“Good Intentions Paving Company,” Joanna Newsom

How I said to you honey just open your heart
When I’ve got trouble even opening a honey jar
And that right there is where we are

Honey here is jelly roll, blues porn, a promise and an admission. In classic blues, *I make the best jelly roll in town* is brag and come on; in another era, *I can’t open my own honey jar* is as much admission\(^{108}\) as provocation.\(^{109}\) This is sorry as well as *you’re never gonna get it (again)*. You had it—you were it—and now I’m singing away from here (read: you). Still, the song lingers, the story draw(l)s out. It’s love after the fact—making love out of what’s gone.\(^{110}\) To say *I wanted you to pull over and hold me ’til I can’t remember my own name* is to say you didn’t. Here we are where we ended up: The Good Intentions Paving Company,\(^{111}\) companied by compensatory horns that lead us out.

The road is paved with lost advances—or/and advancements. Relationships are big (or little) business and *that right there is where we are*. This coupon is good for one free verse. This song is in stead of one (more) good time. Something happened but what is it? You left but you left your self (or (your) trouble) here. Every good motto leaves itself at the door. Don’t slam the car on your way out. The song is cloying in that it has no trouble opening a honey jar. Listen: it’s still going on.

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\(^{108}\) and sign of the times
\(^{109}\) *Hello my old country hello* is as well a taunt and flirt at the old man
\(^{110}\) verbing and reverbing across a verse treated like a chorus—*Won’t you love me a spell*, which is to say the saying makes a happening, though *no amount of talking is gonna soften the fall*. Language, as real as it is, is not reality.
\(^{111}\) As Bellow writes to Roth with reference to TGIPC, circa 1984, “[I] fucked up again.”