here waiting for you to call me
Or for me to call you
But you never do, and neither do I
I ain't really sure why

The friend that I once knew
I sure would like to see you whenever you would like to
We got older but never outgrew
the friend that I once knew, my friend did you
Did you

The friend that I once knew
I sure would like to see you
whenever you would like to
We got older but I never outgrew
the friend that I once knew, my friend did you
Oh did you
We got older but I never outgrew
the friend that I once knew, my friend did you


I CAN'T STAY
Michael Wickham

05. I Can't Stay

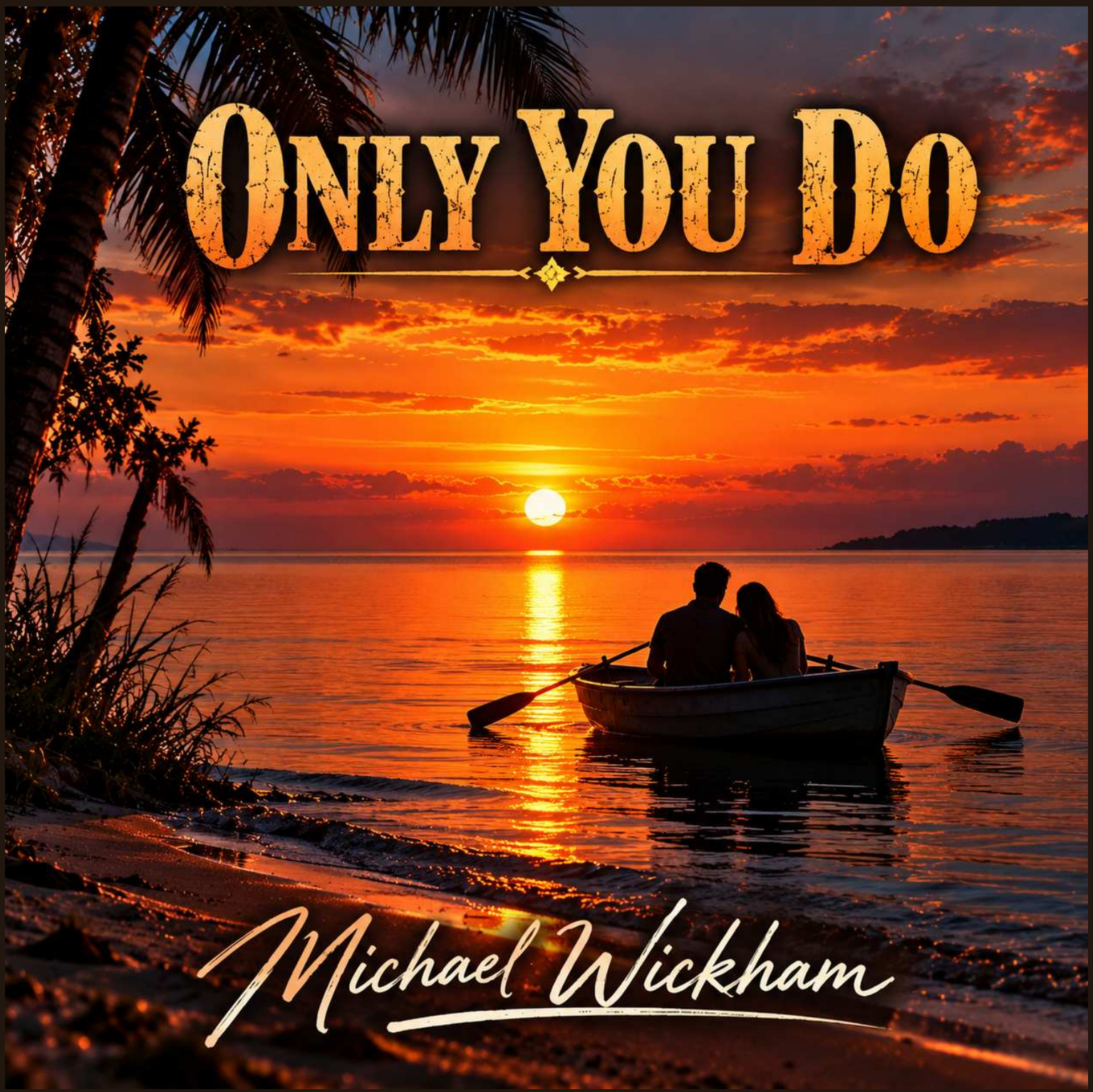
3:19

I can't stay
I feel a different way
I could tell you that I love you
And say everything you want to hear
I could hold you close to me
And put an end to your lonely fears
But I can't stay

I can't stay
I feel a different way
Believe me I have tried
And I have been on that side
I know how hard it is to be denied
The love you waited and waited for
Is suddenly not there anymore
But I can't stay

I can't stay
I feel a different way
Well I don't mean to make you cry
I'm doing my best to tell you why
I know you have a deep love for me
You believe that we would forever be
But I can't stay

I can't stay
I feel a different way
It won't be very long
You'll again meet someone
And I hope that from the start
Love will find your heart
And there will come a day
His love will stay
But I can't stay
I can't stay
No I can't stay
I just can't stay


ONLY YOU DO
Michael Wickham

06. Only You Do

3:45

No one knows me anymore than you
Than you

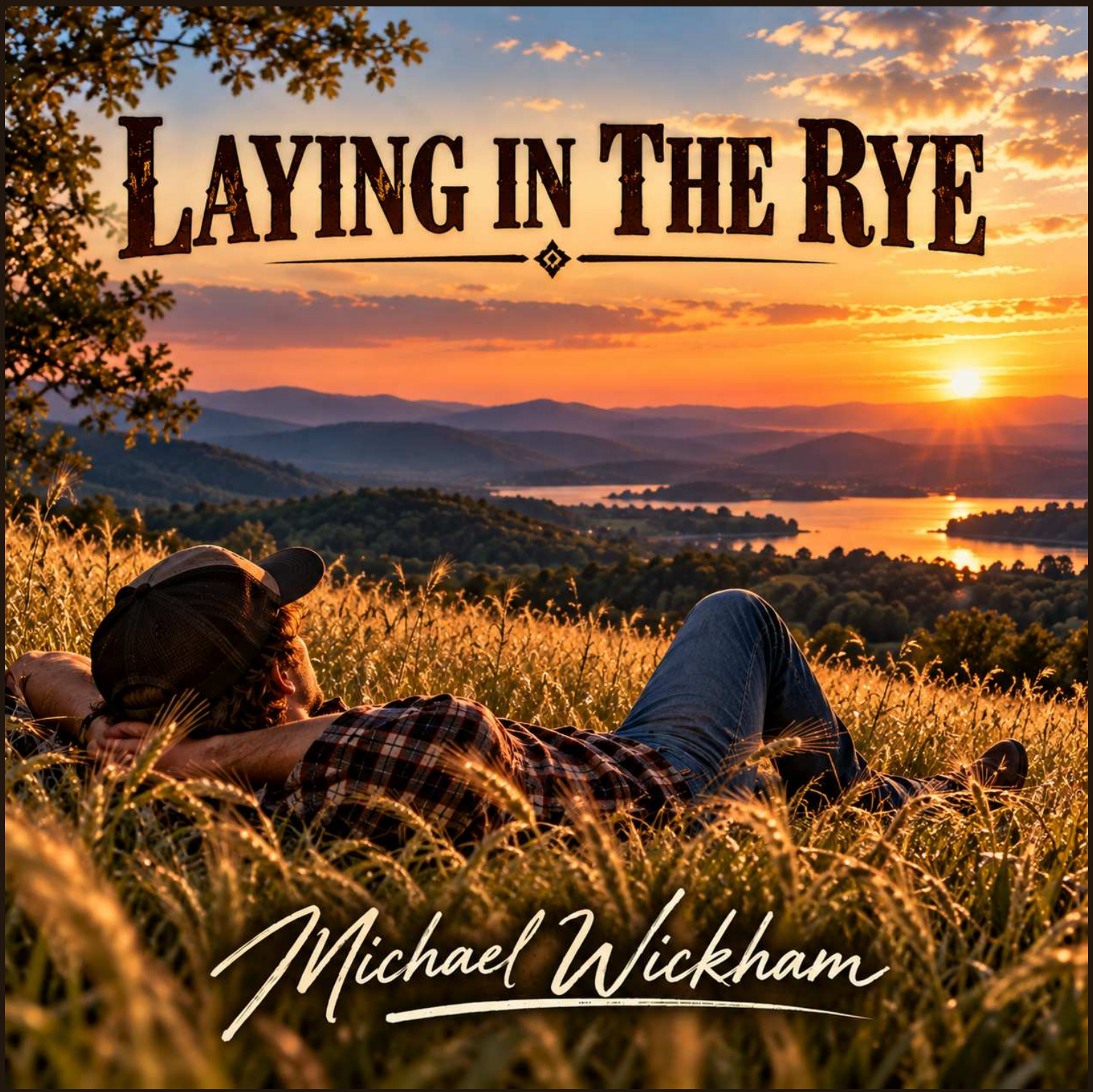
No one knows how I feel more than you
Than you

If someone asked you about me
You know exactly what to say
Because you have been with me
Every step of the way
And you see
What makes me who I am
When no one else in the world can
But you
But you

You know all my ups and downs
You know what makes me smile and makes me
frown
You know the silly things that make me laugh
The ordinary things that make me cry
Because it's just been you
And I

We've been looking into each other's eyes
Since we were so young
You are the only one I'd let in
But I just want you to be
With me
Until the very end

No one knows me anymore than you
Than you
No one knows how I feel more than you
Than you
Only you
Only you do


LAYING IN THE RYE
Michael Wickham

07. Laying In The Rye

3:55

I can't give up
There's nothing I would do to hold on to you
I need you to stay
Having you by me here helps me to get through
I'm not letting go
What do I do to keep you from walking away?

But over on the other side
Someone's waiting just like me
I know how hard it is to be the one waiting
And laying in the rye
Knowing all too well that soon it will die
As the summer heat begins to rise
And I just want to see your eyes the next time
The sun does shine

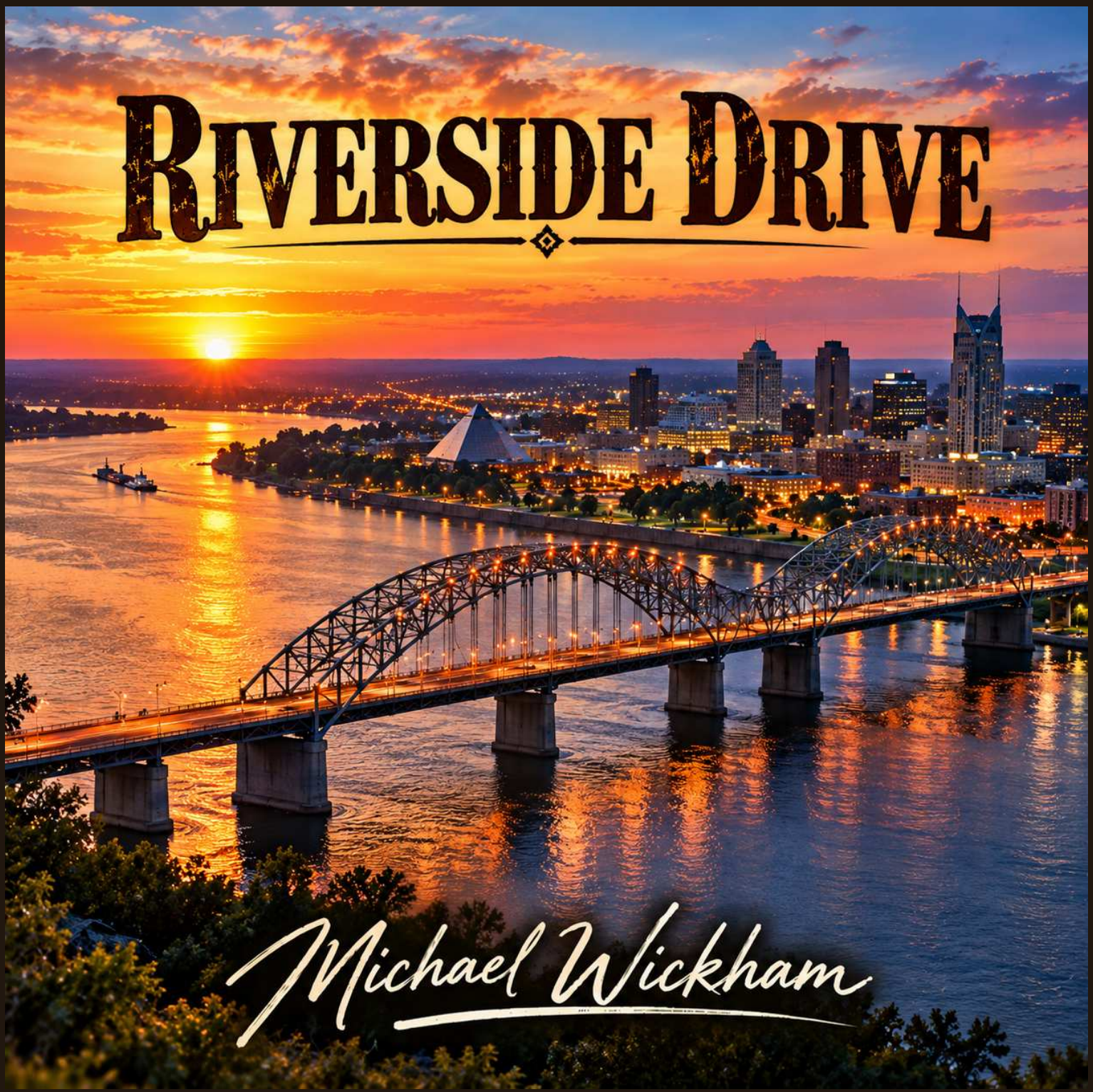
Don't walk away
I pray that you will stay at least one more day
Let the night end with you still laying right here by my side
Do you hear my cries?
Begging you not to break this heart of mine

But over on the other side
Someone's waiting just like me
I know how hard it is to be the one waiting
And laying in the rye
Knowing all well that soon it will die
As the summer heat begins to rise
And I just want to see your eyes the next time
The sun does shine

I fell asleep
When I woke up
I just wanted to weep
You were gone
Left me here, laying here all alone
I will be here
I will be here
I will be here

On the other side, waiting
And laying in the rye
Hoping you'll be back before the summer heat does rise
Waiting and laying in the rye
Hoping the cool air keeps the rye growing strong and high
I just want to see your eyes

The next time the sun does shine
The next time the sun does shine


RIVERSIDE DRIVE
Michael Wickham

08. Riverside Drive

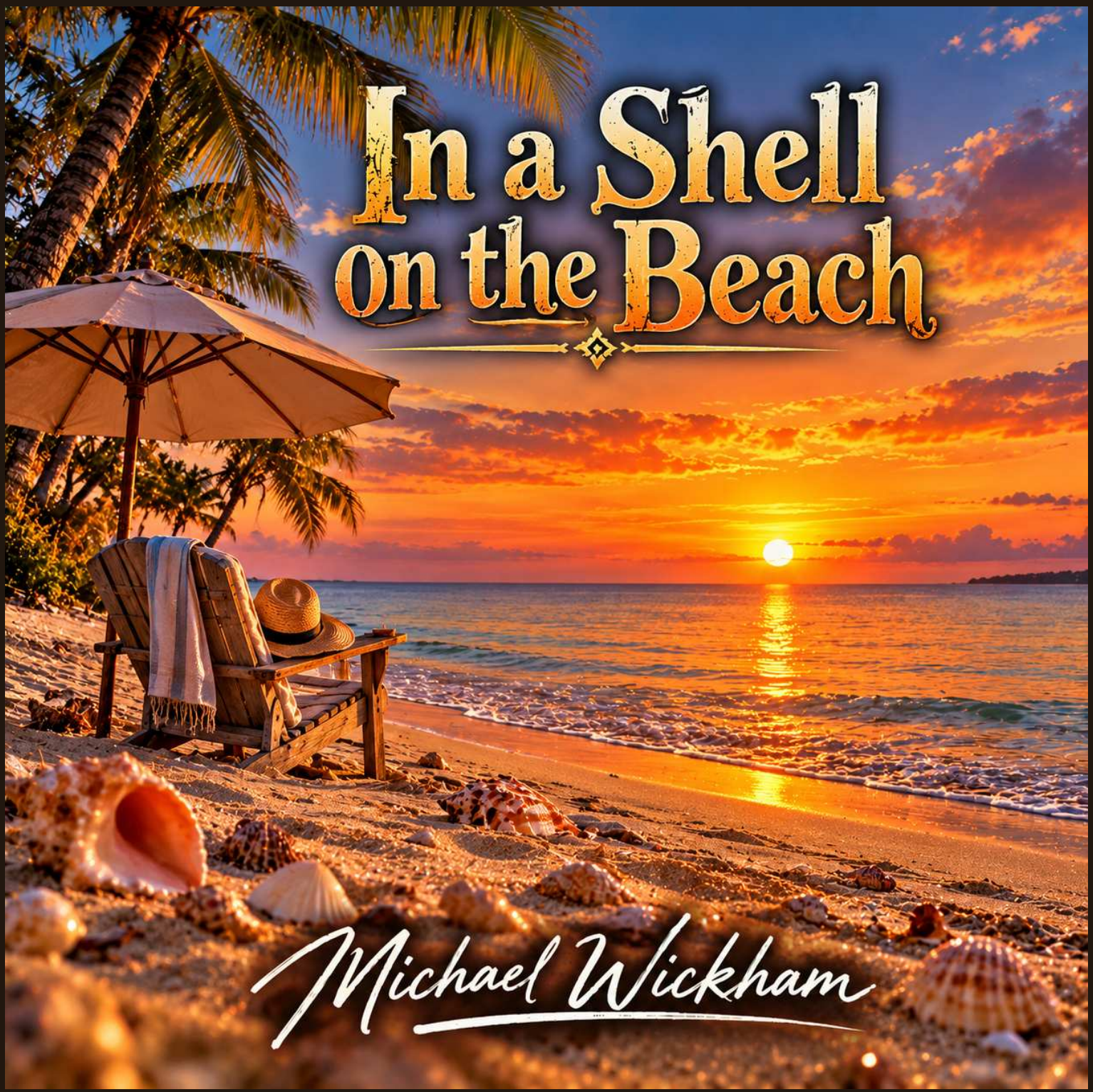
3:39

I was looking for my wedding ring
That I wore many years before
When I looked in the dresser drawer
everything fell out all over the floor
I had to get down on my knees
Which I couldn't do with much ease
Lying underneath all that mess
I saw her picture in an old wedding dress
I picked it up with a smile
I leaned back for a while
I started to reminisce
Of that sweet river kiss

The first time I saw her,
she was with someone else
To him she was just a blur
I pulled up beside her,
she let out a subtle smile
She said she hadn't
been happy for a while
She said meet me down
on Riverside Drive
as I drove away
I felt so alive

The very next day
We met down on Riverside Drive
I stared into her deep brown eyes
I said
let's take a picture
of our heads touching together
It'll look like a lover's postcard letter
I gave her a kiss
on her rosy lips
Then she slowly drove away

I set down that picture,
got up off that floor
The tears kept on rolling
till I couldn't cry anymore
That dark haired beauty
who barely knew me
Married me
and made me feel alive
She's long passed away
but as I sit here today
I can see our heads
still touching
down on Riverside Drive!
Riverside Drive
Riverside Drive


In a Shell
on the Beach
Michael Wickham

09. In a Shell on the Beach

3:18

Baskets
of pillows and throws
Sand dollars and seashells
in a glass fishbowl
Sand between my
fingers and my toes
Watching the tide
ebb and flow
So maybe I should just
Stay right here
Stay right here

Basking
in the summer sun
Watching people having fun
Sipping on my ice-cold beer
Listening to the crashing waves
Following the dolphins as they play
A walk on the beach can change your day!
But I'm getting sleepy, so I close my eyes
When I wake up the sun has gone down
The salty air has made me high
I look there is no one else around
The night is cool and clear
So, I think I'll just stay right here
Stay right here
In a shell on the beach

Pictures
of beach life on the walls
I can hear
those palm trees call
Outside
the gulf stream flows
So down to the beach
here I go
and get sand between my
fingers and my toes
So maybe I should just
Stay right here
Stay right here

Basking
in the summer sun
Watching people having fun
Sipping on my ice-cold beer
Listening to the crashing waves
Following the dolphins as they play
A walk on the beach can change your day!
But I'm getting sleepy, so I close my eyes
When I wake up the sun has gone down
The salty air has made me high
I look there is no one else around
The night is cool and clear
So, I think I'll just stay right here
Stay right here
In a shell on the beach
In a shell on the beach
In a shell on the beach


Moving In With
Her Rules
☑ My Rules
☑ My Way
☑ Our Home
☑ Happy Life
♡
Kitchen
(My Way)
Michael Wickham

10. Moving In With Her Rules

3:29

I moved in in the middle of the summer
About a year after I got her number
That year seemed to last forever
Until the day she said, "Come on over and
bring everything that you own"

But there were rules that I had to follow
Some were like a hard pill to swallow
Nothing could wait until tomorrow
I had to hang with my friends on the down low
I'd never seen so many pillows
Spent a hundred to paint her toenails
Mama never told me about those
Living with someone blues
And moving in with her rules

I drove to the trailer and loaded up
Just some junk and clothes in my pickup truck
I even took my mama's good book
Promised her someday I'd give it a good look
But I wish that I had known

There were rules that I had to follow
Some were like a hard pill to swallow
Nothing could wait until tomorrow
I had to hang with my friends on the down low
I'd never seen so many pillows
Spent a hundred to paint her toenails
Mama never told me about those
Living with someone blues
And moving in with her rules

I walked down to the graveyard
Told mama I was trying real hard
I turned and saw my dad behind me
He said, "Son, I wish I could still be"

Having rules that I had to follow
Hers could be a hard pill to swallow
She just couldn't wait until tomorrow
I had to hang with my friends on the down low
I bought her so many pillows
Spent a hundred to paint her toenails
your mama was worth every one of those
Living with someone blues
And moving with her rules

So son, go home and do whatever
It takes for you to keep her
And hope that she asks you to forever
To do every one of those
Moving in with her rules

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Written, Produced & Performed by Michael Wickham

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