

# A NIGHT IN THE LIFE OF

by Mary Aldin

And so, because it was Thursday and warm, we went to Sunset Sound to say hello to David Crosby. Very late at night, and very good music happening; Joni Mitchell was recording, and David in his producer's chair was making her laugh, easing the tension, making it work. Joni has an ethereal quality to her--almost Collins, but uniquely herself. And oh, the songs. Marcy, and Michael From Mountains, and listen to Ian and Sylvia do her Circle Game. So, so beautiful.

And then it was midnight, and David wanted to see his old friend Paul Kantner, who after all was only just up the street at RCA. And so into the car and off to fetch Kantner, for David couldn't leave the session. Past the teenyboppers waiting anxiously outside, hoping for a glimpse of Jorma or Grace, past the three--three!--policemen guarding the inner sanctum, and so at last into the studio. The quiet was intense. Grace in the studio, earphones on, belting out a song. Marty Balin sitting in the control room hunched over a magazine. Casady nowhere in sight. Jorma sitting on a couch, alternately listening and turning to say something to the people next to him. Very few outsiders, mostly close friends and a manager or two, all listening, listening.

But no Paul Kantner. What to do?

And so it was that ten minutes later we pulled up to Sunset with not Paul, but Jorma, squeezed into the front seat of the new Renault that I'm just learning to drive. David, being David, was just as glad to see HIM, and we left them there, listening intently to the latest track, rapping, what's been happening, talking, smoking, digging.

And then to Western, for after all, a promise is a promise, and I DID say I'd be there. Hearts and Flowers, three of the greatest people in the world, or to be more specific, in my life. Country Larry, tall and flatpicking. Davy Dawson, autoharp freak, coffeedrinker, and good person. Bernie, smile and blond girlfriend and knowing about the music.

A short listen and then off, to the Whisky to see James Cotten and his blues band; what can I say? They're great. And there we were at one-thirty in the morning and in come Jorma and David, move over, everybody. And from somewhere there is Eric Clapton, and Ron Muller, and a lot of talking about music and people and James Cotton. And wanting to know, I asked Jorma whether he'd heard the rumor that Grace was leaving the group. "Again?" he asked. "Come ON, Mary." He hears that one every week.

And not really caring, I asked about Jack, not in evidence at the session OR the Whisky, and Jorma said only that Jack is getting into transcendental meditation, or something, and had been at the session but left. And why DO people start absurd rumors, making it necessary for the performers to either issue denials, which is a drag, or ignore the whole thing, and let it build up into colossal absurdity?

And finally the house lights went up, and we all stretched and headed out the door. And there was Peter Yarrow, looking healthy and my goodness, where's your beard got to? And he's shaved, and looking good behind it, and we rapped for awhile about people and things and then split.

Amazing how many people there are in the record industry that all know one another and all hang out together, and more amazing yet is how real they are. Music is a lovely way to live a life, yes? It was a great night!