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DIDX 2390
DIGITAL REMASTERING
MONAURAL

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

1. ONLY THE LONELY
2. ANGEL EYES
3. WHAT'S NEW?
4. IT'S A LONESOME OLD TOWN
5. WILLOW WEEP FOR ME
6. GOOD-BYE
7. BLUES IN THE NIGHT
8. GUESS I'LL HANG MY TEARS
OUT TO DRY
9. EBB TIDE
10. SPRING IS HERE
11. GONE WITH THE WIND
12. ONE FOR MY BABY
13. SLEEP WARM
14. WHERE OR WHEN*†

Produced by VOYLE GILMORE
Arranged and Conducted by NELSON RIDDLE
*Previously Unreleased Selection



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DIGITAL MASTERING



FRANK SINATRA
sings for

only
the
lonely

Orchestra conducted by NELSON RIDDLE



Notes by Sammy Cahn and James Van Heusen, lyricist and composer of the Academy Award winning song, All The Way, and of the title song in this album.

Loneliness is many things to many people. For the keeper of the lighthouse it is the loneliness that attends endless days and nights of watching the angry sea. For the New York policeman on the dawn patrol it is the measured loneliness of his beat to the accompaniment of the nocturnal noises of the city.

For the lyricist and composer attempting to write a song of loneliness for Frank Sinatra it becomes the challenge of matching words with notes. Lonely words for equally lonely notes.

The Frank Sinatra that we know and have known (and hardly know) is an artist with as many forms and patterns as can be found in a child's kaleidoscopic. *Come Fly With Me* is one Sinatra. *All The Way* is another Sinatra. A Sinatra singing a hymn of loneliness could very well be the real Sinatra.

What kind of a lonely song to write? The album itself would contain songs like *One For My Baby, What's New?* and *Blues In The Night*, the very best of the songwriter's art dedicated to the "Lost One," or as Frank likes to describe them, "The Losers." (This album was nearly titled "For Losers Only," until it was decided that this could well be mistaken for a collection of songs dedicated to the gentlemen of the two-dollar window.)

First, then came the title, *Only The Lonely*. Then came the melody.

Van Heusen: "The lyric came very hard. Session after session without the glimmer of a line. Sammy is as facile a man with words as there is in our business, and I thought changing the melody here and there might be helpful. He wouldn't permit me to change a note."

Cahn: "I believe this to be one of the best melodies Jimmy ever composed. While I usually refuse to write a lyric that 'comes hard,' I'm delighted now that the melody is exactly as I first heard it."

Here, then, is Frank Sinatra in *Only The Lonely*. We have written many songs for Frank, his reaction is never over-enthusiastic. It is always the most imperceptible nod. We hope that you will give this album of songs of loneliness the same imperceptible nod, because where Sinatra is concerned we have come to know it means "It's a gasser!"

When the late Nelson Riddle, the distinguished arranger-conductor who from the middle 1950s contributed so significantly to so many of the very finest recordings Frank Sinatra ever made, was asked to name his own favorites of the albums he made with the singer, he unhesitatingly cited this and the *Songs For Swingin' Lovers* albums. The latter, which perhaps best typifies the special easy-swinging way with ballad fare associated with Sinatra and Riddle, was their second such collaboration along these lines, the first being the aptly titled 10" LP of April, 1954, *Swing Easy*. And that, in turn, had been an outgrowth of their very first album collaboration, *Songs For Young Lovers*, recorded in early November of 1953.

As has become increasingly evident, these were important, even ground-breaking albums, perhaps the very earliest to be organized along purely conceptual lines. This alone would distinguish them from other album productions of the period — which generally were little more than collections of hit singles or other recent recordings by a performer — but what made these Sinatra-Riddle collaborations so unusual and so successful, artistically and commercially, at the time of their release, and what continues to compel our interest and admiration even now, are the unprecedentedly, extraordinarily high levels of focused artistry they consistently attained in them, which place them among the very finest achievements in all of American popular music. A number of them, in fact, are widely regarded

as classics, establishing the standards by which other such efforts are to be judged. They've never been equaled, let alone eclipsed. This album is such a one.

Recorded over three days in late May and June of 1958, *Only The Lonely* was little different than those album projects which had preceded it. As they usually did, Sinatra, Riddle and Voyle Gilmore, the singer's recording producer, had discussed the approach to be followed in the album — that is, the overall emotional mood that would be projected through its selection of songs and their settings — had gone through large numbers of songs before a final selection had been made, the last word in this area being the singer's, and Riddle set about writing the orchestrations. Recording commenced on May 29, 1958, at which time six selections were undertaken — *Only The Lonely; Angel Eyes; Willow, Weep For Me; Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out to Dry; Ebb Tide; Spring Is Here*. On the 24th of the following month Sinatra and Riddle returned to Capitol's studios to commit to record *What's New?, Blues In The Night* and *Gone With The Wind*, and on the following day *It's A Lonesome Old Town, Good-Bye* and *One For My Baby (And One More For The Road)*. Every one a standard of uncompromising excellence and, as you'll hear, every one given a flawless performance by the singer and his arranger-conductor. In the estimation of their writers, several of these readings are in fact the songs' definitive ones. Even without their acknowledgement, this is apparent solely on the evidence of one's ears. Rarely has one heard singing of such power and persuasiveness, qualities made all the more so by the direct, nonhistrionic character of the singing, which never once strains after effect, never strikes a false or artificial note but which in its unerring, compelling sincerity and forthrightness utterly and immediately convinces. And so does Riddle's writing, never so right or emotionally authentic as here, and never so perfectly, helpfully imaginative.

The late-night mood, wistful and melancholy, is immediately established by the album's opener and title song, a particularly affecting lament for love gone wrong that is notable for Sinatra's deeply moving, uncloying, beautifully enunciated singing and Riddle's lovely, complementary writing for the string and woodwind orchestra. A deceptively upbeat quality is introduced, briefly as it turns out, as Sinatra attacks the seldom-performed verse to Matt Dennis' beautifully limned *Angel Eyes*, but the mood of quiet desperation of the late-night toper reasserts itself as soon as the singer starts the first, familiar strain of the song. Riddle's writing is particularly, subtly helpful in maintaining the doleful mood. This performance, stunning as it undoubtedly is, is succeeded by what is arguably the single finest, most powerful reading of the Haggart-Burke composition *What's New?* ever recorded, Sinatra's slow, stately, emotion-wrenching vocal framed by one of the most exquisite orchestrations Riddle ever devised for the singer. Listen and marvel; this is perfection.

The introduction to the somber *It's A Lonesome Old Town* very effectively offers a fugitive allusion to *Angel Eyes'* melodic line before establishing its own tellingly powerful mood of almost total emotional desolation, and this almost imperceptibly segues (emotionally, that is) into the equally affecting *Willow Weep For Me*, another definitive performance in which the singer marshals emotional forces of such depth and unfeigned sincerity, and does so with such unforced, convincing persuasiveness, that one literally feels he's never heard the song before. Certainly one's never heard it with such utter revelatory power as Sinatra exposes in this performance.

A chamber music mood introduces Gordon Jenkins' unabashedly lovely *Good-Bye*, a song most closely associated with Swing band leader Benny Goodman. Once you've heard Sinatra's unforced, deeply felt vocal interpretation, however, you'll understand the song's emotional implications, the real power it possesses. Then too, you'll probably never again be able to hear *Blues In The Night* as anything other than the very, touchingly expressive lament it is

writers Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer meant it to be. Certainly Sinatra and Riddle eschew anything of the coy or light-hearted so many lesser interpreters have vested the song with. The fundamental lyric conceit of *Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry* may be a bit forced, but never in the singer's wholly feelingful, convincingly dramatic interpretation. We believe him, and that's more than enough. Riddle's sumptuous orchestral setting pleads the song's case equally well.

Robert Maxwell and Carl Sigman must have been extraordinarily pleased, if not overjoyed by Sinatra's magnificent reading of their *Ebb Tide*, one of the most uncloyingly tender, persuasive and utterly beautiful interpretations ever given a song that in lesser hands too often has tended to the florid and bathetic. Aided greatly by Riddle's sympathetic orchestration, the singer here shapes a performance that never once seems less than masterly and the piece itself anything other than a paradigm of the songwriter's art. *Spring Is Here* is, simply, perfection. Beautifully, intelligently sung, with an almost conversational naturalness, it is ravishingly beautiful, no small measure of its success deriving from the eloquent, unobtrusive expressiveness with which Riddle has framed the singer. Much the same is true of Allie Wrubel's marvelous *Gone With The Wind*, which Sinatra graces with a spacious, unhurried treatment in which each and every word and note is given its proper weight in the unfolding drama that he reveals as the true nature of the song. As in the performance that follows it, this is a perfect demonstration of what Riddle meant when he noted of the singer, "Frank gives more thought to a lyric than most other vocalists, and after sizing up a song this way and that, he uses all the tricks of the trade to accomplish his goals."

Finally, there is what is easily and incontestably the album's high point, the ultimate saloon song, Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer's gripping portrait of the rueful toper, *One For My Baby (And One More For The Road)*, the perfect vehicle for one who has on more than one occasion described himself as just a saloon singer. With the spare backing of Bill Miller's piano, augmented with only occasional orchestral touches, Sinatra paints a powerfully dramatic picture, creating a performance forever associated with him, and rounding out what is easily one of his most gripping conceptual recordings and, as such, one of the classic albums of American popular song, as rewarding and satisfying today as when first released three decades ago.

Expanding for compact disc release the analog original are two selections recorded at the very next session — September 11, 1958 — following the third of the *Only The Lonely* sessions — *Sleep Warm* (previously included in Capitol LP 1538) and the stunning *Where Or When*, a true tour de force for the singer. Supported solely by pianist Bill Miller for the first 28 bars, Sinatra sings with great heartfelt expressiveness, shaping the song with a keen sense of drama, building in emotional intensity all the while. The orchestra enters only at the very end of the performance, capping off what is arguably one of the singer's finest and most touchingly poignant ballad readings. As for *Sleep Warm*, the arrangement is by Nelson Riddle, who also conducted. Inexplicably, the recording was not issued during Sinatra's tenure with Capitol, and prior to its appearance here we heard only in the British Capitol set *The Rare Sinatra*. It's a classic. But, then so is all of *Only The Lonely*.

— Pete Welding

ONLY THE LONELY

(S. Cahn/J. Van Heusen)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

ANGEL EYES

(M. Dennis/E. Brent)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

WHAT'S NEW?

(B. Haggart/J. Burke)
Recorded on June 24, 1958

IT'S A LONESOME OLD TOWN

(H. Tobias/C. Kisco)
Recorded on May 25, 1958

WILLOW WEEP FOR ME

(A. Ronell)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

GOOD-BYE

(G. Jenkins)
Recorded on June 25, 1958

BLUES IN THE NIGHT

(H. Arlen/J. Mercer)
Recorded on June 24, 1958

GUESS I'LL HANG MY TEARS OUT TO DRY

(S. Cahn/J. Styne)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

EBB TIDE

(R. Maxwell/C. Sigman)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

SPRING IS HERE

(R. Rodgers/L. Hart)
Recorded on May 29, 1958

GONE WITH THE WIND

(A. Wrubel/H. Magidson)
Recorded on June 24, 1958

ONE FOR MY BABY

(H. Arlen/J. Mercer)
Recorded on June 25, 1958

SLEEP WARM

(L. Spence/M. Keith/A. Bergman)
Recorded on September 11, 1958

WHERE OR WHEN*†

(R. Rodgers/L. Hart)
Recorded on September 11, 1958

Produced by VOYLE GILMORE
Arranged and conducted by NELSON RIDDLE
Remastered by Larry Walsh at Capitol Recording Studios

**In addition to all the selections included in the original LP release, the Compact Disc version of this classic Frank Sinatra album contains additional selections, remixed to the digital format from the analog master recordings to insure superior sound reproduction.*



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