

Intro

Nothing special to note here, other than that the line “**A tale of bargaining and compromise... or the distinct lack thereof.**” is a direct reference to the original song I wrote in 2020 called ‘bargaining/compromise’, which acted as the foundation for ‘The Ballad of Dr. Jekyll’

And of course, this is the first appearance of the Narrator of the whole album, who was nameless in his own story, and remains so in this.

The Ballad of Dr. Jekyll

This song is somewhat unique in that most of the lyrics in the song weren’t originally written with Jekyll and Hyde in mind, and were instead original lyrics about my own mental state at a somewhat dark (-ish) time in my life.

This song is really just a culmination of wanting to redo the original song (bargaining/compromise) in a new way, and I circumstantially read The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde at about the same time.

Due to how early in the process it was made, I ended up just using my sort of default, Australian-vocalist accent in this song, unlike in Dead Man’s Sea Shanty and Ode of the Cog, where I made a conscious effort to actually sound English. (It seems like most people can’t tell the difference anyway, so screw it.)

The Mr. Hyde Jive

Fun Fact! Somewhat similarly to The Ballad of Dr. Jekyll, the very beginning of this song (all up until “Is that what you wanna hear?”) was written long, long before I ever had an idea for a Jekyll & Hyde song.

The lyrics of this introduction, which are completely unchanged, were originally written about – and from the perspective of – the concept of addiction, and how fearful I am of it in general.

I never ended up having enough motivation to finish that concept, so I instead spun it as Mr. Hyde momentarily pretending to empathize with Dr. Jekyll, saying what he wanted to hear, before breaking the illusion and laughing in his face (at which point forward, the entire song is new and written for-purpose.)

My inspiration for the voice during the whole song was “90% That Handsome Devil, 10% Will Wood.”

“Perhaps you’re Dr. Right? If so, then I’ll be Mr. Wrong.” is a lil’ cheeky reference to a line by Utterson in the original novel,

“If he be Mr. Hyde,” he had thought, “I shall be Mr. Seek.”

My favourite rug-pull of the whole album, I purposely foreshadowed that the name of the album would be ‘The Main Event’ using the line

“So say hello to the main event, and say goodbye to the before.”

When the *true* album title was actually hinted immediately after, with

“And raise a glass up to the one and only: the lowly, unholy Gothic Whore!”

(It’s at this point Hyde stops talking to Jekyll, and instead starts addressing the audience.)

“...and see just how quickly they fall!”

:O it’s the thing!! the motif-y, melodic-y thing!!!

(This little melodic phrase is what I started calling the Fallen motif in my head, which I will continue to point out throughout the album.

Truthfully, it doesn’t mean anything ultra-specific, but it is something I sprinkled in a lot, so it’s worth mentioning.)

The ending of the song, where the instrumental cuts out and slowly builds up back to volume, is a cute little metaphorical, representational... thing, relating to the final message of the song itself, wherein Hyde basically tells the listener that black-and-white-ism is doomed to fail, and that you can’t ‘avert your eyes’ from the less palatable parts of your own self, lest the other, truly evil things that lay further behind escape instead.

Wilhelmina Waltz

Alt. Title: ‘Keep it in your pants, you weird, old vampire.’

This song was, perhaps unsurprisingly, inspired by ‘Vampire Reference in a Minor Key’ by Will Wood, which actually brings me to a common thread connecting pretty much every song in the album; “fuck your metaphors, let’s get literal.”

Lots of songs and stories (including some of my own (see: wings of wax.)) like to reference literature, novels and other past stories in an attempt to draw a metaphor to

their own circumstances. Obviously this makes a lot of sense, but I often found myself wishing that there was a more literal version of these interpretations, and thinking that it'd be fun to make them.

So this album is a bit of an inverse to that idea. Literal interpretations with some sprinklings of metaphor and analogy, as opposed to one big metaphor that makes reference to a story.

The other main objective I had for this song itself was to try and have Dracula himself toe the line between charming/romantic, and straight-up creepy.

...you can likely tell which lines fuel the latter.

I also wanna point out how much effort and I put into pronouncing the foreign words in the intro. I watched like, five separate videos for each individual word and properly practiced them to be accurate.

(Transylvania, Wallachia, Vlad Țepeș Dracula.)

"So darling, can you dance a waltz in five?"

was actually the first lyric I wrote for the song. I have no idea why, but I loved the idea of trying to make a song that was in 5/4 (at least for parts (in this case, the choruses)) but still kept the feeling of a waltz.

This also helps with making Dracula feel a little weird.

A little wacky, even.

Wonky, perhaps.

"Van Helsing the Dullard, Jonathan beloved... and the other three."

is a reference to Dr. John Seward, Art Holmwood and Quincey Morris who, when grouped with Van Helsing and Jonathan Harker (and Mina) act as the main protagonists of the novel.

"...when we bathe in the eternity?"

Fallen motif!

"Even Renfield dare not defile a cat as fair and as tasty as thee."

Aside from being another usage of the Fallen motif, this line segues into the next sections of the song that are performed by Renfield himself.

("Did you call me?")

I also just want to point out that in the original novel, Renfield is depicted less as Dracula's faithful servant, and more as a genuinely insane patient at the hospital where Dr. Seward works that gets tricked by the vampire king to aid in his plan. The intense ramblings in the second half of his section are made to parallel a warning he gives Mina – and only Mina – towards the end of the novel about Dracula.

"Well between you and me, if you're seeking my help..."

A very, very subtle Fallen motif, hidden in the bass-line.

"...TILL NOT EVEN DEATH CAN UNDO YOU."

Fallen motif!

"Darling, won't you let me come inside? Just say the word and I'll be right behind you to wake you goodnight."

The final lines of this song are also a cheeky reference to a lore nugget that time forgot, where vampires are physically disallowed to enter a given space/home until granted express permission by its owner/resident.

A Styrian Rhapsody

This is a bit of a strange one.

Basically, I wanted to really hone in on the idea that Carmilla was written as an allegory to lesbianism, but under a modern lens showing how outdated some of those implications would be.

Nothing explicit actually happens throughout the novel, but it was also written in 1872 so there wasn't a lot of leeway to be had, and it's very easy to draw conclusions on the original story's intent, which seems to set out to paint homosexuality in a pretty negative way.

fuck that lmao.

I also went into this song with a specific 'rule' in mind, which was that unless I specifically came up with an idea that necessitated it, I would not change my mind on a single aspect of the song. This rule was pervasive throughout pretty much every aspect; writing, lyrics, structure, mixing etc.

This was done partly as a challenge, but also as a neat way to tie in to the themes of the song involving societal standards and rules, and the condemnation placed upon people who didn't fit within them.

"If I want to write a song about gay vampires that changes key-center every 25 seconds, there's nothing you fuckers can do to stop me."

There's actually an extremely subtle Fallen motif starting right before the Narrator says **"This... is A Styrian Rhapsody."**

"Man, the 70s were an awful time to be a lesbian..."

'cos the book came out in 1872, bit cheeky.

I also just want to point out how fun – if straining – the voice during the final section of the song was to record.

(“But we won’t listen to fools that refuse to use the tools of change” onward.)

The Monster’s Lament

The thing that struck me most when reading Frankenstein for the first time was how incredibly eloquent the Monster (who offhandedly refers to himself as Adam at one point) ends up being when he meets with Victor.

I feel like there’s a general consensus of the Monster being a lumbering, simple, Minecraft-zombie type of character, and I really wanted to double down on that not being the case.

To that end, I purposely wrote the lyrics so that as the song progresses, he gets more and more eloquent, culminating in what might be one of my favourite sets of lyrics that I’ve ever written.

(“HE’S JUST A QUACK, CLAMBERING ABSENTLY” up till “LAND, SEA AND ICE, I WILL RAVAGE.”)

To the same end, though a lot more subtly, the Monster’s vocals become more and more melodic throughout the song. Starting purely as husky screeching, and slowly introducing more melodic and harmonic lines.

Also a fun little tidbit is that the basis of the instrumental for this song was written in like 2018. It was extremely bare-bones and lacking in many ways, and like 30 seconds long, but the basic DNA of it is the same. (At that point it was just a bit of drums and a bass line, which I slowly expanded on to make The Monster’s Lament.) Fitting, don’t you think?

This gets mentioned a lot, but the first chorus is essentially a shell version of the second, where all the lyrics and notes are the exact same, but the first run-through is missing a lot of them. This was again meant to be a way of mimicking the Monster’s progression to eloquence in the novel, as if in the first verse, he knows what he wants to say but is just unable to articulate it properly.

An Elegy for Fuck Mate This Title is Still Way Too Long, or ‘The Haunted Palace’

Probably the most thematically dense song of the whole album, this one.

First off, to parallel the original story (The Fall of the House of Usher), I intentionally kept the Narrator's name unspecified, and even baited the audience into thinking it might be revealed with

"My name! Remains unimportant..."

Secondly, the song is lyrically split into three distinct parts:

The Narrator, who is written as a third-person recount of Usher's decay into madness.

Roderick Usher himself, whose lines are ripped directly from the story, in which he writes his own song called 'The Haunted Palace.' (Obviously books don't have audio, so I had to write the melody, but the lyrics are identical.)

And what I call *The Ethelred Section*, which is in reference to the original story when the Narrator starts reading 'Mad Trist' in attempt to calm down Roderick.

This was basically a fun exercise in lyricism, where **the Narrator** was written to be completely original in tone and language (though still recounting the story), *The Ethelred Section* was written using very similar language to the original story, and *Roderick Usher's* parts were completely copied from the text.

(That's all just a very long-winded way of saying I'm proud of the lyrics in this one. Sue me.)

Third, during *The Ethelred Section*, you can hear three separate sound effects that mimic what's being said as the Narrator reads 'Mad Trist.'

This also happens in the original story. At first made to seem paranormal, it's revealed that Madeline never actually died, and all the sounds the characters hear can be attributed to her.

Finally, and something I've never seen anyone spot or mention, is that with the exception of the vocals and the aforementioned sound effects in the background of *The Ethelred Section*, every single sound you hear is an acoustic stringed instrument of some kind.

The most prominent instruments are probably the acoustic guitar and cello, but other things like a monochords, lutes, violins, double basses and all that fun stuff are used to create texture and emotion in the instrumental.

This was all done in reference to somewhat of a throwaway line, in which it's revealed that due to his on-setting mania, Roderick Usher has come to despise the sound of most musical instruments, (even though he's a musician) with the exception of a select few stringed instruments.

The final chorus of the song, though still ripped from the original story like the rest of *Roderick Usher's* parts, is instead sung by the Narrator. This is because, if you listen

very closely, it's revealed in the lyrics of the song that Roderick Usher fucking died like 20 seconds ago.

Also: I've seen a couple of people mention hearing the Fallen motif at the very end of the song. That wasn't intentional, but let's just pretend it was. Birth of the reader and all that.

Interlude

This literally just acts as an introduction for the two songs that would otherwise not fit in the album at all.

"...from across the pond we call 'genre.'" acts as a fun double-meaning that alludes to Treasure Island and 1984 being from completely different literary genres, but also that the two main characters are both Bri'ish.

Each of the two noises in the background here also allude to the next two songs. The accordion is obviously in reference to Dead Man's Sea Shanty, which features the accordion somewhat heavily.

The vague machine sounds, though, are slightly more interesting. Aside from feeling vaguely mechanical and fitting 1984 pretty well, the machinery heard (specifically ink-printing machines) were directly recorded at my old workplace, from which I quit at the same time I released Ode of the Cog.

Of course, that doesn't mean much in regards to Ode of the Cog itself, but when paired with Dear Machine. Hate, the Cog, which is written to be separate from the literature stuff and instead about my own thoughts, it ends up as an extremely satisfying artistic parallel.

Dead Man's Sea Shanty

What a change of pace!

Won't lie, there isn't much in the way of deep themes or artistic metaphors or whatever.

This was really just a way to shake things up in the album and have a bit of fun. (If you're looking for parallels to the original story, the Genius Lyrics page for this song does a pretty good job, so I'll mostly be pointing out some other fun facts.)

It's been pointed out to death, but the first few notes of the little riff that plays in every chorus is identical to the first few notes of Kass' Theme, from The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild. (A fuller version of that tune also plays in the little outro section at the very end of the song.)

Similarly, Song of Storms can be heard for a short while as Hawkins sings **"One more for our crew!"**

HOWEVER! Two other little melodic references are also hidden away in the instrumental of the song.

The first is Chopin's Funeral March, which shows up for a couple seconds as an unnamed pirate and Long John Silver remark:

"Cap'n Flint is long dead." "The river man holds his head."

The second is quite up-tempo snippet of the British national anthem – God Save the Queen (King now? idk), which plays immediately after Hawkins says

"young Ben Gunn's the British hero!"

There are two instances of the Fallen motif in this song! One as Hawkins sings **"and with a mind for the loot – and a tongue for the booze..."** and one as he sings **"I can't help but admit, the report of my gun..."**

Fun Fact! The final chorus of this song, along with the short "Encore!" section of Monster Mash, are the only parts of the entire album to have parts performed or recorded by anyone other than myself.

For both, I basically sent out a call to action in a few of my personal group chats, asking if anyone wanted to help out by recording a few lines.

For Dead Man's Sea Shanty, I really wanted to create the kind of feeling that a big crowd of people is singing along with the song (right after Hawkins says **"Let's bring her home, lads!"**) so I made sure to target not just fellow musos, but also people that have no musical experience at all (just like an average audience, essentially.)

Finally, the outro section is taken directly from the original novel itself, a little poem before the story starts titled 'To the Hesitating Purchaser', all the way down to the punctuation (in my copy, at least.)

Ode of the Cog

This one is actually a bit of a doozy.

Similar to Dead Man's Sea Shanty, there are lots of parallels to the original novel and movie annotated on the Genius Lyrics page that I simply can't be bothered re-reading, so I implore you to check that out.

But aside from those!

First of all, the main repeating synth melody you hear throughout the song is the same as a song from the OST of the 1984 film released in... 1984 ('Winston and His Diary' is the name of the piece.)

Secondly, throughout the piece, things slowly start to get more and more 'real' and vibrant, as Winston continues to reinforce his beliefs that the Party can't change what he thinks.

This is mostly done by introducing more real instruments as the song progresses (bells and glockenspiel at the first "Oranges and lemons" section, violins at "She is my constant, my truth." and brass instruments toward the end of the second verse and throughout the second "Oranges and lemons" section, etc.)

But also, for the whole song up until that second "Oranges and lemons" section, lots of the instruments are summed to mono tracks, before being spread out across stereo space in the second chorus. This is most noticeable with the brass, which pans to the left in the second chorus, and the violins, which go to the right at the same time, but it's present with a few other instruments as well.

The whole middle section with the "WAR IS PEACE", "FREEDOM IS SLAVERY" etc. is essentially just made to mimic the torture scene from the original story.

Another little fun fact! The whole final verse ("But as the bullet hits my head..." up to "Two plus two is five.") was the first set of lyrics that I wrote for this song, even including the rug-pull rhyme scheme that kicks you in the guts as he says "five." When I came up with the idea, that was actually meant to be the very end of the song, but it never sat right with me – especially within the context of the whole album – so I ended up writing what I lovingly refer to as the CATHARSIS SECTION.

Also,

"OR IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR? WELL TOO BAD, SWINE, THE END IS NEAR."

is an intentional parallel to The Mr. Hyde Jive's

"Is that what you wanna hear? Come on, man, no need to fear."

Monster Mash (Encore)

This might be the single lamest song I'll ever write, and I absolutely adore it. Frankly, I don't want to write anything up about it. Enjoy it in all of its stupid, corny, referential glory...

...though I'll still point out the Fallen motifs.

One in the introduction section, after the Narrator says **"It goes like this..."** and an extremely obvious one by the whole crew, right before the solos.

There is also a little backing line that sounds extremely similar, but is different enough that I still don't know whether to count it or not, as Winston says

"Two plus two is four. To know this is to be free."

bargaining/compromise + Dear Machine. Hate, the Cog

Inversely to Monster Mash, these songs both mean a lot to me on a personal level, and I think they're more valuable to the listening public untainted by my own feelings, so I want to leave it all up to interpretation.

The more personal or emotional a song is, the less valuable I feel my opinion becomes. Strange, is it not?

