**Cracked Shells and Broken Hearts**

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I wanted to do something different. I wanted to do something more upbeat. I wanted to reach beyond my comfort zone. I’m pretty sure that I accomplished all three of those goals. The question remains, however, is it any good?

I wrote a bunch of songs with guitar parts that I could hardly play. I wrote bass parts that I could barely play. I yodeled. I chanted. I think I may have even rapped during the funk and jive song. The songs are very dark and many of them about broken relationships; perhaps some of those relationships are from my past. Perhaps some of them are just songs that came out during the “process”. Is it any good? I don’t know. I had fun doing it and I guess that’s what matters.

Here are some thoughts about each song.

1. It Wasn’t Them - Sometimes two people can be looking for exactly the same thing in a relationship but somehow they still aren’t quite right for each other.
2. Cracked Shells and Broken Hearts - My sister Theresa, not Sister Teresa burst out with this line while me and my middle siblings were taking some time away from life in North Myrtle Beach late last April. We were working on a song I was writing where I was trying to write one verse about each day the three of us spent together. Before the 6 day vacation was over we had finished the 3 verse song. The Cracked Shells and Broken Hearts concept took over the the group of songs I had been working on for my next album. I was worried about how “dark” the songs I’d been composing were sounding; most of them in minor keys; when this line in its terse summary what most of our emotional lives boil down to, somehow tied them all together. This album is dedicated to my sisters Rose and Theresa. None of the songs are about them but the three of us somehow found common ground after years of living in our own emotional countries. Middle children in large families somehow share a bond that transcends space and time.
3. Imagine Reality - Sometimes it is hard to image that the world we live in is not imaginary.
4. Door Nail - This is either a song about death or retirement. I'm not sure which.
5. It Feels Like It's Snowing - It is an icy cold world out there. Let's love each other and warm it up a little.
6. An Accident Waiting To Happen - The accident already happened once. How did everyone forget about it so soon.
7. I Lost My Imagination - In this age of 24/7 nonstop news it's getting harder and harder to find out what the news really is. Think your own thoughts. Develop your own informed opinions. It takes work but it is well worth it
8. Time for a Drink - I've been playing this guitar part for years. I thought I should put a song to it before the arthritis eats up what is left of my cartilage
9. No Reason At All - Sometimes trying to make sense out of this thing we call life is endlessly perplexing.
10. Chasing The Wheel - Dogs Cats Rats in a Maze. That seems to pretty much sum up the society in which we live
11. Same Old Funk and Jive - For all of you single parents out there. I cannot even imagine your struggle but I tried to.
12. Hostage - Don't ask. I'm not sure. I just started playing it one night and it turned into a song.
13. Sun Was Gone - Don't ask. I'm not sure. I just started playing it one night and it turned into a song.
14. Solid Ground - This is a metaphorical song. You must be in a metaphorical state of mind to understand it. Right now I am not in a metaphorical state of mind so I will not try to explain it.
15. Out Of Your Life - Someone once said to me when discussing one of my previous interpersonal relationships, "You two have been so much better apart than you ever were together". Thus this song was born.
16. Day’s End - My wife and I discussed whether to call the song Day's End or Days End. She preferred the former. I preferred the latter. Guess what the song is called. Love each other. Hope for peace on earth. This life doesn't last forever. Be as kind as you can while it does.