

Old Friends Executed Recently - Vol. 1

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Rosemary's Baby - drums on 1, 2, 4, 6, 8

Howard Storkman Jr. - drums on 3, 5, 9, 10

Catriona Flamenghi - bass on 4, 5, 6, 8

Concertina Gina - accordion on 9

Todd Brunner - everything else

Recorded at Fir Tree, Factory Floor and The Enclave,
Lushwood Hills, 2020.

Produced by Todd Brunner

Cover and booklet by Atticus Grafficas

I have been writing songs ever since I first learned three chords on the guitar and could make up my own creations. I never cared about playing other people's material, because right from the start, as far as I was concerned, the guitar was primarily a tool for writing songs. Of course, at the time I didn't realise I was becoming a songwriter. I was just going with the teenage hormonal flow of it all. But this did not serve me well in high school when the girls wanted to hear the hits of the day, and instead, I played them my latest pretentious opus, ensuring beyond the shadow of a doubt that I was neither getting laid nor any credibility as a decent guitarist (which, admittedly, I was not). Had I just learned "Stairway to Heaven" perhaps my life would have taken a different path?

Yes, my early songs, like everyone's, were pretty bad, but I was determined and driven. Why, I do not know. I wrote constantly and eventually got pretty good at it. And further down the line, I began recording my songs on





home gear, realising that if I wanted to hear records of my stuff, I was going to have to record them myself.

In the early days of home recording technology, things were a lot more difficult than they are now, and songs took A LOT longer to record. Because of this, choices always had to be made about which songs would get recorded and which would have to be put on the back burner. In the landscape of a serial songwriter like me, the result was that a lot more stuff got written than got recorded. Over the years the songs piled up, some forgotten, some abandoned.

Flashing forward to the present, home recording is an entirely new beast than it was back in the ancient days. Without bludgeoning you with technical details you don't

want to hear, suffice it to say that one can produce music significantly faster now than before. Subsequently, pretty much everything I write now gets recorded, unlike those troubled days of the past when hard choices had to be made because of time. Bearing this in mind, it occurred to me that maybe I should dip into the old stockpile of unrecorded songs and see if any still have legs.

I should note that prior to late 2019 this idea had not occurred to me, and I had no intention whatsoever of ever revisiting any of these songs. I had relegated them to the wasteland of the past. But once the idea of doing so popped into my head, I could not get it out. I became more and more enamoured of the concept of revisiting my past.

So I began to compile a list of songs that I felt were good enough to proceed with. I searched my archive of rough demo recordings and lyrics, dating all the way back to when I banged out themes and melodies relentlessly into a cheap mono portable cassette recorder (stolen) in a bedroom of my mother's tacky apartment. I started with a list of around 30 songs, narrowing it eventually down to 20 by discarding the shit. Of the tacky bedroom recordings, I salvaged only two.

As I reviewed my old material I rekindled a love for these songs and realised that this was a healthy and happy place for me to go at this point in my life. It became both therapeutic and cathartic to rediscover these old gems as a new project. For a change, it was refreshing to delve into the past instead of obsessing about the present and future.

Eventually, the idea solidified into the concept of two volumes of 10 songs each, all approached recording and arrangement-wise, exactly as if they were current songs. But first, I had to re-learn to play them so that they would once again become familiar, thereby inspiring new arrangement ideas. From October 2019 to January 2020 I played all 20 songs on acoustic guitar pretty much every day, re-learning their ins and outs, thinking about arrangements and deciding how they were to be divided between the two collections. Where lyrics were concerned, I changed the odd word here and there, and the odd phrase that was dated, but left them largely as they were originally written.





CUMBERLAND
WALK

Volume 1

During January 2020 I went into local studios with my drummer pals Rosemary's Baby and Howie Storkman, and recorded the drum tracks for this, Volume 1. Back at my home studio Cat Flamenghi was going to play bass on the whole album, but we only got four tracks done before impending financial disaster forced me to suspend further recording temporarily. By the time I was ready to resume work, the COVID-19 pandemic was upon us. So the rest of this record was recorded by me alone during the quarantine. Whether or not this brings some kind of new flavour to the music, I will let you decide.

Here is some info on the tracks:

I See You (1997, Burwash, East Sussex)

This was a song frequently performed by my two bands, The Nitz and Uncle Twylite in the mid through late 90s. The song was shortlisted to go on my *Just a Skeleton Under That Skin* album, but in the end, I decided not to for reasons I can no longer remember. Then it was again shortlisted for my ill-fated follow-up album, *Anti-gravity*, but that record died a painful death when early in the production I decided to abandon it and music for six years.

Consideration (1995, Burwash, East Sussex)

No, this is not my version of the 2016 Rihanna track from her brilliant *ANTI* album. This song pre-dates that by quite a bit! This is one of two tracks in this collection that is a bit of a cheat. This one, along with "This Train", was indeed recorded back in 1995. Unfortunately, due to a hideous

accident, the master tape to both songs was destroyed less than a year later. The original recording featured a beautiful vocal from my friend Petra Moore, singing only the word "Consideration". It made the song! Petra actually has the only existing cassette dub of the original version. For some sad reason, I ended up with no cassette dub



of my own. Don't ask me how these things happen. This version is pretty faithful to the feel of the original (from what I can remember) but is based around piano rather than guitar.

Just Anybody (1983, Santa Monica, California)

Yes, this one is from the tacky bedroom "sessions" and is the oldest track here. It was actually subject to a hideous 4 track recording on a borrowed machine at the time, but I do not regard that as a proper recording, as the result

was disgusting and primitive. It's a short, jaunty little ditty that I had completely forgotten about until I discovered it (the disgusting recording and a super sped up solo guitar and voice version) on an old tape a few years back. The lyrics, regarding a relationship in the terms of a business deal, are amusing to me still, for both their audacity and naivete. I knew almost nothing about relationships and absolutely nothing about business. But things have now come full circle and I know quite a bit about both. You might say I've grown into the song, haha! (And no, I don't actually consider relationships to be business deals.)



Naturally (1999, Burwash, East Sussex)

Written for the final iteration of my band, Uncle Twylite, the song was a staple of our live repertoire in the last few months of the band. There is no fascinating story to go with this one. The “dreams” in the lyrics are entirely fictional. Sorry to disappoint you. The song simply disappeared once the band did in early 2000, among many others. Resurrected here because, why not?

I'll Explain (2002, Tunbridge Wells, Kent)

Written around the time I was planning my album *Anti-gravity*, which was never finished. I don't think this was going to be on it, but it was a song that was tooling around at the time. There were 5-10 other songs from the period of 2002-2005 that have been completely forgotten because I did not record any rough work tapes of them or write any lyrics. This one survived because I did.

This Train (1995, Burwash, East Sussex)

This is the other track, along with “Consideration”, that was a victim of the infamous master tape destruction of 1996. The original version had lyrics, and Petra Moore and I sang the entire thing together on the 1995 recording. Our voices sounded great together, and it was always a joy to work with Petra. I very much regret that we didn't do more of it. Now, even though the master of the finished track with vocals was destroyed, I did, for some inexplicable reason, retain a mixdown of the basic tracks without vocals. Again, don't ask how this shit happens. I discovered this mixdown in 2014 while working on the *Eastbourne Supremacy* compilation and thought it sounded pretty good on its own. I was going to chuck it onto a future compilation of old tracks as is, but decided to redo

it here as an instrumental instead. I have added a melodic line on the choruses, but most of the other stuff was there on the original basic tracks, if in a more subdued form.

Juliet Again (2001, Tunbridge Wells, Kent)

Back in 1988 or thereabouts I wrote and recorded a song about my first “serious” childhood crush at age 12, called “Juliet Regrets”. Yes I know it’s a weird thing to do, but I was fascinated with this idea of never getting over your first childhood love, and it haunting you throughout life. Of course, it wasn’t true, other than the name, but I liked the idea anyway. Case closed, or so I thought. Sometime in 2001, I had this very vivid dream of an adult Juliet, whom I had never in real life laid eyes on, beckoning me to walk through a train-type turnstile and join her on the other side for a “happily ever after”. The dream was so vivid and powerful, and so completely out of the blue that I was obsessed with it for days. During those days I wrote this song. So that’s two songs I’ve done about someone I haven’t seen since I was a child. Pretty sure there won’t be a third.

The Bugs (1996, Burwash, East Sussex)

This is a very strange one, and perhaps as inexplicable to me as it is to you! It was performed by both The Nitz and Uncle Twylite, my two bands of the time, because for some insane reason I thought it would be a live crowd-pleaser! It never was. Ostensibly it is a hard rocker about all the noise in life, but then I had to get weird and insert a middle section featuring an imaginary conversation between myself and Bob Dylan! I have absolutely no idea where this idea came from. Truly it is one to the strangest things I have ever dreamed up, and I have no explanation



for it. And we performed it just like this live, with me doing the batshit exaggerated bad Dylan voice, while audiences looked on in bewilderment and horror. Those were the days! While recording the song I actually did an alternate Dylan track with me doing a much calmer and more accurate impression, but this totally did not work, so I reverted to the original manic, insane, not at all accurate version. Incidentally, both my part and Dylan’s part of the conversation are first takes. I liked them both so much that I kept them both, even though some of the lyrics are wrong.

Misfit (2000, Burwash, East Sussex)

This is a song that floated around for five years before I finally finished the lyrics in 2005. Surprising it took so long, as there are hardly any of them. It is a sort of gypsy waltz, as envisioned by someone who has never seen that shit and grew up in Hollywood. I have always gravitated towards the 3/4 time signature, even though it is SO NOT rock n roll. I am most certainly a geek, as well as a misfit.

You'll Come Around (1996, Burwash, East Sussex)

A sweet little song that I originally wanted to do with Petra, but that never happened. It has lurked all of these years, waiting! Of all the songs on this record, it has turned out to be the most difficult to get right. And I'm still not sure I have. I would have thought the opposite would be true, but life is full of surprises.

I hope you enjoy revisiting my past as much as I have!

Todd Brunner

Lushwood Hills, 06/2020





I See You

Was a time when I knew you
Once a comrade and a friend
In a land of wine and leisure
But I don't think life will ever be that good again

Killer Kane was a Mormon
Wendy Carlos was a man
You never know which way the wind blows
And I don't think life will ever be that good again

<chorus>

Dead in the water just floatin' like a leaf, I see you
I see you
I see you – not sayin' what you say
I see you – in a circumstantial way

I see you – and I'm sure you would agree
I see you – not necessarily
</chorus>

Got a chip on your shoulder
And you hold it like a gun
God I hope you never shoot me
Cause I don't think life will ever be that good again

<chorus>

Got no faith in the system
Or the workings of your mind
If it's broke, you'll never fix it
So I don't think life will ever be that good again

<chorus>

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Consideration

What did you do to me the other day
You got right through to me in every way
Cheers for the subterfuge and all those lies
When I need consideration

Out on the open road you pass me by
Doing the very things that you deny
Leaving some obstacle for me to find
In place of consideration

Guess I've been living out a fantasy
So I'll just get on with it and let you be
You've got my money-back guarantee
Just call it consideration

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Just Anybody

I'll take your promise
In place of the money
I'm certain you'll owe me
And if you're lying
Well good for you

Cause I don't trust just anybody

Meet me at seven
We'll co-sign the papers
And make a transaction
And if you don't show
Well shame on you

Cause I don't trust just anybody
Can't convince just anybody
And you can't be just anybody

Certainly the times are lean so yes it's very hard to make a
deal these days
La la la la
Clients come and clients go but seldom do they qualify
with expertise
La la la la
I prefer collateral but circumstances are exceptions
La la la la la la la
La la la la la la la la la

Out at the restaurant
Light conversation
To toast our agreement



But when the bill comes
The joke's on you

Cause I don't trust just anybody
Can't convince just anybody
And you can't be just anybody

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Naturally

Naturally the spark of innovation
Naturally the ground will always break
We will make a mountain of a molehill
Naturally

Naturally the rush of confirmation
Naturally the sweet smell of success
These will be the days of wine and roses
Naturally



Had a dream that I was lower class and unemployable
In a car careening down a winding road towards a private
club

Where men in suits were showing all their teeth to me
And as I tried to speak my name I had no mouth
But that was just a dream

Naturally the forging of an empire
Naturally the icing on the cake
We will build that castle on the hillside
Naturally

Had a dream that I was minuscule and insignificant
In a machine with clockwork gears that scribbled out the
writing on the wall
Morality and reason spun around my head
I tried to grab one for a dance and drifted off
But that was just a dream

Naturally

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I'll Explain

Ever wonder what I could do
If I got these fingers all over you
Any measure can be applied
There are combinations that even I have never tried

So I'll explain

Yes I mean it
I really do
I wanna shake you up until I make it true
Don't you get it?
You should have known
No truer words from this old mouth have ever flown

So I'll explain

Got no money
Got no class
Got metaphors and words and other shit right up my ass
That's the reason for this song
I wanna make quite sure that you don't get me wrong

So I'll explain

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Juliet Again

Ju Ju Ju Juliet

Long time ago when we met
But that was then and this is now
You're with me still I wonder how
Long time ago when we met

Ju Ju Ju Juliet

I aint got over you yet
You found yourself inside my dreams
You like it there or so it seems
I aint got over you yet

Ju Ju Ju Juliet

Guess we deserve what we get
Oh yeah you could have held my hand
Oh yeah I could have stayed not ran
Guess we deserve what we get

Ju Ju Ju Juliet

You don't remember I'll bet

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The Bugs

Too many insects too many drugs
Been there forever can't shake the bugs
Got mixed emotions that I confuse
With the higher level functions that I gotta use

<chorus>

Can't shake the bugs
Can't shake the bugs
You can pull your life together but you can't shake the
bugs
Can't shake the bugs
Can't shake the bugs
You can teach a doggie new tricks but you can't shake the
bugs

</chorus>

They built an empire inside my head
Them little buggers was needin' to be fed
They hit the hammer right on the nail
And me, I'm just a half-price bargain after-Christmas sale

<chorus>

Well I was feelin' bugged and itchy one fine day
When Mr. Zimmerman rang and said come out and play
I said Thank you Bob, I'd like to do just that
But I've got a little problem here in my habitat
Ya see these creepy insects keepin me awake
With all that noisy music that they gotta make
Have given me a pain around where you can't see
So I think I'll have to miss your hospitality

He said don't worry comrade I can sort you out
I've got a no-bug method and there aint no doubt
It Takes A Lot To Laugh It Takes A Train To Cry
But I can rid you of them bugs before you bat your eye
You ring the Chimes Of Freedom down on Maggie's Farm
And the Rainy Day Women will do those bugs some harm
And if that don't work man, put on your stompin' shoes
And administer a sample of the Tombstone Blues

Well I said Thank you kindly, Mr. Tambourine Man
I think your method sounds like an acceptable plan
And so I tried it out gave it the old school go
But the bugs turned out to be a formidable foe

They put my reason in disarray
Domesticated and tucked away
Tending the embers fanning the flame
I can feel em spellin' out the letters of my name

<chorus>

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Misfit

Head's up I'm a misfit
You can see it spelt out on my face
Never sad but in a nutshell
Just a mind in a different place
When I lean to the left side
I sway to the right
Head's up for the misfit

Gather 'round I'm a misfit
You just never know what I might say
Funny words and opinions
A lot of crap at the end of the day
You won't know what I'm thinking
And you'll miss what I mean
Gather 'round for the misfit

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You'll Come Around

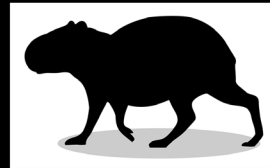
Don't you ever get the blues
The walls close in it's so confining
You need a pair of flying shoes
with golden fleece and silver lining
Put 'em on your feet and float away
You'll come around another day
You'll come around another day

Don't you ever feel the weight
of pressing time and grand tradition
You need a chance to elevate
and satisfy your wild ambition.
Take your little self on holiday.
You'll come around another day
You'll come around another day

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Thanks to all those who were part of my life during the writing, performing and eventual recording of these songs. You were and are my inspiration.

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