

i.e.

blklly

Liner Notes

Thanks for listening to my first efforts as a hobby musician back in 2020. In five years, I've come up with another dozen-plus songs, of various musical styles, many hopefully with some Bill humor that others can appreciate too! Music is magic to me!

There's so much that's happened since that last album – the rest of Covid, my diagnosis with glioblastoma in 2021, Anna's and my wedding. Much of it made its way into lyrics here. And when my cancer treatment began, I insisted I needed a new Jaguar guitar – seen at right – thanks Loïc for helping me buy it in Geneva!

As usual, the songs are more or less in chronological order. The guitar and vocals aren't always perfect, but I've stopped fixing them – I'm not perfect myself!



Bill, portrait by niece Krry



Dedicated to my friend of the last 51 years, the best guitarist I know, and a guy who can come up with a whole story or song lyrics in 24 hours (song 4): Ron Cherry.

1. Isolation (Corona Trilogy Part 3)

[Remember Covid? 'Jab' is the English term a lot of people used to refer to the vaccinations back then.]

I've had enough of isolation
I'm gonna get me that jab
Gonna book a flight to Patagonia
Pack my case and call a cab

I don't have any reason to complain
I didn't lose my job
I didn't lose my lover or my sense of smell
Only my patience, man, I'm bored as hell!

I've had enough of isolation
I'm gonna get me a vaccination
Gonna book a flight to New
Caledonia

2. Liquid Fire

[As the Philly punk band The Dead Milkmen said, I'm born to love volcanos. There's nowhere with more than Iceland, so I'm using their history. Surtr was a "fire giant".]

When I get back,
I'll pay what I owe ya

I wanna lie under swaying palm trees
Climb up the sides of smoking volcanoes
Eat exotic food that gives me the runs
Even a traffic jam in Bangkok sounds like fun!

I wanna (*guitar sound*)
I wanna (*different guitar sound*)
I wanna (*still another guitar sound*)
And I'm betting that you do too.

I've had enough of isolation
I'm gonna break out soon
I'm gonna hike to Outer Mongolia
Maybe I'll take SpaceX to the moon

We stand astride liquid fire
Beneath the ground, where you see no flames
An invisible pyre
Earth, air and fire become the same

Oh Surtr!
Magma rising
Earth unfolding
Lava flowing
Surtr embold'ning

We stand astride liquid fire
Beneath the ground, where you see no

3. Fuck Cancer!

[From September 2021 on, I didn't write another song for 15 months, so the topic was pretty obvious. My "pembro" is often seen on TV ads in the US as Ketruda.]

I need this disease like a hole in the head
Turns out that's included, plus a feeling of dread
The demand for it seems pretty damned low
But the supply is high and continues to grow

My pembrolizumab's got my tongue in knots
And my temodal's the best friend I've got
Makes me sick to tell you the truth
But it's the closest I've got to a fountain of youth

flames
The situation is dire
Your fate may turn out to be the same

Fagradalsfjall
Sending a warning
Fiery fountain
Is now aborning

Thanks to all of your help I'm stumbling through
And I'm not about to tell you all adieu
I think this life's the only one I'll get
But it's been pretty damn good and I'm not done yet

So fuck cancer!
That's what I say
Gotta live my life from day to day
Gimme a hand and let's keep it abay
Everyone together now: Fuck cancer!

My life now includes more doctors than friends
But that's a damned good means to a happy end
Glad to get poked and filled with pills
If it takes care of the shit that does me ill

I need this disease like a hole in the head
But thanks to all of your help I'm movin'
ahead
I think this life's the only one I'll get

4. Daddy Didn't Get It (lyrics by Ron Cherry)

*[Ron came up with this in a day or so,
after mentioning his father was a
minister. The lyrics are amazing - this
is my religion too!]*

My daddy was a preacher and he and tried
and tried
To keep me connected to the Methodist
side.
I was down-till I stumbled on the rock 'n
roll:
Straight from the devil-and it saved my
soul.

I went to church on Sunday and up stood
the choir,
But the twang of a Telly was taking me
higher.
Daddy tried to bring me to the biblical age
But he missed the second coming of the
lord: Jimmy Page.

But it's been pretty damn good and I'm not
done yet
So fuck cancer! That's what we say
Gotta live my life from day to day
Gimme a hand and let's keep it at bay
One last time, all you folks: Fuck cancer!
(Missed the turn of the page)

Yakking in the pulpit-he does it for a job.
But I needed a religion with a volume knob-
I can eat from the table and drink from the
cup,
But I'll turn the sermon down and the punk
rock up.

Daddy didn't get it and he never will
He sent me to sleep upon a dunghill
Daddy didn't get it and I paid the toll
Cause I sold my soul to rock'n'roll

Sold his soul to rock'n'roll
Gonna spend eternity paying the toll
Sold his soul for a guitar and a pick
A couple of chords and a pentatonic lick

We had a prayer meeting and I testified.
I told him how my spirit got satisfied
When the host of angels played screaming
leads
And the power chords heralding their

righteous deeds.

But Dad didn't listen or acknowledge the facts:

The Truth of the Fender and the Marshall Stacks.

So shall it be, but the rock beat's a 'rewvin'
And when I'm done here I'm goin' straight to heaven.

5. Without

[Sometimes I play around with some chords, and they turn into a song.]

A book that has no words I cannot read
A heart that knows no love will never bleed
An order with no sense I will not heed
A life that has no love I will not lead

Oooh, I will not
Ooooooh, will this vow not be forgot

6. Edgelea Drive

[I think a lot of people my age think back to their childhood. We moved when I was 5, and as my sister was about 2 and my brother a newborn, I'm the only one with this picture of Edgelea Drive in Chambersburg, Pa.]

Think of a childhood memory

Sold my soul to rock'n'roll and I got a good price

I'd do it again but it won't work twice

Daddy didn't get it, no he never did

Why he became the dad of a rock'n'roll kid

(Became the dad of a rock'n'roll kid)

With colors in a magic blur
Figures from a children's picture book
Yeah, that's where the wild things were.

Let your eyes unfocus
And let your mind drift free
Turn back into a child of three
And come back to that place with me

The Edgelea Drive of my childhood doesn't
exist today

The magic it had till '62 has long since
gone away

Edgelea Drive was a work in progress,
progress I don't want to know
I'll keep my magical Edgelea Drive inside
my head aglow

Dad made us a cave to hide in
When the snow piled as high as our chins.
That this was a once-in-your-life event
I never could be convinced.

You might see a bare body streak past you
Was that Pow Wow the Indian Girl?
Clothing was an awful nuisance
Li'l sis would rather unfurl

I remember Billy Ramsey
Lived on Edgelea Drive like me
The only girl I ever knew
Who shared a name with me

Billy Ramsey, where are you today?
I don't want to know
You'll always be there in my Edgelea
Forever on the go

[Chorus]

Storm wasn't a weather front then
She lived on Edgelea too.
Biffy and RC, though little rascals,
Lived there -- and not on the tube.

We ranged the fields of snakes and
milkweed
Found the secret launching pad
Used by some mysterious Big Kids
Or maybe it was my Dad

[Sung with melody of the chorus:]

Billy Ramsey is a magical figure
From those magical years of my distant
past
When men were called Red who are long
since dead
Your childhood's not meant to last

Twenty other kids
Lived twenty other lives
So I'm sure there are twenty
Other Edgelea Drives!

7. i.e.

[I knew for some time that this album would have to be called i.e., and then I came up with a song of the same title. The real story of how I ended up as blklly is much less interesting – I needed a login name with at most 8 letters, so blklly became blklly. The 4 L's always seemed like art to me, so it was perfect. Funny mistake: I tried to look up sweetheart in Welsh, and came up with their word for thimble. Later went back and looked for a source and couldn't find one – it's not correct, but I left it that way.]

I am a man of literacy

A lover of the letters

And I count them six and twenty, more or less

With those letters I loved words

With the words a hundred stories

And a thousand heavy tomes

Yet my feelings turned out mixed.

I.e. I banish thee

Without you I am proud

But I can show no pride

That is to say

And say it loud

I have long since made the choice to be
disemvoweled

Fuckin' A

It feels OK

Elated by a vowel that is so pure

Aglow with O's

Jubilant with U's

But I feel no glee with I and E.

Sometimes Y

The wise will tell you

Can join the other five

Bleakly and bulkily

And certainly with blklly

It comes alive

I am a man of literacy

A lover of the letters

But I'll take a fricative

Before a foul-mouthed vowel

Cause in my fantasy

I'll bring back Alan Ginsberg

And together we may howl

Aooo! Oo Uu!

I.e., I banish thee
Without you I am proud
Thought I cannot write that pride
That is to say
And say it loud
I have long since made the choice to be
disemvoweled.

Hey, I got an idea.
If we want to get away from A, E, I, O and U,
Let's go to Wales!

8. Last Day on Earth

[Enjoy every day here! I do!]

The sun is shining in my window
Showing me the way
To get my body out of bed
And start a brand-new day

What can I do to make the most
Of all this precious time?
A coffee in the sunshine first
Then find a word that rhymes

This could be my last day on earth,
Had 24,000 of them since my birth
Some so beautiful, some so tough
Seems like I can't get enough

There are a lot of places we can go over
there!
From Bwlchgwyn to Ysbyty...
You'll probably find that I'm un-kissable

Fucking A
It feels OK
To sing a tune of only vowels and such
About my tales of disemvoweledness
But I believe that I have now said too much

The sun is shining out of doors
A day to bike, or hike a tour?
But then again it just might rain
A perfect day for books again

Or maybe we should hit the road
We've so much left to see
Wherever we're together
Is the place to be

This could be my last day on earth,
Had 24,000 of them since my birth
Some so beautiful, some so tough
Seems like I can't get enough

This could be my best day on earth
I'm gonna squeeze it for all it's worth

Every day here earns that much respect
Do make it the best one yet

Maybe you have noticed that
The sun shines for you too
And even when it rains,
Your fate is up to you

Don't know how many days I've got
But then neither do you
The thing is to make each one count
With what that means for you.

This could be my last day on earth,
Had 24,000 of them since my birth

9. Heading South

[Loud and proud? Up and down!]

10. Stupid Angels

[Anna and I were at the Stifkirche in St. Gallen, and where the preacher would preach, there's a whole collection of angels, including a little one playing with a dog. Wtf? Apologies to those offended.]

Stupid angels,
Watching us from the clouds
Stupid angels,

Some so beautiful, some so tough
Seems like I can't get enough

This could be your last day on earth
You gotta squeeze it for all it's worth
Every day here earns that much respect
To make it the best one yet

This could be your best day on earth,
Treat it that way for I must insist
Find some thing that you've always missed
And take it off your bucket list!

Make it the best one yet!

Staring into the crowds
Trying to save us from the fall
I don't think that that will work at all
Don't think you'll stop us from waging war
Not when you're the ones we're fighting for

Stupid angels,
Watching us day and night
Stupid angels,
So pained to see our plight

We love our neighbors,
Except the ones we hate
Don't try to help us,
You're way too late.

Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust
Promises broken
In God we trust

11. She's So My Girl

[I think this is one of those songs where a few chords demanded a song and determined what the lyrics should be about.]

My girl dress so snazzy
Make me wanna sing all jazzy
What am I going do
Without a sweetie like you?

Her hair so fluffy
Make me feel all scruffy
But what could I do
Without a sweetie like you?

12. Blackbird in a Palm Tree

[I was sitting outdoors with Mom in Locarno eating dinner, and I said listen to that blackbird singing in that palm tree. She said it sounded like a song, and so this got written – unfortunately Mom didn't live long enough to hear it.]
Blackbird singing in a palm tree

Stupid angels
It's about time to give it up
Stupid angels
Get yourself a dog, or maybe a pup
Give it up.

Want to stay together
Make her mine forever
Hope that I make the measure
To make it a lifelong pleasure

My girl is so fancy
Makes me all kinds of antsy
Just what could I do
Without a sweetie like you?

My girl is so witty
Really deserves this ditty
Just what would I do
Without a sweetie like you?

"Look at me! Look at me!
Sends this message from his palm tree:
"All I see belongs to me

I wrote this song
It's a little bit long
Got at least a hundred verses
With a hundred different melodies
And some more I intersperses "

His day starts very early
He's up about 5:30
And sings up in his palm tree
Sounding very birdly

So what's going on with Mrs. B?
Does she have her own palm tree?
Well, it seems that she does not
But in the hood she does a lot

Down the street she smells a rat
Says "Look at that! There's a cat!"
And then she shouts "Alarm! Alarm!"
That cat means us birdies harm
If we don't want to buy the farm
I really have to sound alarm!"

So Mrs. B listens to his song

She mostly hears it all day long
"Why's he say 'it belongs to me'?"
Pontificating from his tree.

It really all belongs to US!
Don't know why he makes a fuss.
It's all that pompous singing makes me
Really want to cuss."

Blackbird singing in a palm tree
"Look at me! Look at me!"
Sends this message from his palm tree:
"All I see belongs to me

Everything that here I see is
My territory!

(But don't tell the Mrs!)"

13. Words Matter

*["I would have made this instrumental,
but the words got in the way." - that's
from Xtc, one of my favorite bands from
the 1980's from their song No
Language in Our Lungs. Inspired by
books, newspapers, word-of-the-day,
Scrabble ... and Xtc..]*

It's a mad mad world packed just full with
words,

But what is my point? Well, words matter
Well, insults provoke and compliments
flatter,

So watch what you say: words matter!

Get 'em out of your lungs
To the tip of your tongue
Get those words in the air
For profit or fun!!!

Think of those books
Full of crannies and nooks
With their forewords and afterwords
And whatever it took.

It's a mean old world
With a lot that's weird
But the way it's wired
Its matter is words!

I tried write a book
How many words that took!
But what I forgot...
You need a plot.

My way, the highway, what way is this
about?
Just think how Miss Muppet had to tough it
out.
Sitting around with her whey and her curds
Couldn't escape from all those words.
And oh my word, what did she weigh
Eating her way through all of that whey?

Words word words,
Make 'em do what you want
Or let me be blunt:
My lyrics bear the brunt.

Words word words,
To insult or flatter,
You'll get folks' attention
'cause words matter!

I would have made this instrumental,
But the words got in the way! [*From Xtc - No
Language in our Lungs*]

Words word words, etc.

14. Cured

[No, not any cure, but The Cure. Their "depro" music (a German term) always makes me feel better!]

16. Phenomenally Unimpressed

[I decided to translate a song by my favorite German musician, Farin Urlaub (guitarist for Die Ärzte) into English. It's a karaoke version, I'm not playing the instruments.]

Each night I lie in bed hours and hours and think of you.

But to say I love you's not true.

There is no woman in this world who is more beautiful than you.

But to say I love you's not true.

I'm so indifferent, I don't mind

'Cause you are really not my kind

And in any case, there's no way I'm in love with you.

15. Platypus Tinnitus

[A rare instrumental, which leaves you even more room to come up with a crazy title. Recorded this in 2021, just edited out the mistake 4 ½ years later.]

From time to time I stand quite accidentally at your door.

But I don't know what that is all for.

It just coincidence your photo is on my wall

What I want from you's nothing at all.

I never think of you

I'm phenomenally unimpressed.

I have to tell you now, even if it breaks your heart in two.

I'm just not in love with you.

I'm so indifferent I don't mind

Cause you are really not my kind

And in any case, I'm hardly in love with you.

I'm so indifferent I don't mind

Cause you are really not my kind

And in any case, I'm hardly in love with

you.. With you ... I'm hardly in love with you.

Music in pictures!

Here's my new friend in Madrid for my second Mad Cool musical festival. Didn't see him in 2025 at my third.



When in Philly to see ELO's farewell tour, I met a woman with the better version of this shirt: *A day without music won't kill me ... but why take the risk?*



The PRS SE 24 is still my favorite guitar



1. Isolation (Corona Trilogy Part 3)
2. Liquid Fire
3. Fuck Cancer!
4. Daddy Didn't Get It (*lyrics by Ron Cherry*)
5. Without
6. Edgelea Drive
7. i.e.
8. Last Day on Earth
9. Heading South
10. Stupid Angels
11. She's So My Girl
12. Blackbird in a Palm Tree
13. Words Matter
14. Cured

i.e.

Bonus Tracks

15. Platypus Tinnitus
16. Phenomenally Unimpressed

Liquid Fire video



More info, e.g. lyrics videos at:
<https://blklly.com/mp3/ie>



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