



“Night Songs & Laments” was written and recorded over the past four years and the songs are highly personal responses to events taking place in my life at the time. And it’s true... most of the songs were written late at night. It takes me a long time to write songs... years sometimes.

The lyrics to “The Sirens of Tonight” are a call for the forces of good to triumph over evil in both my personal and global outlook. The song may seem to be about nothing and everything at the same time as it was written in a manner that can be interpreted in multiple ways for anyone’s own personal situation or beliefs. Whereas Homer’s “Sirens” drew the sailors to their deaths mine represent the forces of “good” calling me out to take on the forces of “evil”. I am not now nor have EVER been a religious person... So I leave all to make their own interpretations.

“Falling Down / The Facebook Song” is about the infinite emptiness of total connectivity in today’s world of so-called “social-media”. Society is indeed “Falling Down” under the cascading effects of this new digital global order. I left Facebook 2 years ago and have never looked back!

Bob Dylan wrote two songs with the same title as “I Shall Be Free”. Dylan numbered one of his #10... while mine gets the #295 from the Gibson model of guitar I played throughout the song. The song concerns the liberated freedom of getting to a certain age where one no longer has to worry about what anyone thinks of their actions. And I am SO TOTALLY there!

My dear friend and musical companion Denise Pineau passed away a little less than two years ago. She was a close friend for many decades... a terrific operatic singer... and the voice of “The Queen of Hearts” on the 1998 recording of my musical “Dreams for Alice”. Denise was the inspiration behind “I Can’t Seem To Tell You Goodbye” and this album is dedicated to her.

I follow this with a “remake” of “The Cheshire Cat Song” from the same musical. I was looking for an excuse to record a better version of it, and the “Cat” was also Denise’s favorite.

I moved to the Catskills just outside of Woodstock a little over eight years ago and put together a little hilltop paradise for myself called “The Grouse House” that operates as both a recording studio and a one suite B&B. “Catskill Hills” is my love song to the region.

My second Catskills song follows with “The Last Silent Snow”. It was the last song completed for the album after this long harsh winter finally came to an end.

I return to my roots with “Louisiana Lament”... a song about the rape of the state and it’s natural resources by the oil and gas industry. I recorded it “live” with me and the acoustic guitar laying down the initial track alone. I wanted to come as close as possible to the sound I once got when I played clubs across South Louisiana in the 70s and early 80s.

“Truckers Lament” is my ode to Interstate 81... a MAJOR truck route... the highway runs between my home in New York... diagonally down to my Louisiana roots. I’ve driven the route at least three dozen times over the years and I wrote this from the point of view of truckers.

The album ends with “It Takes Me Home”... a song about missing my father as well as the power of music to pull you back to memories of childhood. Written after discovering a long lost harmonica from my college days in a dusty bottom drawer of my studio. During the second half of the song I’m playing my father’s 1932 Martin Mandolin, which he played in the thirties with “The Red Hot Ramblers” in Shreveport Louisiana.

I want to thank Peter Ecklund and Peter McCaw for playing horn and bass on a couple of tracks and also Dr. Randall Rissman and Counselor Heidi from the Maverick Clinic in Woodstock for helping pull me back to my creative center . Hope to be playing “live” more in the future!

All acoustic guitar parts were played on a 1956 Gibson ES100 while the electrics used include a 1976 Les Paul Black Beauty Anniversary Model and a 1952 Gibson ES295 on most of the tracks... a 1955 Les Paul Junior on Trucker’s Lament... plus all of the Cheshire Cat guitars are played on a custom built Pensa “Strat” from Rudy’s on 48th street in Manhattan. There is no “slide” used... it’s all “whammy bar” shit. All recording, mixing, and mastering was done here at the GROUSE HOUSE STUDIO near Woodstock New York. www.GROUSE-HOUSE.com

GILBERT HETHERWICK - APRIL 2015 www.HETHERWICK-MUSIC.com

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(1) The Sirens of Tonight

In the darkness of the shadows with the passing of the night
 When the better part of angels have retreated from out sight
 When the worst we can imagine has so clearly taken flight
 And the trials in which we find ourselves have blinded us from sight

TONIGHT – Like a beacon through the fog and the cold
 TONIGHT - On the breakers as the sunlight unfolds
 TONIGHT – Like the sirens calling out to me by name
 TONIGHT – Through the thunder their sweet voices came

Staring up into the ceiling where no answer’s ever found
 Running up and down the stairways in the dawn’s near silent sound
 Can we crystalize our visions in the hopes we turn around
 ALL these darkened forces forming and the lies that so abound

TONIGHT – Like a beacon through the fog and the cold
 TONIGHT - On the breakers as the sunlight unfolds
 TONIGHT – Like the sirens calling out to me by name
 TONIGHT – Through the thunder their sweet voices came

THIS CANNOT WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW... IT'S TIME WE TAKE THIS FIGHT TONIGHT...

As the waters rush out... So the waters rush in
 Through the undertow... There's a path from within

And it's TONIGHT.... (repeat above)

THIS CANNOT WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW... IT'S TIME WE TAKE THIS FIGHT TONIGHT...
 THIS CANNOT WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW... THESE TIMES HAVE NEVER SEEMED SO RIGHT

As we sail along in darkness with the devil's danger near
 May the sirens upward guide us to a time beyond these fears...
 Tonight...

(2) Falling Down – The Facebook Song

I could be the friend you never could find... I could make amends and you'd never mind...
 I could be your part time lover... Living on the lamb and running under cover...
 I could be the friend that you could never ever deny!

And I can see you falling down... I can see you on the ground.
 I can see you falling... Down to the ground...

I could be the light that shines in your eyes... Or maybe just the truth that lasts through the lies
 I could be the friend that's always there forever... With nothing in our past or the future or whatever
 I could be the friend that you could never ever deny

And I can see you falling down... I can see you on the ground
 I can see you falling down... I can see you falling... Down to the ground...

I could be the friend you never could find... Hit me back again and I'll answer in time
 I could be your part time lover... Living on the lamb and running under cover
 I could be the friend that you could never ever deny!

(3) I Shall Be Free #295

In the dark... In the dark of the turning day
 There's a spark... There's a spark out beyond the gray
 A new sunrise... A new day's dawn... I realize... I must move on...

And I shall be free... To Fly... Away...

All my pasts... All my pasts are such a distant haze
 Dies were cast... Dies were cast and I turned the page
 I have NO fear... I feel NO pain... And you're still here... Most every day
 Yes... I shall be free... I shall be free

To Fly.... Away... To a time beyond today...
 And I shall be strong... As I chase each new day's dawn...

(4) I Can't Seem To Tell You Goodbye (Song for Denise)

Deep in the night while the spirits were in flight...
 And the moonlight cast wide past the shades
 I awakened from my sleep to the memories that I keep
 And I whispered... so softly... your name...

You said I don't have to worry about you at all... And not to ask questions or why...
 I don't have to worry about you at all... But I can't seem to tell you goodbye...

Though the years had now passed and the memories seemed to last
 As is natural... our lives slipped apart...
 When the call came today... Filled with sadness tears and pain...
 You were stronger... than I... from the start...

You said I don't have to worry about you at all...

Standing tall... With a voice that soared so high above us all..
 That gorgeous sound... And now the Queen of Hearts herself is homeward bound...

(5) The Cheshire Cat Song (from the musical "Dreams For Alice")

Down here they know me as the Cheshire Cat
 I am afraid I DO KNOW where it's at
 In the middle of darkness... In the middle of the day
 I am the cat who'll show you all the way

Down to the right you'll find the Hatter's house
 Down to the left that March Hare and his mouse
 I've seen it all you know I've been there before
 Ask me no questions I'll tell you no more!
 I'm the Cheshire Cat.... ALICE! So glad to meet you..... ALICE!
 Always a pleasure... ALICE! I'm the Cheshire Cat.....ALICE!

That Hatter is as mad as mad can be... I think the March Hare's who you'd like to see
 If you leave now you'll be in time for tea... It's quite a party as I think you'll see

In the middle of a path where there's no wrong or right
 In the middle of a laugh I hope you'll see the light
 In the middle of a dream I smile from ear to ear
 In the middle of the day you'll always find me here
 Cause I'm the Cheshire Cat.... ALICE! (Repeat chorus)

Now a dog's tail does wag when he's happy not sad... And he growls when he's angry or mad
 But I'm not the same... It's an "opposites" game... And it proves once again we're all mad!
 Fade away Fade away... I'm sorry Alice but I have to fade away...

(6) Catskill Hills

Clouds roll and flow... Fall casts a glow...
 Trees standing Tall... While their leaves start to fall...

In these Catskill hills our lives and dreams are filled with our magic mother nature's simple song
 Whether winds within the trees... or these roaring mountain streams
 As a symphony of life surrounds us all

Night is a silent show... Deer come and go...
 And low a night owl calls... As the moon shines down on all
 In these Catskill Hills... (chorus)

Stones of grey and blue... With light that shines so true
 Whether Cole or Church or Brown... Or what Seeger did with sound...
 Art's harmony with nature's there for you...
 In these Catskill Hills... (chorus)

(7) The Last Silent Snow

In the evening... As the sun sets
 Through the windswept empty trees
 There's a chorus... From the forests
 As the night falls tenderly

As we stand on our own... Staring out through the cold
 While the last silent snow... Fades away... Fades away...

With the shadows growing smaller... And the mountains seeming taller
 Hold me closely in this moment... As the winter melts away

As we stand on our own (chorus)

As the winter turns to spring and the forest nature sings
 In a song that's as old as the stones
 As the snow then melts to streams that go roaring through our dreams
 With the circles of the seasons coming home...

(8) Louisiana Lament

Lying up tonight real quiet... I was thinkin bout the ties that bind
 With thirty years in Dixie... And thirty-two a Yankee
 My allegiance is to neither disguise...
 But the feelings always strong... For that place to which I long...
 Like the passions for a woman of my youth...
 But that woman of my youth has now fallen to the few....
 With abilities to monetize the truth....

Wash away Louisiana... Wash away from the shore... Wash away Louisiana... Ever more...

Knockin round the quarter for an evening while the spirits were beginning to descend...
 There's magic to the madness and a cheap triumphant sadness
 To these overall enlightening events...
 Fading wrought iron soaring glories... Up the stairs to second stories
 As reasons and realities repent

Wash away Louisiana... Wash away from the shore
 Wash away Louisiana... Wash away ever more...

Just hanging on by a few strands of thread...
 The rape of the lands and the marsh left for dead...
 With five years to fix it... Could emptier words have been said?
 Histories lessons never learned... As the state loses again...

(9) Truckers Lament

Frozen in the driver's seat...
 Trying to make the numbers meet
 Southbound screaming down the road
 Bethlehem to Allentown to turn another load around
 Burning out the vapors in my soul
 And I'm out on the road again...

The shadows of a pentagram...
 The Devil's in the final plan
 Waiting for the story to unfold
 Underneath the overpass a broken sign ahead for gas
 Brake lights flashing through the cold
 And I'm out on the road again...

Down this highway... there's no wrong way... there's no right way... there's just only me...

Silicone at Sloppy Joe's... Sitting empty so it goes... Waiting for the night's early show...
 Pay the check and lighten up... grab another coffee cup

Trying to keep your distance and control
And I'm out on the road again...

Memories of another night... Shadow bars and flaming lights...
Her face glowed warmly through the cold...
Harrisburg to Chattanooga... Birmingham to Tuscaloosa
Eighty One to Twenty... and I'm home...
I'm out on the road again.

(10) It Takes Me Home

As the moon is rising high and the stars are flying by
I stand alone upon the deck to face the view....
As the memories taken hold turned to words I would have told
Had I only more than moments left with you...
It takes me home....

Somewhere in my bottom drawer my harmonicas are stored
And I stumbled on one rusted from misuse....
But the sound was sure and true.... Soaring back into my youth...
And I play that rusty harp tonight for you... It takes me home....

Photographs and memories will fade into the past...
But the sound of music rising up.... We know will always last....
It takes me home.

WRITE TO ME AT Hetherwick@me.com

GILBERT HETHERWICK