

= Adam 's Song =

" Adam 's Song " is a song recorded by the American rock band Blink @-@ 182 for its second studio album , Enema of the State ( 1999 ) . It was released as the third and final single from Enema of the State on September 5 , 2000 through MCA Records . " Adam 's Song " shares writing credits between the band 's guitarist Tom DeLonge and bassist Mark Hoppus , but Hoppus was the primary composer of the song . The track concerns suicide and depression . It incorporates a piano in its bridge section , and was regarded as one of the most serious songs the band had written to that point .

Hoppus was inspired by one of his friends that died while on tour ; while his bandmates had significant others to return home to , he was single . He was also influenced by a teen suicide letter he read in a magazine . The song takes the form of a suicide note , and contains lyrical allusions to the grunge band Nirvana . " Adam 's Song " was one of the last songs to be written and recorded for Enema of the State , and it was nearly left off the album . Though Hoppus worried the subject matter was too depressing , his bandmates were receptive to its message . The song was produced by Jerry Finn .

" Adam 's Song " peaked at number two on the US Billboard Hot Modern Rock Tracks chart ; it was also a top 25 hit in Canada and Italy , but did not replicate its success on other charts . It received praise from music critics , who considered it a change of pace from the trio 's more lighthearted singles . The single 's music video , a hit on MTV , was directed by Liz Friedlander . Though the song was intended to inspire hope to those struggling with depression , it encountered controversy when a student of Columbine High School committed suicide with the track on repeat in 2000 .

= = Background = =

Beginning in the summer of 1997 , Blink @-@ 182 would enter an extended period of touring to support their second studio album , Dude Ranch . The group had played a handful of dates on the Vans Warped Tour 1996 , a lifestyle tour promoting skateboarding and punk rock music . However , upon Dude Ranch 's release and popularity , Blink @-@ 182 would play every date of the 1997 tour worldwide with the bands NOFX and Social Distortion . The group were gone from their hometown of San Diego for nearly nine months straight beginning in late 1997 . " When we did our longest tour stretch , it was right when I started dating my fiancée , " recalled vocalist / guitarist Tom DeLonge . " We were all new and in love , and I had to leave . It was just , " Hey , I 'll see you in nine months . " It was really hard . "

Bassist Mark Hoppus penned " Adam 's Song " to vent these frustrations and the loneliness he experienced on the tour ; while the other members had longtime girlfriends to return home to , Hoppus was single . " When you ? re on tour , you 're so lonely , " Hoppus said . " You hang out with all your bros and it ? s a great time and everything , but everybody wants to come home and have a girlfriend . And every time we 'd fly home , Tom and [ former drummer ] Scott [ Raynor ] always had girlfriends waiting for them at the airport , and I didn 't . It ? s about me being depressed and lonely out on tour , and not really having anything to come home to . " The couplet " I couldn ? t wait til I got home / To pass the time in my room alone " originally ended " to get off the plane alone . "

Hoppus said the song 's inspiration came from " reading a magazine where some teenage kid had killed himself and left a letter for his family . " Untrue online rumors purported that the song was inspired by a friend from Hoppus ' high school years who committed suicide , or a play titled Adam 's Letter that has the same focus . A fictional suicide note was a part of the script for Adam 's Letter , a play that wasn 't written until two years after " Adam 's Song " came out . John Cosper , the writer behind Adam 's Letter , said :

" The play was written in 2001 with a different title , Final Word . It was renamed and released on the web as Adam 's Letter in around 2005 . The actual suicide note was written by me as a part of the play script . As it was written two years after the blink song , there is absolutely no connection whatsoever between the note and the writing of the song . By the same token , the naming of the central character was a coincidence . The name goes back to the original script ; I had no

knowledge of Blink @-@ 182 or their music at that time . "

In his memoir Can I Say , drummer Travis Barker wrote that the song 's title was taken from a " sketch on Mr. Show about a band that writes a song with that name encouraging one particular fan to kill himself . " David Cross , co @-@ creator of Mr. Show , confirmed this , commenting , " They were fans of the show and that was a knowing tribute that I thought was pretty cool . "

= = Recording and production = =

" Adam 's Song " was among the last tracks composed and recorded for Enema of the State , and was nearly absent from the final album . The band were halfway finished with recording when Hoppus developed the idea . Though he worried it was " a bit too far and depressing for what we were trying to do , " his bandmates were receptive towards the idea :

" I remember the day I played [ " Adam 's Song " ] for Tom and Travis , and they were like , " Wow , that 's a pretty heavy song . It 's really good . " [ There ] was never even a question of whether or not to put it on the record , or was that a " real " Blink song , or was that the right direction for us to go . Whatever song we write , if it 's a good song , we 'll put it on the record . If we wanted to write a song about ? I don 't know , people starving somewhere , we would . "

Although vocals would usually take many alternate takes to complete , Hoppus completed much of the vocal track for " Adam 's Song " in a single take . " It 's in a pretty high register for me , so I just blasted it out one night after dinner . That 's , like , 90 per cent of what 's on the final track , " he told Kerrang ! . The idea to include piano in the track came without much forethought ; " We realized , ' Well , this part here could sound rad if we put piano in here . ' So we tried it out , and it sounded rad , " said Hoppus . The piano was performed by session musician Roger Joseph Manning , Jr . , best @-@ known for his work with Beck .

= = Composition = =

" Adam 's Song " was a departure from the content of the band 's previous singles , in favor of a slower tempo and more depressing lyrics . Brian Wallace of MTV wrote that Blink @-@ 182 " explores new ground on ? Adam ? s Song , ? setting aside their normal pop @-@ punk punch for a more emo @-@ influenced approach . " The song is a pop punk and alternative rock track composed in the key of C major and is set in time signature of common time with a tempo of 136 beats per minute . Hoppus ' vocal range spans from G3 to G4 .

The song begins with the narrator contemplating suicide with the lyrics " I never thought I 'd die alone . " The lyrics continue : " I 'm too depressed to go on / You 'll be sorry when I ? m gone . " " Adam 's Song " includes a reference to " Come as You Are " by Nirvana . " Come as You Are " by Nirvana includes the lyrics " Take your time , hurry up , the choice is yours , don 't be late " . " Adam 's Song " , in turn , includes the lyrics " I took my time , I hurried up , The choice was mine , I didn 't think enough " .

Barker 's drum track was labeled by Drummerworld as " one of the most creative beats of his career , " and mainly consists of the same basic beat repeated in sections throughout the verses . The first measure begins with the kick drum and splash cymbal playing on the downbeat , followed by a hit on the bell of the ride cymbal on beat two , preceding an open hi @-@ hat that rings out for a full count on beat three . " The kick , snare , and floor tom are all hit simultaneously on beat four , followed by floor tom hits on the last two sixteenth @-@ note triplets of beat four . " The snare is hit on beats two and four , respectively . The song " gradually builds to a powerful , piano @-@ laden crescendo , " and the song 's final chorus and conclusion take a more uplifting view of the world : " Tomorrow holds such better days / Days when I can still feel alive / When I can 't wait to get outside . " DeLonge noted that over six guitar parts were recorded for the " gigantic , sad " choruses , but upon mixing , only four were used . " The extra ones didn 't really do anything besides make it a little more unclear what was going on . "

= = Commercial performance = =

" Adam 's Song " was mainly a commercial success in the United States , but it also was a top 25 hit in Canada and Italy as well . In the US , it debuted on Billboard 's Modern Rock Tracks chart at number 38 in the issue dated March 18 , 2000 . Over the following weeks , it gradually ascended the chart to a peak of number two in the issue dated April 29 . It remained at that position for seven weeks , held off the top position by " Otherside " by the Red Hot Chili Peppers , and " Kryptonite " by 3 Doors Down . On May 13 , the single peaked at number one on the Bubbling Under the Hot 100 chart . In CMJ New Music Report , a trade magazine that contained exclusive charts of non @-@ commercial and college radio airplay and independent and trend @-@ forward retail sales , " Adam 's Song " was a number one hit on their Commercial Alternative Cuts chart in the issue dated May 15 , 2000 . The song made its sole appearance on Billboard 's Hot 100 Airplay chart on that same date , peaking at number 79 . The song 's last appearance on the Modern Rock Tracks chart came on September 9 , 2000 ; as a whole , it spent 26 weeks on the chart . In the Billboard issue for July 19 , 2003 , Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems recognized the single with the BDS Certified Award for 100 @,@ 000 radio spins . The song later made an appearance on Billboard 's Rock Digital Songs at position 38 shortly after the release of the band 's sixth album , Neighborhoods , in October 2011 .

In Canada , the single debuted on the Rock Report chart , compiled by RPM , on May 15 , 2000 at number 26 . Over the ensuing weeks , its position fluctuated , but it reached a peak of number 20 on June 12 , 2000 . It last appeared on the chart on July 24 at number 29 before dropping out . In Italy , the single reached a peak of number 21 and spent three weeks on the charts . In New Zealand , the song reached a peak of number 39 and spent six weeks on the chart , while in Germany , the single fared poorly , spending only one week and reaching a peak of 98 .

= = Critical reception = =

" Adam 's Song " is generally considered one of the band 's more serious songs , one " that hints at the emotional maturity they 'd show on later releases , " particularly their eponymous 2003 release . Richard Harrington of The Washington Post deemed the song " a powerful exploration of exhaustion and depression . " Alex Pappademas , writing for Spin , compared the song to the music of Weezer . Katy Kroll of Billboard recognized it among her top 10 singles of 2000 , calling it " a good old @-@ fashioned depressing song with mainstream flair . " Geoff Boucher , writing for the Los Angeles Times , called it " a poignant essay on a teen mulling over suicide " ; conversely , Steve Appleford of the Los Angeles Times dubbed it a " moving if unremarkable examination . " Scott Mervis of the Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette called it a " rare departure from the usual Blink fare . "

Writers for the The A.V. Club listed it among other suicide @-@ related songs in 2009 , describing it as " surprisingly affecting , especially when the band reaches the bombastic chorus , and when the song describes suicide 's crushing aftermath . " In a retrospective review , Chris Payne of Billboard wrote , " Stylistically , it 's also a Blink breakthrough : rather than putting their heads down and plowing through at breakneck speed , the band dials back the verses and interludes to let them breathe a bit . The resulting chorus achieves an arena @-@ worthy feel not achieved anywhere else on Enema of the State . "

= = Controversy = =

The song caused a controversy in 2000 when it was set to replay indefinitely on a nearby stereo as 17 @-@ year @-@ old Greg Barnes , a teenager who attended Columbine High School and had lost one of his best friends in the massacre the previous year , hanged himself in the garage of his family 's home . Both Hoppus and DeLonge were sympathetic but stressed the song 's meaning :

Hoppus : " I was actually out shopping , and management called me up and told me the story of what happened , and I was like , " But that 's an anti @-@ suicide song ! " It felt awful . I mean , the things that the kid had had to go through in his life were very saddening , and then to end it that way was really depressing . But " Adam 's Song " , the heart of the song is about having hard times in

your life , being depressed , and going through a difficult period , but then finding the strength to go on and finding a better place at the other side of that . "

DeLonge : " It affected us really strongly because that song was a song of hope . When we were writing it , we knew specifically that we did not want kids to think it was something that we thought was cool or rad . We didn 't endorse it in any way . "

Mark Hoppus also told interviewers he received fan mail following the song 's release from fans that had contemplated suicide , but decided not to go through with it after hearing the song . Rolling Stone compared the controversy to that of Ozzy Osbourne 's " Suicide Solution " , which similarly was playing as a teen committed suicide .

= = Music video = =

The song 's music video was directed by Liz Friedlander and debuted on MTV 's Total Request Live on March 7 , 2000 . It consists of performance footage of the trio in a warehouse in front of a wall decorated with photographs . In between verses , the photos ' origins are explored through the different perspectives of individuals near the band . As the band prepares to play a show , a man has a conversation with a girl and is subsequently left alone . In another , while DeLonge and Hoppus read magazines inside a late @-@ night convenience store , a melancholy woman attempts to make a call via a pay phone . Other montages show the trio in the company of friends and practicing , a man looking out upon the sea , and a solitary man deserted by others at an outdoor restaurant . The final montage consists of personal photos from the band 's past .

= = Use in popular culture , covers and live performances = =

The song was covered in 2014 by the math rock group Dads , for the compilation EP I Guess This is Growing Up . In 2015 , a mashup combining " Adam 's Song " with " Hotline Bling " by Drake surfaced online . Called " Hotline Blink " , the mashup received a positive review from Loren DiBlasi of MTV , who called the mashup " hip @-@ hop @-@ meets @-@ pop @-@ punk @-@ nostalgia " and wrote " Trust us , you ? ll want to watch again and again and again . " In an article about the mashup , Tyler Sharp of Alternative Press wrote " In a bizarre , unexpected way , the result is tolerable ? maybe even enjoyable ? " Following the death of DJ AM ( born Adam Michael Goldstein ) , a close friend of Barker , Hoppus wrote on Reddit that " Adam 's Song " is " too hard " to perform and may be permanently retired from Blink @-@ 182 's set list .

= = Formats and track listing = =

All songs written by Mark Hoppus and Tom DeLonge , except where noted . Live tracks recorded in November 1999 at the Universal Amphitheatre , Los Angeles , California .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes for Enema of the State .

Locations

Recorded at Signature Sound and Studio West in San Diego , California , Mad Hatter Studios and the Bomb Factory in Los Angeles , California , Conway Recording Studios in Hollywood , California , and Big Fish Studios in Encinitas , California .

Mixed at Conway Recording Studios in Hollywood , California , and South Beach Studios in Miami , Florida .

Mastering at Bernie Grundman Mastering in Hollywood , California .

Personnel

= = Charts = =

