

QUEEN OF NEW BEDFORD

The Thief Who Stole the Ocean



F o r e w o r d

The Thief Who Stole the Ocean is the story of a thief, the struggle of his early life, his rise as a capable assassin, the devastating grief he incurs, and the revenge he seeks against those who have wronged him.

This album was originally conceptualized in late December of 2024 during a period of discontentment with my CORVID LANGUAGE project. I needed a change of pace from working on an album I intended to commercialize, and used the idea to combat the frustrations I was dealing with by working on something completely self indulgent. Thus, I felt compelled to create an album to detail the life of a character I made years ago, a story I could never quite properly convey on paper. I produced three tracks, put them in a folder, and promptly forgot about them. I finished up the BLUE JAY SLAY album in mid-January, released a techno album, and worked on some other projects until I rediscovered those tracks at the

beginning of June 2025. I found them very compelling, and immediately began work on structuring those, as well as some other spare tracks, into the beginnings of a new Queen of New Bedford album. Things flowed quickly and easily as my vision for the album formed, and it wasn't long before I had a sprawling assortment of recordings lined up. This zine serves as a companion piece to the album, and contains commentary and annotations on the story the album tells, as well as thought processes and concepts behind the lyrics, composition, and production of this album.

I can safely say that this is by far my favorite project I have worked on. I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.

- *Lentil Corelli*

Part One:
The Ocean

The Ocean

This instrumental track sets the scene for the story. The sound of waves crashing on the shore can be heard as the backdrop for the more prevalent interplay between three instruments: a clarinet, a violin, and a cello. Each instrument represents a figure who appears in the story.

The composition is performed in F minor, played in free time, with no set tempo or rhythmic constraint. Each instrument plays as it sees fit, occasionally colliding with the sounds of another. They represent the flow of the tides and waves as they come and go throughout the length of the track.

Steel

*Don't fear the water
Pulling you under
Swaddled among the fishes
Rocked along by thunder*

*Come forth from the tide
Come out to leave your mark
Find somewhere else to hide
Your freedom is the dark*

*Fair weather won't come
So learn to love the embrace of the rain
Keep yourself from the sun
The shade will trade you power for pain[1]*

*Go forth and deny them all
Steal the whole ocean away
Feast upon the fishes
When you meet your end,
Know the sky will be grey.[2]*

Notes

A prophecy, a premonition of what is to come. A young man stirs on the beach, washed over by the waves. He has no memory and no name, feeling as though he's come into the world simply to suffer and struggle. He knows not of his destiny and the life that awaits him.

Skirmishes

*In company of those who only speak of revelation
Simmer down, I have no time to deal with all your fuss
Yes, ignore I must
If I wanna stay sane[3]*

*But I cannot shake this feeling, an unusual dread
Does it mean by being here I'll wind up dead?
Why do such things pool up in my head
Some things, I think, are better left unsaid*

*The perpetrators wanna deflect the blame
Instigators aim to do the same
The target's on your back and not the ones who lit the
flame
There's no way to win this game[4]*

*Forget about all of the things that could go wrong
Focus on the details in the now
Even if you're really not too sure how
They say: to learn, it's better late than never*

*And necessity and pressure, two of the best to teach
How to run and jump and slide and duck and reach
In a deadly game of tag, there can be no room for mistakes
Be ready to do whatever it takes*

*The perpetrators wanna deflect the blame
Instigators aim to do the same
The target's on your back and not the ones who lit the
flame
There's no way to win this game*

Notes

The young man has found himself known as a Thief as he navigates the world, stealing out of necessity and doing whatever he must to survive. He's perturbed by the uncaring and hostile attitude those more fortunate have towards him and others in similar situations. He notices that the upper echelons often engage in unbecoming behavior, causing problems for the community at large, and in turn blaming people like him for the ills of society. As such, he sees no reason not to engage in his thievery and shady dealings. He even begins taking up unsavory work doing some of the dirty deeds of those who don't wish to get their own hands dirty. Many of those around him warn him that he's going to find himself in too deep, but the Thief ignores them, determined to work his way out of the squalor and dereliction he's lived his life in thus far.

Patch Trick

*Hiding alone again, I
Don't want it any other way
I found an opening, I
Learned a lot today[5]*

*Now if it pleases you, I
Can open any lock
You can leave me to it, I
Love it in the dark*

*If anyone should ask my name
You don't know a thing
What difference does it make to you?
We are all the same[6]*

*Don't delay
Out of sight and mind
To betray all reasoning
You don't need a reason*

*The deed is done so now, I
Want what I am owed
Nothing in this life comes for free
Surely this you know*

Do you really wanna play this game?

*You will never win
I don't think that you realize
What a mess you're in*

*Don't delay
You won't get away
You underestimated me
The one who does the dealing*

—

*Don't leave the room, I can explain
Living in a glass home
From throwing stones,
You'd do well to refrain*

*Are you worried about the bloodstains
I'm leaving here?
An eye for an eye, only with one
Is how I'm leaving here*

Notes

The Thief develops an ego as he refines his skills, taking on risky and dangerous jobs for influential people who aim to further their interests in the dark. Upon the completion of a burglary, his employer refuses to pay him for his services. Refusing to accept this, he makes arrogant threats, going on to sack the home of the man who hired him. Unfortunately, he's not as cautious as he thought, and is caught off guard, knocked unconscious and restrained in a cellar before being beaten and brutalized to the extent that he loses an eye. Unable to even stand by the end of his torture, he's dumped in a puddle in the woods, left for dead in the rain as he bleeds.

This two part track has a simple chord progression for most of the song accentuated by a crashing grand piano sound, with most of the vocals being harsh and aggressive to add color to the haughty and arrogant attitude the Thief harbors during the events of this track. This eventually gives way to a much more subdued and dreamy atmosphere after an energetic guitar solo, representing a major attitude adjustment as the Thief is captured.

Wave Sequence

A woman makes haste through the woods in the pouring rain, returning to her cabin where she lives alone. Formerly a prominent figure in the world of royal affairs, she was exiled due to her political dissent. She harbors resentment over this, and plans to one day take back the status she'd built for herself. Until then, she resides quietly in the forest. Rumor has it that those who venture far out in her direction may encounter a Witch.

As the Witch weaves between the trees, she finds a badly injured young man lying unconscious in a clearing. It's clear that he will die if left unattended, and she takes it upon herself to rescue him, bringing him back home and cleaning his wounds, bandaging him and packing his empty eye socket with gauze before placing a patch over it. When he finally rouses, he's immediately defensive, but cannot do much due to his injuries. She manages to get some information out of him, becoming frustrated and upset as he details the injustices he's experienced and the horrors he's come to endure. She assures him that he is safe here for the time being, and that he will one day get his revenge on the man who took his eye.

This is one of the first tracks I recorded for this album, a composition for hammered dulcimer — a chordophone

stringed instrument consisting of a trapezoidal resonant box over which courses of strings (sets of two) are stretched over two bridges. The number of courses can vary, but my dulcimer has 31 courses. These courses are struck with a small hammer to create a very distinct sound. The manner in which this instrument is played can allow for a number of unique techniques to be employed, such as allowing the hammer to bounce repeatedly as I did with this track. I think the hammered dulcimer produces a sound very much conducive to creating a fantasy sound reminiscent of the soundtracks of many RPGs I've played over the years, notably Skyrim (though the adjacent sound profile for that soundtrack is created by tapping wooden pencils on the strings of a piano, though the concept and end result are much the same.)

Additionally, I used the sound of a storm to add atmosphere to this piece, as well as the sound of snipping shears to represent the Witch cutting bandages to size as she tends to the Thief's wounds. Definitely one of my more unique compositions, and a personal favorite.

Careful

Quit looking at me
You're starting to freak me out
Have you been my keeper all along?
Is that what the anger is all about?

And when you take me to your home
You say it's time to heal my bones
I never knew
The kindness I've found in you

I liken myself to a page
Torn up and thrown away
Forgotten when the wind
No longer speaks my name

And what did I do to deserve
Who would even have the nerve?
I don't understand why
That I am alive
It was out of my sight

I'm lucky that you came
But I don't even know your name
But you don't care
How nice it is that you were there

I liken myself to a page

*Torn up and thrown away
You picked me up off the ground
A new life it is I've found*

Notes

The Thief, upon finding he's been taken to a cabin in the woods after being rescued, is at first alarmed and concerned. He's heard the rumors of a Witch lurking in the forest. After calming down and realizing that he's been greatly assisted by this woman, who seems to expect nothing in return, he tries to process the feeling of kindness and being cared for, which is something he's lived entirely without as he struggled to survive in the past. He comes to view the Witch as a maternal figure to him as she takes him in, giving him guidance as he begins a new life.

I wrote this song after obtaining an Epiphone Les Paul Junior guitar with a P90 pickup, a type of single-coil guitar pickup first utilized by the Gibson Guitar Corporation in 1946. This pickup produces a bright and punchy sound I've sought out for a while now, and I was very pleased to finally have the opportunity to explore the new sounds I could produce with it. This guitar can be heard on many guitar solos throughout this album.

Pupil Distance

*Focus on holding your breath
Each blow that hits your chest
Still your mind and you'll be fine*

*Forget the world
The ones that you fell
Clear it out, and rest for a spell*

*Piece it all together
It's in your hands
To do all you can
To reformulate your plan*

*To vanquish your foe
To conquer the sin
The place to go, the way you're living*

*So take what you learn
And don't make a sound
The flame that burns,
In your mind and all around*

*Gone is the glow
Hide in the shadows
After all,
You know which way the wind blows*

*You're ready to go
I'm passing it on
Go find a throne for your to sit upon*

Notes

The Witch begins to train the Thief in order to refine the stealth and thievery skills he'd begun to develop. As his abilities grow, she explains that there is a much more lucrative business than burglary, one that many would pay him vast sums for: assassination. Despite her exile, the Witch still maintains a network within the city, and is able to set him up with such work, if he wishes, and that he could certainly help her out with some tasks as well. He agrees, feeling like he owes her for his life, and is interested in making something of himself. Over the following years, he grows to become a highly competent and feared assassin.

Confidence Trick

*Waking up late one evening, feeling kind of on edge
Someone's sitting on the ledge
At once I found myself rather suspicious
I don't need anybody pushing me closer to the edge*

*I didn't hesitate to draw my weapon on you
Looking to bring you to an end
But for some reason you just smiled at me
You said, "Calm yourself, don't be alarmed, 'cause I am a
friend!"*

*Or the closest thing you may ever find
So take my hand and we could have a good time
We could make some perfect company
Come on and have a little fun with me*

*I can't believe you sold me on your stupid story
We go on in gore and glory
You know, you almost had me impressed with your
methods
But I'll show off a bit, if I may
So make sure that you're watching carefully
You might learn a thing or two about the name of the
game we play*

*I'm the closest you will ever get
The only one you've ever met
Making you feel a certain way
A one that makes you hope I'll stay
Do you wonder why your face is red?
Come find out, climb into my bed
Let's get to know each other
Let's get to know each other*

Notes

A few years pass, and the Thief has regained his confidence, taking on his tasks fearlessly, expertly carrying out his work. He eventually encounters a Rogue figure who seems just a little too curious about him. He dismisses him initially, but upon waking up one day to find him peering through his window, hesitantly accepts his extension of friendship. He sees much of himself in the Rogue, identifying the skills he'd once developed himself, and offering his own expertise, taking him under his wing. He develops feelings for the Rogue, and comes to place a great deal of trust in him. The Rogue becomes his confidant and a treasured companion who joins him in the illicit line of work he pursues.

Lessons

Well, let me ask
How do you think
Something leaves your sight in just a blink?
You listen well,
You make a list,
Make sure you identify the risk

If trouble should arise
You better hope you have a good disguise
No second chances in this life
It's plain to see
It's rough out here for those like you and me

No one is willing to help us out
So we can't keep our hands to ourselves
Those who can't afford to take the hit will feel the burn
That's a lesson that we had to learn
The hard way

Steel your nerves
Take the jump
And get what you deserve
When your back is up against the wall
Only look down
If you wanna know how far you'll fall

*No one is willing to help us out
So we can't keep our hands to ourselves
Those who can't afford to take the hit will feel the burn
That's a lesson that we had to learn
The hard way*

Notes

The Thief imparts wisdom on his skills and his experience navigating the uncaring world which has kept him on his toes for his whole life, and that he feels responsible for pushing him towards a life of thievery and eventually into a position of becoming a contract killer.

Blindspot

*Missing an eye doesn't mean I'm completely blind
If I tail you for the night, what is it that I might find?*

*My heart goes out to you
If you should do me wrong
What do I mean to you, if you stuck around this long?*

*Do you think I can't see in the dark
when I taught you everything you know?
Do you really think I'm in the dark
When I'm watching everywhere you go?
Do you think that I can't read between the lines?
Is it not enough for you to have me call you mine?
For someone who you claim to care about,
You're sure filling me up with a lot of doubt*

*Why do you feel the need to keep secrets from me?
Have I ever been anything but completely trustworthy?
What kind of mess do you want me to find?
I thought that we were partners in crime*

*Well, let me ask you just one question
And I'll put this thing to rest
I don't want to put your loyalty to the test
But what I want to know,
I need to know for certain
Can I trust you?*

*Do you think I can't see in the dark
when I taught you everything you know?
Do you really think I'm in the dark
When I'm watching everywhere you go?
Do you think that I can't read between the lines?
Is it not enough for you to have me call you mine?
For someone who you claim to care about,
You're sure filling me up with a lot of doubt*

Notes

The Thief notices a pattern of strange and avoidant behavior develop in the Rogue and begins to grow suspicious of him. This causes stress and tension, as especially considering their usual activities and line of work, he needs to be able to trust his partner completely. Despite this, he decides to shed his reservations and choose to believe that his closest friend wouldn't put him in jeopardy.

Gauze

*Deliver the news
About this undertaking
It overtakes the need for me to run
‘Cause time is for the taking*

*And I know I blew it last time
But things are different now
My hands are empty ‘til I see the sundown
I’m invisible this time*

*They say that desire clouds you up
I can’t afford to pay the price
So get yourself together ‘cause
An empty-handed failure won’t suffice*

*Bleeding out worn’t do no good for you
If I’m all out of gauze[7]*

Notes

At long last, with the help of the Rogue, the Thief has developed a plan to finally exact his revenge against the man who took his eye years ago. Though he usually takes on tasks with the Rogue by his side, he will carry out this plan by himself, choosing to face his target one-on-one. He goes off to do his deed and is successful in his efforts, but begins to feel that something is amiss as he takes his leave. His heart pounds as he rushes home, a horrible feeling welling in the pit of his stomach. His world shatters as he arrives.

The second half of this track is an atmospheric composition intended to build anxiety in the listener to mirror the mental state of the Thief as he hurries home. I created a variety of eerie sounds by utilizing alternative techniques on guitar and bass, such as scratching the strings and quickly alternating pickups, with the kick drum sound moving faster and faster to replicate a heartbeat. The final glass shattering sound at the end is the moment the Thief arrives home, and moves directly into the following track.

Lateness

*What is home to me
Might as well be pulling teeth
From my mouth
An emergency
Presents immediately
It's all going South*

*Red abound
On the ground, in the sand
Dripping from your hand*

*You know I loved you so
You know that I can't
Let you go*

*Is this really what I meant to you?
Just another point for you to prove
Now you lay somewhere you will stay
You've left me with nothing to say*

*You reap what you sow
So know that
This fate you have chosen
You did it to yourself*

*How can I let go?
With a hand in each of mine
Getting colder*

*Frozen in time
I'm not getting any older
If I fall in line*

Notes

The Thief stares in disbelief at the bloodstained hand of the Rogue, who has just slain the Witch. The woman he loved as a mother is now dead before him, dead at the hand of the only man he ever trusted, the man he'd shared years of his life with, who he loved and cared for. The Rogue expresses his condolences, understanding that he loved her, but her role in conducting the assassinations of key political figures and meddling further in royal affairs has not gone overlooked by the King, and as such, her life had to be brought to an end. He expresses remorse that he ended up being the one put up to the task, and tells the Thief that he's sorry, and that he loves him.

With tears in his eyes, the Thief feels he has no choice but to avenge the Witch, no matter how much it hurts. He takes the Rogue's life with no struggle, though he

wonders that if there had been a duel, perhaps the act wouldn't feel so empty. He feels numb as he holds the lifeless hands of the only two people who he ever cared about, and who ever cared about him. He's alone in this uncaring world once again, just as he'd come into it.

This is the first track I produced for this album, and is one of my favorite recordings I've ever made. The unwavering organs, swirling discord of distant guitar phrases alongside a pointed electronic bass riff exemplify the numbness and disbelief the Thief feels during this event. The song comes to a brief harmonic resolution partway to the song, but only for a moment before returning to the dark patterns present earlier in the track.

The slow and atmospheric tone of this track is partially derived from the influence Ethel Cain's *Preacher's Daughter* had on my stylings back in December of 2024. That album also largely informed the format of this album as a whole, and inspired me to utilize this format to tell the story of a character.

Part Two:
The Thief

The Thief

The ocean can be heard once again at the beginning of the second part of this story, only this time there is a storm present. The wind howls along the beach as the waves crash on the shore. The cold and wet air here could quickly chill one to the bone. The instrumental theme from the first track of this album returns for this one, but this time only the clarinet is present; the violin and cello which meandered along with it before are nowhere to be heard.

This track represents the loneliness and turmoil the Thief has found himself plagued by in the aftermath of the recent events he has experienced.

Rupture

*Haven't done anything in a while
Giving up never felt so easy
You said you would kill me with your own hand
But I'd like to know the reason*

*All the times you told me I could confide
What was your intention?
And sometimes I think that this is all a joke
Of my own invention*

*In a dream, I see it all again
Everything
In a dream, I feel it all again
Everything*

*Haven't got out of bed in a while
Letting go isn't all that easy
I'm not sure that this is all your fault
We all have to make a living*

*I'm sorry that I had to take that from you
Understand that I had to do it
I know the monster walks among us still
The one who put you up to it*

*In a dream, I see it all again
Everything
In my dream, I put it all to rest
All your lives*

Notes

The Thief has given up on everything, spending his time wallowing in grief and despair. He finds it very difficult to move on from the betrayal he experienced, as well as the guilt he feels from taking the Rogue's life to avenge the Witch. Despite this, he's very conflicted over how to feel about the Rogue after the fact. He can't bring himself to hate the man completely despite what he did, knowing that there are any such times in life where one faces something he cannot stand up against, and chooses to believe that this is the case. He believes that the King is truly to blame for the deaths of both the Witch and the Rogue, and eventually finds himself convicted to overseeing his fall.

I originally wrote this track back in mid-2023 while I was working on another Queen of New Bedford album, *Sick*. This is largely responsible for the washed out lo-fi sound present here, and a lot of the programmed instruments are reminiscent of the techno projects I was working on around the same time, particularly

Synthesis, which I released as *Lentil*. A lot of the programmed instruments sound very hollow, which I think reflects the mental state of the Thief in this section quite nicely. I ended up shelving the track until now, as I felt that it did not fit in with the heavily overdriven guitar and programmed percussion sound I was working with on *Sick*. I think it serves its purpose well enough, though I changed the lyrics for the second half of the song to fit the context better.

Dexterity Trick

This instrumental is adapted from a track I released as part of a series called *Boston Transplant* I released on SoundCloud back in 2020 under the name Easel, a moniker stretching all the way back to 2017 which I used for more experimental and largely instrumental compositions. *Boston Transplant* was the result of a period of time where I had little to work with other than an acoustic guitar and a Blue Snowball microphone. This led to extremely heavily compressed and artificially amplified recordings marked by very intense programmed percussion and layered acoustic guitar which I attempted to alter in a way to replicate the sound of an overdriven electric guitar. These tracks were quite crude productions made in the free program Audacity.

This particular track is derived from the track “Wiregrass Medical.” I replaced the original acoustic guitar with proper electric guitar and added the outro section to round it off a little better.

The *Boston Transplant* project can still be found on SoundCloud, though if you decide to find it for whatever reason, I implore you to turn your volume down, lest your eardrums be ruptured by ill-advised production techniques.

Dentistry, Forgetfully

*In timely need
You deny me
A kindly deed
You deny me
With effortless speed
You deny me
How unimportant I must be[8]*

*Gone is the bond
I was leaning on
Across the pond
You carry on
Forget about me
You're moving on
How unimportant I must be*

*Is this really all that it takes
To punch a hole in the boat?
Is something the matter
You know we're just tryna keep you afloat
Is this never-ending?
I don't have a lot of time left to devote
Is that really all that it took
To punch a hole in the boat?[9]*

*It doesn't end
If I pretend
You weren't the friend
Of evil men
Misunderstanding
Now we're all dead
How unimportant I must be*

*In timely need
You deny me
A kindly deed
You deny me
With effortless speed
You deny me
How unimportant I must be*

Notes

The Thief is back on his feet, but is unable to escape an intense self-loathing as he reflects upon recent events and his life as a whole. He feels that his actions in the past are meaningless and empty, since the glimpses of happiness he's experienced were ultimately fleeting, and have given way to a despair greater than any he's encountered before. He questions himself and his actions, as well as the actions of those around him.

This is one of the few tracks I did not use programmed percussion for. I believe I recorded this one back in March 2025, with the drums performed on my Alesis Nitro Max kit (which I would probably sell to you if you're interested.) I used that kit extensively during the recording of my Queen of New Bedford album *Pipe*, on which it can be heard on every track. I don't consider myself to be a very good drummer, so I much prefer to program drums these days, especially after upgrading to Ableton Live 12, which has a much better assortment of kits and samples to use than what I had available to use in my past projects.

Box Trick

*What do you get up to
Around the compline hour?
Speculating about who
Might hear your words[10]*

*I'm alive enough
To say that I'm half dead
I can call the bluff
Over the things unsaid[11]*

*You can see in the dark
But only if you're willing
You can tear it apart
Just to pull out the filling*

*You can sink your teeth
Into the sacred skin
What you think you're beneath
Is still the mess you're in[12]*

*Everyone around me acts like they're under mind control
I'm a secret agent lurking right below your nose
You'll be glad to know
That a major conspiracy is brewing
And I'm dragging the bar down to a new low[13]*

*When you hide in the box
They never see your body
Someone else is below
Offering you their legs*

*Coming straight from the book
The crowd's applause is empty
Where the box was sawn
Everyone feels empty*

*Now go hang up your wand
Nobody wants to see you
For the love of the act
Is not enough to feed you[14]*

*Now there's nothing left
Unless you count the humor
And it grows in your brain
Just like an awful tumor*

*Everyone around me acts like they're under mind control
I'm a secret agent lurking right below your nose
You'll be glad to know
That a major conspiracy is brewing
And I'm dragging the bar down to a new low*

*Everyone around me acts like they're under mind control
I'm a secret agent lurking right below your nose
You'll be glad to know
That you're a fucking joke[15]*

Notes

The Thief begins to plan his greatest feat: the assassination of the King. He seeks the support of those in low places he's encountered in the past, both in his life before becoming an assassin and those he's met in his line of work. He tries his best to be convincing, to light a flame in them to remind them of who is responsible for all of their suffering at its core. No one is interested in assisting him in this plot, giving him a lukewarm reaction at best. He feels frustrated by this, feeling as though everyone around him is in on this joke but him. He ends up feeling disgusted by them all, his spirit hardening as his belief that he is alone in this world solidifies.

The Jump

Out of line
Soon enough will be my time to shine
Out of sight
Hiding here, I'm ready for a fight

This is not a test
There will be no room for mistake
Remember how you have been blessed
And leave them all in your wake

In the hall
Listening in with an ear against the wall
On my own
My presence never will be known

Never make a sound
I'll see to it that you lay cold on the ground
Never make a sound
I'll see to it that you lay cold on the ground

Notes

The Thief, at his peak, his skills refined, hides and clandestinely scopes out the palace, making sure everything is perfect. Since he is completely on his own for this mission, it's important to ensure that there is nothing amiss. He has one opportunity to accomplish his goal, and he is determined to stop at nothing to do so.

This instrumental is probably my favorite of the whole album, and I am very proud of my musicianship on this track. I love the sound I was able to build for the bass, and the drum programing is some of my finest to date. My guitar skills are on full showcase on this track, with a number of solos which I think exemplify my abilities, particularly the final solo. I very much like how the vocal harmonies on this one turned out as well. All around, one of my most solid tracks to date.

Final Trick

*Before me, I see nothing but a man
What makes you better than me
To rule all of the land?*

*Even if you're heaven-sent
I'll still send you to hell
Picked apart forevermore
By the leagues which you fell*

*Your transgressions
Are known to us all
Your deeds towards our oppression
Are mine towards your fall
Staring death straight down the blade
You cower like a fool
Never again, Never again
Shall someone be your tool[16]*

*There will be no trial
There will be no judge but I
None have been afforded that
You've no law to abide by*

*Nothing you can say is enough
To buy innocence
I've no doubt about your guilt
Take the knife to the hilt*

*Burn this place!
Burn the whole kingdom to the ground!
Perish all of those who've wronged me
I'll bring you down!*

*Burn this place!
Burn the whole kingdom to the ground!
Perish all of those who've wronged me
I'll bring you down! [17]*

Notes

The Thief finally meets the King face to face. Knelt before him, he holds a blade to his neck and airs his disgust with him and the suffering he's caused to so many, including himself. After taking his life, his rage does not cease. He succumbs to his hatred. Not only has the King wronged him, but so have all of those who have looked down upon him, denied him assistance in his time of need, beaten and tortured him. He wants to see the entire kingdom burn, and he hates everyone in it.

The instrumental for this track is largely informed by my love of emo and post-hardcore music, with particular influence from Circa Survive, La Dispute, and Brand New. I recorded this track sometime in early to

mid-2024 when I was experimenting with a lot of new guitar techniques and sounds, largely as a way to explore the potential of the Michael Kelly custom Telecaster I purchased around that time. The track had been sitting unused for quite some time, and I do quite like it, so I'm glad it finally has a home.

I think the vocals and lyrics on this track are really what sell it, though. Since this is the climax of the whole story, and the culmination of all the rage and pain incurred over the Thief's entire life, I needed to make sure that the vocal delivery reflected that intensity. Because of this, the harmonies on this track are shaky and imperfect, and often out of tune. I think the emotion I was looking for shines through this track, and I'm pleased with the outcome, and how it builds into the final track of the album.

No Matter

*With or without you
I made my move
With you gone, so goes my name
So I have nothing to prove*

*I really don't mind
If I leave everything behind
You all fell for my greatest trick of all*

*Take it as a sign
The weather changes over time
Be careful when you're toeing the line
Make sure you check the sky as you fall*

*No matter
No shame and no remorse
There's nothing you can do
The ship I sail is steady on its course[18]*

*Circumstance can always cloud your view
I choose to believe you acted through
The will of someone coercing you*

I just hope I never know the truth[19]

No matter
No shame and no remorse
There's nothing you can do
The ship I sail is steady on its course

Clear a path, get out of my way
Loyal men have come to take me away

Clear a path, get out of my way
Loyal men have come for me

Clear a path, get out of my way
Loyal men have come for me today

At the edge of town
What took you so long to come around?
I've been expecting you
For I have caused all hell to break loose

No explantion
No masking my elation
For the revenge that I have taken
Is all I sought, don't be mistaken

Now this cliff I stand on
There will be no execution
May the sun never shine through this grey sky
Now I take my leave
Fuck you all
Goodbye[20]

Notes

The thief, having accomplished his goal, escapes into hiding. He can trust no one, and stays out of sight. Despite this, he knows that his days are numbered. The severity of what he's done cannot be overlooked, and a new King will always be on the horizon. As he stays hidden, he knows that men are searching for him already. In the meantime, he reflects on the events of his life, and attempts to make peace with some of the feelings he has towards the Rogue and towards himself, and decides that he's better off believing what he chooses to believe, forgiving the Rogue regardless of what the actual truth may be. Before long, he's coaxed out of his hiding place, pursued by the royal guard through the city. Though he manages to throw them off his trail briefly, they soon find him once more, driving him out of town and cornering him on a cliff where there is nowhere left to run. He faces them with a smile on his face, taunting them as he tells them that his purposes were entirely selfish, and that he does not care about the fate of the kingdom thereafter. He curses them, hoping they never see the sun again, as he has never seen it himself. With this, he spits one last obscenity at them before bidding them farewell, casting himself off the cliff and to his death, fading away into the ocean from which he came.

This track was a major undertaking, an episodic piece which ended up being the longest track I have ever produced. I had a vague idea of how I wanted the ending of this album to go, and knew that I wanted to end things with the song wrapping back around to the original chord progression and vocal harmonies found in “Steel” much earlier in the album, and that this had to be followed by the sound of the ocean fading out to close the cycle created by the opening tracks of the first and second parts, with the Thief’s death coinciding with the lack of clarinet in the final moments of the album, as the absence of the violin and cello on “The Thief” represent the losses of his two closest companions.

This track goes through multiple key changes, with several bass riffs denoting these for the most part. Though the sound profile is different, this track is partially inspired by a track called “The Last Lost Continent” by La Dispute, which is a long and intense track towards the end of their debut album. I wanted there to be an impactful ending to this story, and I do think I was able to accomplish that with this track. The final three tracks on this album are a continuum which comprise some of the finest songwriting and musicianship in my entire catalogue.

Personnel

Acoustic Guitar, electric guitar, slide guitar, electric bass, percussion, violin, cello, clarinet, hammered dulcimer, vocals – performed by Lentil Corelli

Composition, lyrics, programming – Lentil Corelli

Engineered, recorded, mixed, mastered, and produced by Lentil Corelli.

Artwork and package design by Lentil Corelli.

Equipment

1984-87 Squier E-Series Made In Japan Stratocaster
Michael Kelly Custom Collection Telecaster
Epiphone Les Paul Junior
Squier Affinity J-Bass
Alesis Nitro Max E-kit
Songbird Hammered Dulcimer
A Violin
A Cello
A Clarinet
Shure SM58 Microphone
AKG P5i Microphone
Fender Mustang I Amp
Joyo Baatsin Overdrive Pedal
Focusrite Scarlett 2i2 Audio Interface
Ableton Live 12

*Analysis &
Annotations*

On Themes & Symbolism

I always love when I have the opportunity to dig into the content of an album or a novel, to really pick apart the details and garner a full understanding of everything that is happening in a literary sense.

Considering I initially envisioned this story as a literary work, I put a lot of thought into many of the recurring symbols and thematic elements throughout the album.

The first and most obvious element in this story is an attachment to water in many different senses. This is prevalent starting from the very first sound that plays on the first track: the sound of the ocean. In the second track, “Steel,” this theme continues, with every verse mentioning a connection between the Thief’s life and water. This is present in many of the tracks on the album, with the sound and mention of rain as well, and a connection between the Thief’s plans and ships and boats.

Another major theme in this story is the Thief’s connection to shadows and darkness. This refers to a number of things. First and foremost, the work of a thief or an assassin in this context is best accomplished discreetly and in secret rather than in plain sight, and as such, this drives the Thief to favor the cover of shade and night. There is also a connection between this theme and the morality of the Thief, which can be

viewed in a somewhat vague sense. The Thief can be seen in a few different lights. His actions and the way he lives his life could be viewed by many as very negative, with his impact on society being hindering and detrimental. The actions of the thief throughout the story are largely selfish, right up until the very end of the story. This is a product of the life the Thief was set forth to live, trodden upon by an uncaring world and doing what he could to rise above it and carve his own path in life. Though he briefly experienced love, kindness, and happiness, this was stripped away from him just as quickly. As such, the darkness and shade also refer to the Thief giving in to the hatred and bitterness which grows as a result of his losses, and his eventual desire to contribute towards the downfall of the entire kingdom for his own fulfillment rather than the betterment of anyone else.

I left a lot of this story vague, as I wanted there to be opportunity to interpret the actions of the Thief as one sees fit, and tie the themes to external factors and other influences. Though the original story I wrote expounds much further upon many of the plot points I wrote here, I think the less detailed account of the Thief's life which I've presented here gives a more interesting view of things.

Annotations

[1] I think this verse exemplifies the intention of this track as a whole. It ties in the main thematic elements of the entire album, foretelling the Thief's connection with water, the way his losses build the emotions which lead to his deeds later in the story. I also think this verse has much poetic value, and is one of my favorite that I wrote for this album

[2] This last verse sums up the end of this story, and again foretells a major part of the Thief's life: his death. This ties directly to the last verse of the album.

[3] This verse is somewhat vague, and I left it nebulous as it represents the first real scene of the Thief's life, his willful ignorance of the advice he's given to be cautious as he goes about his business.

[4] The chorus of this song refers to perpetrators, such as the Thief and those around him. The instigators refer to the upper classes of this society which drive such perpetrators to steal. The Thief feels that there is no way to make everyone happy in the end, and conducts his business for himself at whatever expense it might be to others.

[5] The repetition of “I” at the end of many of the lines of this song can also be heard as “eye,” foreshadowing the outcome of the Thief’s actions as detailed here: the loss of his eye.

[6] The lack of any given name for the Thief throughout this work is intentional, intended to echo the uncaring nature of most of those around him. In this verse, “you don’t know a thing” refers to both the fact that the Thief intends to remain discreet, but also the fact that his client has not taken the time to know his name either.

[7] The lyrics of this song are largely relevant to the Thief’s determination and excitement over finally getting revenge over the loss of his eye, and are a bit scrambled because of that. They also somewhat foreshadow what he finds immediately afterward when he returns home.

[8] The lyrics in this song are presented in a fairly nebulous way, intended to be a conversation between the Thief and himself, and partially of the perceived version of the Rogue which remains. An exploration of this thoughts as he returns to the world.

[9] The boat here represents his plans, and comes up later in the last song on the album. This also mentions a false sense of care from those around him.

[10] This track has some of my favorite lyrics. Much more poetic and abstract than many of the lyrics on this album, this is largely an attempt by the Thief to garner support for his plot to assassinate the king, trying to entice in order to convince.

[11] This verse shows a return to the Thief's arrogance and confidence. He tells people that he sees all that's hidden and that nothing gets by him.

[12] The Thief attempts to entice once more, speaking of how there is much to gain in their support of his efforts. Though many of those around him feel that this sort of thing is out of their control and out of their power, he reminds them that nonetheless, they suffer the consequences of the King's actions either way.

[13] The Thief expresses dismay at how little other people seem to care about the situation he's described and the injustices of society. Despite this, he's determined to take this on by himself if he must.

[14] In this verse and the two preceding verses, The Thief criticizes the unwillingness of others to step out of their comfort zones, comparing their actions to a magic trick where everyone already knows how it's done. This sort of thing will not do them well in the long run, and he thinks they should take a risk and join him.

[15] The Thief's dismay grows into disgust, and he abandons his attempt to get support, deciding that this is a job he must do by himself.

[16] This line is the culmination of all of the Thief's anger and pain.

[17] This verse is where the Thief truly develops a hatred of everyone around him. He feels that the uncaring attitude of those in high and low places have contributed to a perpetuation of injustice, though by this point he only cares about finding his own justice. He truly wants to see the world burn along with everyone in it.

[18] The beginning of this song is largely an internal expression of his feelings towards society as a whole. The line "toeing the line" can also be heard as "towing the line," expressing both teetering over the edge as well as the weight everyone will have to bear due to his actions. The ship refers to his plan once more, and this time it has gone forth unwavering, and cannot be stopped. The King is dead, and nothing will change that.

[19] This is the Thief's final acceptance of the circumstances of losing the Witch and the Rogue. He makes his peace with this, and once again has no desire to know the truth behind the true intentions of the Rogue.

[20] The last few verses here echo the same structure as “Steel” at the beginning of the album. His final speech here represents his hatred towards society, the selfishness of his actions. He has no intention of falling at the hands of anyone but himself. The sky is grey, as foretold in “Steel,” as he chooses to end his life in a way he deems honorable.

On Composition & Production

I want to share a bit of my process here, and detail how I write songs, how I make decisions about composition and production, and why I do things the way I do. This section will likely be very scatterbrained and disorderly, but just pretend that it's due to my passion for music and not the ADHD.

One of the major components of this album is an emphasis on atmosphere. The sound of the ocean and rain add a certain mood to several of the tracks which I feel would be lost otherwise, and also emphasize some of the symbolism in the album. The tracks "The Ocean," "Wave Sequence," "The Thief," and "No Matter," all benefit from these sounds and create a progressive theme.

The second track, "Steel," went through some variations. I attempted to add a strings section to it, as well as acoustic guitar, but I felt that anything further than the largely subdued electric guitar I recorded drew attention away from the vocals. I recorded these vocal harmonies with the intention of having them be completely free of any sort of correction, but I still needed them to be as in tune and in sync as possible. This took many takes and many tries, but I'm quite pleased with the result. The echo of this style of harmony can be heard at the end of "No Matter," also a

bit more intense in that context.

“Skirmishes” is a track that went through many variations as well. It is a track that gave me quite a bit of trouble to produce. Its battling guitars are mostly filtered through a guitar plugin which give the distinctive sound and crunch. When multiple tracks with similar tones played in similar ranges are layered, though, it can be difficult to differentiate them, and difficult to mix them in a way that isn’t too loud without washing any part out. It was also troublesome to mix the bass into this track because of that. Having a lot of moving parts can give an interesting sound, but it can be a pain to deal with from a production standpoint.

“Patch Trick” was one of the first tracks I made for this album, though I changed it up a bit when I started working on the album proper, mostly the guitar sound. The crashing grand piano sound is something I started experimenting with during the recording of my album *Don’t Touch Me*, and is largely influenced by similar sounds which can be heard in *Deathconsciousness* by Have A Nice Life, an album which has served as a great inspiration to me over the years, and is arguably my favorite album of all time. The main draw of this album is the build up with the guitar solo towards the end of the first section, which leads into a release as the crunch of the guitar fades into a much airier and more dreamy tone, representing a shift in literary theme as well. Definitely some of my best work.

“Wave Sequence” is another track I recorded early on as an experiment with my hammered dulcimer, as I was very eager to include it in some recording after obtaining it. I experimented with different ways to mic it, with one method involving propping the instrument up and slipping two microphones underneath it, one on either side, to create a stereo effect that sweeps across the instrument as it’s played. I found this a bit difficult to work with for the purpose of this recording, and if I recall correctly, I ended up recording the dulcimer portion of this track on my phone’s voice memo app. I wasn’t especially concerned with sound quality considering the atmosphere of this piece and the emphasis on rain and a dreamy tone.

“Careful” came about as I played around with an Epiphone Les Paul Junior which I recently traded my old Gretsch Electromatic Jet for. The old guitar served me very well, featured extensively on the first three Queen of New Bedford albums as the primary electric guitar I played. However, after the Michael Kelly Telecaster came into my possession, I found that its tone was somewhat inferior to that of the new guitar. Since the Epiphone has a P90 pickup as I explained earlier, that allowed me to explore a lot of new tones I found inaccessible before now. This contributes to the bright and warm tone of this track. The chord progression isn’t exactly straightforward, and took quite a few attempts to make work.

The chord progression is as follows:

Cadd9 – Cmaj7 – Asus2 – Am

Cadd9 – Cmaj7 – Em9

Cadd9 – Cmaj7 – Fmaj7

E – Fmaj7 – G6

C – C7 – F – G

C – E7 – F – G

There is a fair amount of variation and nuance to the rhythm for this, but this sort of style is something I began working with mostly during the recording of *Pipe*. Rather than focus on what a chord looks like on paper, a lot more flavor can be obtained through implementing novel voicings of chords. For the unfamiliar, chord voicing is essentially the arrangement of notes in a chord. I'll take this opportunity to impart a little music theory knowledge.

To put it simply (there is a lot more nuance to this sort of thing than I'm about to describe, but for the sake of brevity and simplicity, further explanation isn't particularly relevant to a basic understanding), a standard major or minor chord will generally consist of three notes. For example, a C major chord will contain the notes C, E, and G – the first, third, and fifth notes of a C major scale. Any major chord can be made this way, as well as the corresponding minor chords derived from minor scales. With this in mind, major chords are often

defined by the *root* of the chord, that is the lowest pitch of the chord.



This image shows a standard C major chord, with a C in the root. If you move the C to the next octave, you leave E as the root of the chord. This would often be denoted as C/E.



This is also known as an *inversion*. C/E is the first inversion of a C major chord. If the E is moved up to leave G as the root, that's the second inversion. These are all different voicings of a C major chord, and each one adds a different flavor to a song and can create different moods.

Anyway, that was completely unnecessary, but I am very passionate about my craft, and love to explain these things.

“Pupil Distance” is a track heavily inspired by psychedelic rock, with swirling guitars over a mellow drum beat. I recorded the vocals for this track in the same fashion as I did for most of the vocals on *Pipe*, by running an AKG P5i stage mic through the delay and reverb settings on a Fender Mustang amp. I would say the song “Wicked Game” by Chris Isaak and similar songs informed the mood of this track as well.

The guitar solos on this track are some of my favorites, especially the second one. I can’t remember exactly which guitars I used for this one, but the solos are either my Stratocaster or the Les Paul Junior. Either way, I enjoy the atmosphere in this one a lot.

For a little more music theory, this track makes heavy use of maj7 chords – essentially, a major chord that has an extra note added on, the seventh note of the corresponding major scale. I always feel like these types of chords are very much conducive to a dreamy atmosphere.

“Confidence Trick” is a bit of a turning point in the album, involving a pronounced use of programmed instrumental, particularly the eighth-note patterns heard throughout on an organ. The chorus again makes use of maj7 chords, though in a somewhat odd pattern. I found this song quite difficult to write lyrics and melodies for because of this as well as some rhythmic oddities, and shelved it for a long time due to that. I rewrote the lyrics

a number of times until I was finally satisfied. I think the arrangement of the chorus harmonies lend to an almost mischievous tone, which I think works well in the context of the story.

“Lessons” is all around, in my opinion, one of the greatest songs I’ve ever written. The upbeat kick and snare pattern that comes in at the beginning sets the tone nicely, and the snappy bass tone adds to it, and when the acoustic guitars come in, it almost has a bit of a country-influenced feel to it. Because of that, I decided to include the slide guitar melody that can be heard throughout the track. I recorded it using the Les Paul Junior, and I absolutely love the tone I was able to get out of it. Absolutely one of my favorite recordings. The vocal harmonies are tight and imperfect, lending to a bit of a ragged feeling I was trying to achieve for this song. I’m also very pleased with my vocals on the bridge of this song. I had a great time recording this one, though it went through a few phases, largely because the first bass recording I did made absolutely no sense. Either way, I love this one, and I hope you do too.

“Blindspot” marks a major departure from the sounds up until this point. The instrumental for this was originally closer to a Corvid Language track, but I never could figure out what I wanted to do with it. I was listening to *Pretty Hate Machine* by Nine Inch Nails a lot at the time, so I think some of the industrial tendencies are influenced by that. I think some of my vocal delivery

on this track is also reminiscent of Trent Reznor's vocals on that album. I think it's an interesting combination of programmed instruments with a more subtle use of guitar.

"Gauze" is a song I wrote towards the end of 2020 while I was experimenting with a lot of new recording techniques. This was far before I gained any sort of proficiency with Ableton Live, and I worked largely in Audacity, which is a very inefficient way to do things. I was very much into loud and abrasive sounds at the time, and although I'm still fond of that sort of thing, I toned it down a little with this rework of the track. However, the outro to this track was a lot of fun to record. I had the kick drum mimic a heartbeat and slowly speed up to build tension and anxiety. The ominous sounds which can be heard during that section are produced mostly from scratching the strings on my bass very slowly, or messing with switches on my guitar, that sort of thing. The glass shattering at the end is somewhat intended to startle the listener after building up the anxiety, as I wanted to have the listener caught off-guard in a similar way to the Thief as he discovers the horror awaiting him at home.

"Lateness" was, if I remember correctly, the first recording I did for this album. I had recently gained a fair amount of knowledge and skills from working on my Corvid Language projects, and I was ready to put them to use in something a bit more Queen of New

Bedford adjacent. I set out to record a song about this event in the Thief's life, so I had a pretty solid direction to go from the start. The droning organ creates a somber atmosphere, and the slow tempo and build to the end of the first verse are a nice transition into the more grim atmosphere which follows, with dissonant chords and dull guitar sounds fading into the background as a gritty synth plucks out a bass line. The build up into the major chord release is definitely a favorite moment of mine in my catalog. I think this closes off the first part of the album very nicely.

"The Thief" is a necessary element at the beginning of the second disc, as the same clarinet melody plays alongside the wind and rain and ocean, but the cello and violin are absent after the deaths of the Witch and the Rogue. I do think the symbolism here is pretty clear. I did not know how to play the clarinet before making that recording, but I think I did an alright job.

"Rupture" was difficult to mix due to the sheer number of tracks involved. Probably about twelve synths and a bunch of guitar tracks all mashed together into a washed out mess. The song structure, from a theory standpoint, is very simple, and is not the draw of this track. I tried to fill the vocals with the pain the Thief is experiencing during this moment. The outro represents the Thief getting up and beginning to get his life back together, but it was mostly a recording of me after turning my amp up too high and then running around

slamming doors and shuffling papers and whatnot. I think it serves its purpose nicely.

“Dexterity Trick” doesn’t have much to it. It’s from the same era as “Gauze,” with a loud and abrasive tone. I chose to rework it for this album because I think it gives a good tone shift to represent the anger and bitterness that begins to build in the Thief’s mind.

“Dentistry, Forgetfully” is a mostly sparse track of a steady drum beat and repetitive bass line. The fills of dissonant guitar indicate the discontent and confusion the Thief feels around this time, and the abrupt end to the track is intended to represent a quick change in thinking, almost as if he splashed cold water on his face and told himself that it’s time to get serious and make some moves.

“Box Trick” is another favorite of mine. Fairly straightforward track with a bit of a slacker rock tone to it largely influenced by a period of time where I listened to nothing but *Exile in Guyville* by Liz Phair for two weeks or so.

“The Jump” is one of the cleanest tracks I’ve ever recorded. The bass, the guitars, the melodies. The percussion is the best drum programming I’ve ever done, and I love the way every part of this track turned out. Pretty straightforward, not much to say.

“Final Trick” is a remnant of a period of time where I was listening to a lot of Circa Survive. I have many of these periods somewhat often, but at that particular time, I was interested in replicating some of the sonic tendencies of a lot of post-hardcore music. This instrumental is largely informed by that, and I never knew what to do with it until I rediscovered it recently. I wrote most of the lyrics quickly, added on a bit. The vocals are intense and fiery, and I made a point to lose key completely during the final harmony, representing the absolute deterioration of everything for the Thief.

“No Matter” is an episodic piece that has been a real pain to master, as its numerous sections require different processes to sound how I want them to. The end result, along with the two preceding tracks, is what I believe to be possibly the finest chunk of music in my entire catalog. I don’t really know what to say about it. It’s just really fucking awesome.

A f t e r w o r d

Thank you so much for listening to my album and reading this zine. This album has been particularly special to me and is especially close to my heart, and I sincerely hope you enjoy it. I believe that I came into this world to make music, and I just hope that it can give those who listen to it some solace, something to relate to, or comfort of any kind, in the way that my favorite music does for me.

Speeding through this project has been an interesting experience. After dealing with the worst depression of my entire life for most of this year, some personal choices, including my decision to stop smoking marijuana, I believe have contributed to a more positive outlook for me. It means everything that there are people who see value in my craft, and I would like to pursue that further, given the opportunity. With a clear mind, I intend to move forward and refine my skills even further, as an instrumentalist, vocalist, producer,

and as a person.

In the face of a life without meaning, a life with no purpose, it can feel impossible to proceed. When there is no one to catch you when you stumble, it can feel like a shame that the bump on your head didn't shut the light off forever. Impossible to love, impossible to be loved. Impossible to accept that another might make an attempt. The light comes back on, you must get back up on your feet, and stumble through another day. Willfully ignorant of the fire engulfing you, and everyone around you. No one needs another reason. That's why your eyes are glazed over, why you didn't hear what anyone said, why you don't remember where you are, who you are, why you are. Numb.

There will always be something left, though.

You can make a positive contribution to the world, somehow, I believe it. Catch someone else when they stumble. The world is enormous, evil is boundless and relentless in its pursuit of forcing its suffering upon the suffering. But your neighbors need kindness too. They're next to you, and they might even be willing to show you that kindness too. They're here, today.

Every face you see is a human being. A reflection of you. It's bad luck to break the mirror.

I love you.

- Lentil Corelli

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