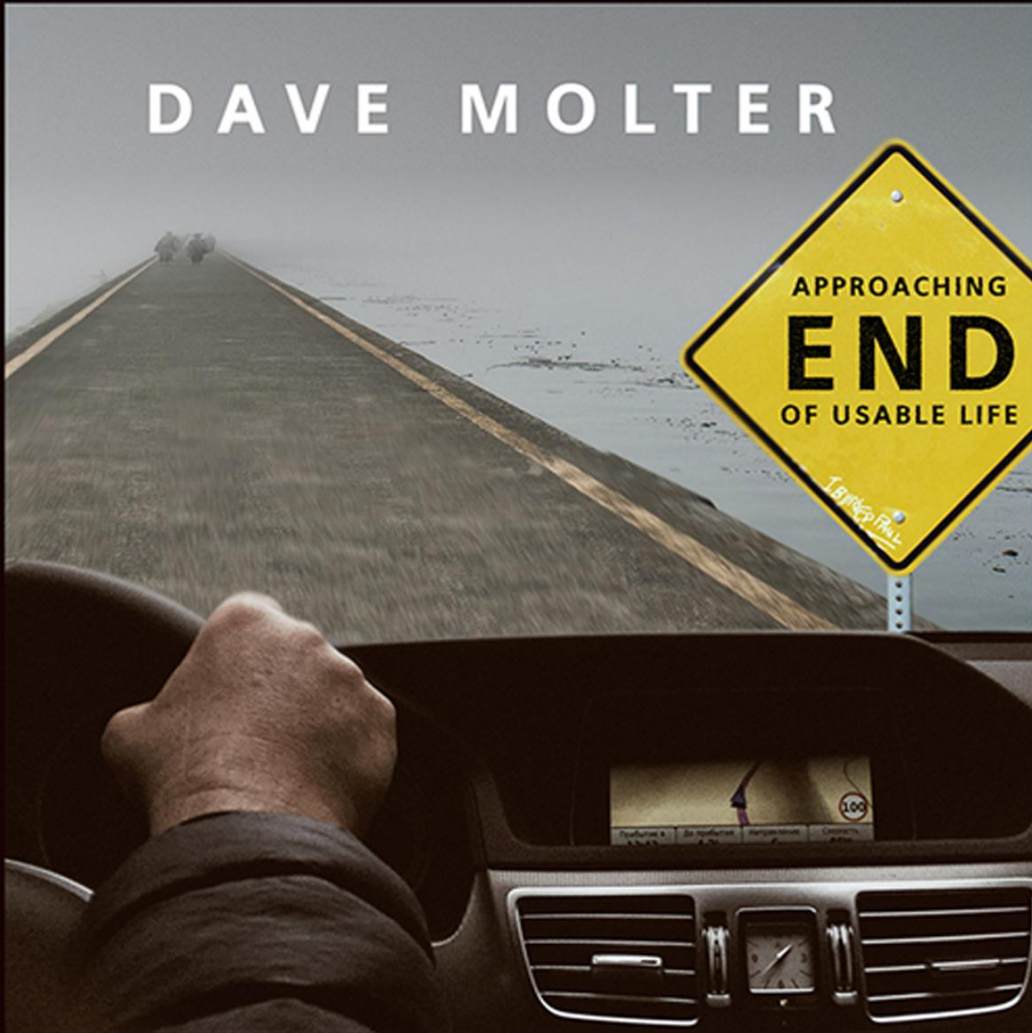


DAVE MOLTER



APPROACHING END OF USABLE LIFE

THE SONGS

1. Approaching End of Usable Life

2. Trainwreck

3. Down to You

4. You and I

5. Do You Want To?

6. Here We Are

Featuring Lisa Klen Bleil

7. All the Answers

Featuring Annemarie Picerno and The Souville Horns

8. We'll Be Fine

9. Do You Ever Dream of Me?

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www.davemoltermusic.com

www.alsnydermusic.com

Dave Molter: Basses, lead & BG vocals, trumpet on "Down to You," MIDI strings on "Trainwreck"

Al Snyder: Keyboards, BG Vocals

Joey Waslousky: Drums, except "Approaching End of Usable Life"

Additional Musicians

Lisa Klein Bleil: Vocal duet on "Here We Are"

Tom Compton: Marching snare on "Trainwreck"

John DeCola: Accordion on "Down to You"

Dave Flodine: Guitars on "You and I" and "We'll Be Fine"; ukulele on "Down to You"

Danny Gochmour: Guitars on "All the Answers," "Approaching End of Usable Life," "Here We Are" and "We'll Be Fine"

Naomi Jarvis: Trumpet on "You and I"

George "Zeus" Marcinko: Guitar on "Do You Want To?"

Ron Orrico: Drums on "Approaching End of Usable Life"

Annemarie Picerno: Featured vocal on "All the Answers"

The Soulville Homs

Phil Brontz: Sax

George Amer: Trumpet

Stephen Graham: Trombone on "All the Answers"

Special recognition

Buddy Hall: Producer, guitars, MIDI programming and BG vocals on "Trainwreck" and "Do You Ever Dream of Me?" R.I.P., "Magic Budster."

All songs composed by **Dave Molter** except for "All the Answers"; "Do You Want To?"; "Here We Are"; and "We'll Be Fine," composed by **Dave Molter** and **Al Snyder**.

All songs produced by **Al Snyder** & **Dave Molter** and recorded at **Albey Road Studio**, Pittsburgh, except for "Do You Ever Dream of Me?" and "Trainwreck," produced by **Buddy Hall** and **Dave Molter** and recorded at **Diversity Studio**, Pittsburgh

Cover illustration

Michael Andrulonis

www.andrudesign.com



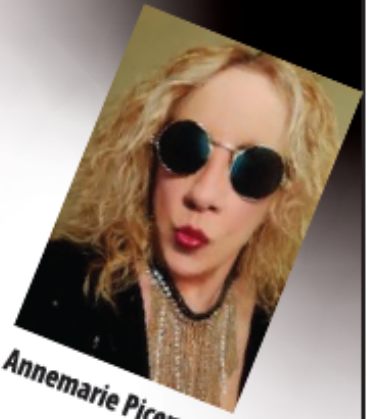
John DeCola



George Marcinko



Dave Flodine



Annemarie Picerno



The Souville Horns



Al & Dave



Joey Waslousky



Ron Orrico



Naomi Jarvis



Danny Gochnour



Lisa Klein Bleil

Photos by Gary Dotterweich, Dave Prelosky, Jamie Kirkavitch, Pam Bice & Al Snyder

Approaching End of Usable Life

I don't understand it
Don't know how time went so fast
I sure didn't plan it
Guess I've been stuck in the past
But you're always the last one Always the
last one to know
Ever the runner, now's not the time to go
slow

Verse 2

Just gotta do it
Leave somethin' here with my name Gotta
get to it
Not seekin' fortune or fame
Start a new session
Push all the doubt out the way
Leave an impression
Somethin' that won't fade away

Chorus

'Cause I'm approaching the end
of my usable life
Battery's bound to run down Approaching
the end of my usable life La la la la la ... La la
... usable life

Verse 3

No use denyin'
I've wasted far too much time
No use in lyin'
Gotta get off of the dime
Pick a direction Don't need no compass, my
friend
Make a selection
Follow it through to the end

Chorus 2x

Behind the Song

It all started with a dead printer.
My producer, Al Snyder, was attempting to
print something for a client when the
printer gave him this message:

APPROACHING END OF USABLE LIFE

It meant that it was time to replace a
component. Why it didn't just say,
"Replace component," I don't know. But I
thought it would make a great song title. I
had music without lyrics that I'd been
sitting on for some time, and that phrase
just fit right in. As soon as I had the title,
the lyrics came in minutes.

After I'd thought about it, I knew that the
CD had to have that title, too. The main
reason is, I really am approaching the end
of my usable life. I mean, I hope I have
another 20 years left, but ...

It's kinda funny, because a high school
friend saw the cover image on Facebook
without explanation and apparently
thought I was heading into depression. So
she gave me a long pep talk -- virtually. I
appreciate that! We haven't seen each
other in 50+ years, but it's nice to know
that relationships continue and that people
still care about old acquaintances.

Trainwreck

We've known each other since I don't know when
Good times and bad, we've always been friends
But you won't listen to me when I say
You'd better slow down, start changin' your ways
How can you be so blind to the fix that you're in?
You got no one to blame but yourself!
You know it's a sin!

Verse 2

You seem to think that you're the only one
Who's been misused and put under the gun
Eight billion people ... they all play that game
You need to understand that we're all the same
At the end of your rope
There's still a chance to climb back
The only way isn't down, that's a natural fact

Chorus

You're a fast train runnin' down a dead-end track
No way to stop you or make you turn back
You're an accident lookin' for a place to happen, my friend
You bought a first-class ticket for a one-way ride
Well you can run, but you never can hide
All of your baggage will follow you right to the end, my friend

Verse 3

I can't believe the crazy things you do
If you walk on thin ice, you're gonna fall through

I'm reachin' out my hand to pull you away
If you refuse it could be your dyin' day
Get a hold of yourself, time goes by too fast
Life is a journey: Get back on the path

Interlude

Half Chorus

Behind the Song

We all know someone whose life is a mess -- a real trainwreck. I used this imagery to implore someone to take the helping hand offered.

Buddy Hall, who produced, played most of the instruments and sang background on this tune, and really outdid himself here. You'll hear snatches of the Beatles, Peter Gabriel and even Argent at one point in this tune. Some of these references were unconscious. For example, we really didn't think of the intro as referencing "Eleanor Rigby" until we started to mix! **Tommy Compton**, who played drums with Johnny Winter and Ten Years After, generously added marching snare drum to the tune.

Sadly, Buddy passed away unexpectedly on January 29, 2021. He was a friend and brother for more than 40 years. I miss him, and it's both painful and joyful for me to listen to anything we worked on. But the joy overrides the sadness.

Down to You

Black, White ... Uptight
Stand, Fight ... shouted provocations But it
all comes down to you

Verse 2

Right, Wrong, Weak, Strong
Headlong into confrontation
But it all comes down to you

Chorus

You may find life's out of line Just take
some time
Assess the situation and
Do what's right
And let your light
Come shinin' through

Verse 3

Up, Down, Smile, Frown
Swim, Drown
Better grab flotation
Or you'll take it down with you

Verse 4

Left, Right, Day, Night
Dark, Light
Seek illumination
'Cause it all comes down to you
Yes, it all comes down to you

Behind the Song

I quite often wake up with snatches of a song in my head. In reading Paul McCartney's "Lyrics," I learned that this happens to him, too. I suppose it's common to all songwriters. Sometimes I'll have just the music, or a few lines of lyrics just pop into my head. For "Down to You," the first verse appeared as you hear it. I knew what I wanted to say and I had the chorus in mind before I sat down to write the rest of the lyrics.

I wrote this song during the Black Lives Matter protests in 2021, not really thinking that it could be construed as a plea for racial understanding. But then it seemed to be exactly what I had in mind all along. The idea behind the song is that no matter what situation you may be confronted with, how you react and what you do about it "all comes down to you." As the middle 8 says:

"Do what's right and let your light come shinin' through."

It should be simple. But ...

John DeCola's excellent accordion sets the scene early on. I get the image of people dining in an outdoor restaurant, and it could easily be in any country where the accordion is played: France, Mexico, Argentina, Poland. Texas? Maybe friends are talking, discussing the state of the world. But when the instrumental section kicks in, the trumpet, tuba and marching snare remind me of a funeral procession in old Italy. At the end, the procession either falls down a set of steps or marches into a wall. I'm not sure.

You and I

You and I go strolling by the river Nature
has delivered
Another perfect day
Side by side we while away the hours Watch
the pretty flowers as they sway

And we talk a while
If we disagree, we end it with a smile And
we never lie
What a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive!

Verse 2

Rest your head now,
Lie down here beside me
With your love to guide me
I'll never go astray
Sun is high
It's perfect summer weather
Rainclouds all decide to stay away

And we're all right now
'Cause we have our love
To see us through somehow
With your hand in mine
Everything's brand new since
I so gladly gave my heart to you

You and I go strolling by the river Nature
has delivered
Another perfect day

Again, I woke up with a part of this song in
my head: the old saying,
"What a tangled web we weave when first
we practice to deceive."

Don't ask me why that particular phrase
appeared, with a melody. All I can tell you
is that ever since I was young, certain
words or phrases trigger a rhythm in my
brain, and I set them to music. I've met
only one other person who does this, but I
think it must be fairly common. It happens
even now and then with, for example,
highway signs, or overheard
conversations. Nine times out of ten, they
go away as quickly as they appeared.
Sometimes, though, they become songs.

This song took shape after I'd been
listening to Tom Petty's "Wildflowers"
album and The White Album. "Mother
Nature's Son" triggered a bucolic setting,
and I immediately had the image of a
couple walking through the countryside:
"You and I go strolling by the river ..."
The rest fell into place from that.

I think this is a very happy, positive song,
and my friend **Naomi Jarvis** added bright,
jaunty trumpets.

Do You Want To?

Do you want to be my baby?
Do you want to be my girl?
Do you want to have adventures all
around this great big world? See the
Pyramids of Egypt? Climb the Mountains of
the Moon?
Do you want to? Do you baby?
I gotta know very soon!

Verse 2

Do you want to take a selfie? You and me,
the Taj Mahal! Catch a Lear jet up to
China? Walk along that old Great Wall? Ride
from Istanbul to Paris
on the Orient Express?
Do you want to? Do you baby? Do you want
to? Please say yes!

Chorus

We'll travel the world ...Capetown to Nome!
No matter where we are,
Baby, you're my home!

Verse 3

Do you want to meet my guru in the hills
above Mumbai?
Ride an elephant through Delhi?
Stare a cobra in the eye?
Hang glide off old Kilimanjaro?
Snorkel in Hanauma Bay?
Do you want to, do you baby?
If you do, you'll make my day!

Chorus 2X

Behind the Song

This song sprung from another snatch of melody with lyrics that appeared out of nowhere -- not in a dream this time, but just during the day.

"Do you want to be my baby, do you want to be my girl?"

I thought it was silly, but it kept nagging me. I came up with the first verse, and the song turned into a travelogue. Come on baby, let's go around the world together!

My producer, Al Snyder, wrote a great chorus that makes it a love song: "No matter where we are, baby, you're my home."

This tune started out in the vein of Wings's "Helen Wheels," but it turned into a Deep Purple groove, and Al's distorted organ along with **George Marcinko's** great guitar really add to that atmosphere.

It was pretty easy for me to pick travelogue destinations: India, China, Istanbul, Paris. For the chorus, Al suggested "L.A. to Rome." But I wanted the distance traveled to be greater. What I really wanted to pick was the southernmost point of South America and somewhere up in the Arctic Circle.

But Ushuaia, Argentina and Longyearbyen on the polar archipelago of Svalbard don't rhyme. So I picked Capetown, South Africa and Nome, Alaska.

Here We Are

Featuring Lisa Klein Bleil

Here we are,
Amazed by the things we feel
Each of us knowing the other's real
So no need to ever be afraid

Verse 2

Yesterday, we drifted in worlds apart
Neither one knowing the other's heart Was
only a beat away

Chorus

And it's nice to know
There's still someone like you Somebody to
depend upon
And tell my secrets to
Yes, it's nice to know
You feel the same way too
That you feel (That you feel)
The same way too (The same way too)

Chorus

Verse 3

Here we are ... Here we are
Here we are,
Amazed by the things we feel
Each of us knowing the other's real
So, no need to ever be afraid
So, no need to ever be afraid
Hey, no need to ever be afraid

Behind the Song

This is one of my oldest songs, written in the mid-1970s in a vastly different form. Sometimes I invent characters, but in this case, I wrote it for a specific woman I was dating at the time. It began as a very slow ballad, with guitar and synthesizer only. It went through several incarnations, including a samba, but it never quite gelled. (Neither did the relationship.)

Fast forward to 2020. My producer **Al Snyder** is also a great singer and songwriter. Al took the bones I gave him and transformed them into a wonderful arrangement that really conveys the feelings in a special romantic relationship.

I always envisioned the song as a male-female duet, but when Al gave me his reworked demo, he sang the part of "the girl." Suddenly, I realized that the lyrics could apply to any relationship and could just as easily be sung by two women or two men.

I was tempted to release the male version because both Al and I believe gender plays no part in romance. Who knows? Maybe we'll release that version yet.

I recruited the wonderful **Lisa Klein Bleil** to sing the duet with me, and she did an amazing job. She is professionally trained and well-versed in any style of singing, and she took this tune to a new level. Her delivery of the solo line "Here We Are" near the end of the song just kills me.

All the Answers
Featuring Annemarie Picerno and The
Soulville Horns

I drove into the city
We had a gig that night downtown
Six months on the road now
I was feelin' mighty down
Pulled up to the stage door
And she was standin' there
Eyes as blue as the mornin' sky
And the sunlight in her hair

Verse 2

I knew that I should walk on by
'Cause you were waitin' back at home But
bein' young and foolish
I guess that I was bound to roam
We hit her place together
I thought she fit me like a glove
When I woke up early next mornin'
I knew that it was stone, cold love

Chorus

For the first time in my life
I thought I had all the answers
I did the math, but it came out incomplete
But I knew you'd be okay 'cause, hey! You
always were a dancer!
And me, I was born
To trip on my own feet

Greek Chorus

I thought I had all the answers
I thought I had all the answers
I thought I had all the answers
But I was wrong

Verse 3

Things got strange with my new love She
started runnin' hot and cold
She called me up at 3 a.m.
And told me it was gettin' old
She said,

"I only liked you 'cause you play
In a rock 'n' roll band
I never really loved you
And I don't believe I ever can!"

Chorus 2

When I got back home I realized
It was you who had the answers
I watched you pack my bags and say, "*Baby,*
hit the street!"
And as I slowly walked away I said,
"Damn! She always was a dancer!"
And me, I was born
To trip on my own feet

Greek Chorus

I thought I had all the answers
I thought I had all the answers
I thought I had all the answers
But I was wrong

Behind the Song

Let me admit right up front that some of
this song is autobiographical. (I'll point out
which parts when they arrive.)

Here's a cautionary tale of what happened
to a guy who decided it'd be no big deal to
cheat on his girlfriend or wife -- take your
pick. In this case, he's a musician (like me)
out on the road who winds up falling in love
-- or so he thinks -- with a woman he
meets at a gig.

Our protagonist knows he's not doing the
right thing, but he rationalizes it by telling
himself that his girlfriend back home will
be okay. But of course she isn't, and when
he gets back home, she kicks him out.

I like the image of this guy's girl back home
being able to handle herself:
"You always were dancer"

contrasted with the schlub this guy is:
"I was born to trip on my own feet."

To sing the part of both the new lover and the jilted girl back home, I recruited the wonderful **Annemarie Picerno**, a multitalented singer/songwriter from Nashville. I found Annemarie by hearing her songs on **Spectrum Radio Petts Wood**, an indie station in London. Who'da thunk it?

Annemarie did her vocals in Nashville with the help of producer **Bob McGilpin**. I gave her very little direction except to say, "Don't hold back. And act really pissed off!" And she did! I mean, when she sings "**Baby, hit the street!**" in the last verse, I want to hightail it out of there.

And her delivery of the line:
"I only liked you 'cause you play in a rock 'n' roll band." is both hilarious and heartbreaking. **Full disclosure:** A girl said exactly these words to me in another lifetime. Art imitates life.

Pittsburgh's **Soulville Horns** added just the right touch of swampy brass, giving the tune a real R&B, Stax/Volt sound, and **Danny Gochnour's** guitar work would be equally at home in a Donald Fagen song.

We'll Be Fine

I never thought
I'd give my heart so soon
Not this time, but here I am
Thought I'd finally learned
A different tune
One where I'm the one in command

Chorus

Oh, but it's all right
I think that we'll be fine
All we need to do is flow
And take a little time
Time to get to know
All we need to know
About each other

Verse 2

In my wildest dreams
I never thought I'd find you,
Not this way
And all the crazy schemes
My mind had brought
Into view, they couldn't say

Chorus

Oh, but it's all right
I think that we'll be fine
All we need to do is flow
And take a little time
Time to get to know
All we need to know
About each other

Bridge

Well, I had some doubts,
But the stars aligned
When I'm with you
I know we'll be fine

Verse 1 reprise

I never thought I
'd give my heart so soon
Not this time, but here I am
Thought I'd finally learned
A different tune
One where I'm the one in command

Chorus

Oh, but it's all right
I think that we'll be fine

All we need to do is flow
And take a little time
Time to get to know
All we need to know
About each other
I think that we'll be fine
'Cause we've got each other
I think that we'll be fine

Behind the Song

Composers often say their songs are like children, and they can't pick a favorite. But I think that, if pressed, I'd select this tune.

It started as a simple song with guitar alone and, again, was drawn from my life. I went through a rough period romantically when I was in my twenties, and that's when I wrote this song. The lyrics reflect a young man avoiding falling in love again for fear of getting hurt. But then he realizes it'll be okay if he and the young lady in question just take things slow. They did. It worked. For a while.

This song went through a long adolescence, but it didn't achieve adulthood until **Al Snyder**, my producer, put it over the top with a wonderful bridge. Most songs have a 'middle 8'; Al did it in a "middle 6!"

There are undeniable musical references to the Beatles here, some of which were unconscious. The piano part at times resembles "Golden Slumbers" "I Am the Walrus" and "Strawberry Fields Forever." The ending reminds me of "Blackbird," which was unintentional. But I intentionally had the idea in the studio of having Joey Waslousky add tribal tom-toms to the middle 4 and choruses, ala "Hello Goodbye."

+++++

Do You Ever Dream of Me?

We had no plan when our love began
We were both just fifteen
Grew together birds of a feather
Thought we knew what love means
But life threw us a curve
Our paths diverged,
Left us so far from each other
I'll carry this load to the end of the road
And I just can't help but wonder

Chorus

Late at night, while you sleep
Do you dream?
Do you ever dream of me?
Say my name by mistake
When you wake?
Do you ever dream of me?

Verse 2

It was unplanned just a one night stand
Stupid as I could be
Your faith shaken
Felt your heart breakin'
I'd shattered all our dreams
What ... what could I say?
You couldn't stay
You walked away and found another
Now ... lives of our own
Children are grown
Still, the thought hits me like thunder

Chorus

Late at night, while you sleep
Next to him?
Do you ever dream of me?
Say my name by mistake
When you wake?
Do you ever dream of me?
Cause I do dream of you every night
Every night so it seems

Repeat chorus to fade

Behind the Song

I think everyone dreams about old girlfriends or boyfriends, ex-lovers. These lyrics tell an unembellished tale: Young love that didn't survive reality. In this case, an affair broke up a relationship. Now, many years later, our protagonist still dreams of his lost love, who has moved on with someone else. And he asks her, rhetorically, "Do you ever dream of me?"

Buddy Hall and I worked hard on this arrangement, channeling Phil Spector, Brian Wilson and Todd Rundgren. The music led the way on this song, and the words came easily after I had the chorus. Buddy did a masterful job on guitars and very emotional background vocals as well as production.

Unfortunately, Buddy passed away unexpectedly on January 29, 2021. We had been friends and brothers for more than 40 years. His talent shines through on this track.

An Easter egg for listeners: As the song fades out, you might be able to pick out pieces of Beatles songs. I think there could be as many as nine songs quoted: "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da," "Rain," "Let It Be," "Can't Buy Me Love" and others even I can't remember. It was Buddy's idea to do this: he quite often stayed up all night, trying ideas in the studio. It's a great illustration of how his mind worked.

Late December

The day we met
Still lives in my memory

My eyes were closed
You opened them up for me
All that long summer
Our love it grew on the vine

But seasons change
And with them your attitude
All your moods now seem
So much more subdued
You say you love me
But it can't work out this time

The girl I knew I no longer recognize
As if you are wearing a strange disguise
Help me see through it,
Show me the love in your eyes

I try so very hard to anticipate
Your every need
But you don't appreciate
What I go through
To keep our romance alive

Chorus

In your mind it's always late December
All I find is love's dying ember
Don't let it burn out
Where there's a spark can be flame
Tend the spark and make it glow
Feed the fire and build it slow
Love knows no season
Keep it alive, let it grow

Bridge

The things you say
Tear out the heart of me
Don't turn away
You're still such a part of me
Can't you remember
We've always been lovers and friends

I try so very hard to anticipate
Your every need But you don't appreciate
What I go through
To keep our romance alive

Chorus to fade

In your mind it's always December
All I find is love's dying ember
Don't let it burn out
Where there's a spark can be flame
Tend the spark and make it glow
Feed the fire and build it slow
Love knows no season
Keep it alive let it grow

Behind the Song

Sometimes the first blush of love just doesn't last. People go headlong into relationships, then change their minds. It's a sad, painful situation. "Late December" tells that story.

Buddy Hall produced and played most of the guitars on this tune, but the outstanding guitar solos are by **Reb Beach** of Whitesnake, Winger, Black Swan and other well known heavy rock bands.

This is the last song Buddy and I worked on before he passed away unexpectedly in January 2020. We conceived this song as an album-closer, so it's 8 minutes long with the fadeout. Our hope was that the song would create an atmosphere that enveloped you, and that you would still be wrapped up in it as it ended.



Buddy Hall