

## **Up To the Day**

Reflections about the song and songwriting process.

I think this is one of the best songs I've written. I don't know where half the lines came from. I love the imagery. It feels both sad and hopeful to me. I like the shapes and the sounds of the words fitting together.

I wrote it in 2003. As close as I can remember, it happened like this: my sister Kimberly and I booked an evening in little basement studio owned by a friend of hers, Matt. We recorded a couple songs I was wanting to demo for JRL (which was just getting started at that point -- a few songs we did there were released on the first JRL 5 song demo, which I renamed every time I burned more copies of it based on the last state I'd played in. OK, enough trivia).

We got the songs done that we came to record and we had some time left so we set up a mic for my vocal, my guitar, Kim's vocal and her oboe. We improvised for another hour or two. During one of these improv sections "Up to the Day" was born. It was a little more than a verse but it had that feeling, that little bit extra thing that has nothing to do with how well it's played or the production or anything. It wasn't complete enough or good enough in my opinion to release though.

A while later -- months? a year? I'm not sure -- I sat down with that song fragment and wrote the lyrics as they stand today. It was a fairly quick write, and done without a guitar. I usually write with the guitar and a pen, so that was different.

My favorite lines: "The wake bleeds black as a night without stars", "See for yourself what I see from this shelf on the rock face of mystery," and "alive and near breaking, taking nothing but great, bold handfuls of hope". I also like the line "Reach, stumble towards now." That line was written a while before the Now record was thought of, and I just noticed that line recently since the release of the project. It's a delightful, meaningful, unexpected connection.

Writing for me is a very intuitive, experimental process. Often the songs begin to make more sense and become more meaningful years after I've written them.

While I feel like this is one of the best songs I've written, I don't think many people have connected with it or noticed it. I wonder if that's because of the recording, the lack of a hooky chorus, or just that it's time hasn't come yet. I'd appreciate any feedback you have about the tune. Thanks.

Jonathan  
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