**Wildflowers**

By Alan Maskell

Song Notes and Lyrics Track by Track

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**Album Background**

This Album was conceived in early 2018 and most of the new original songs were written during late 2017 -mid 2018. This was personally a very difficult period for me as after undergoing surgery I also endured 7 months of Chemotherapy, in the middle of which I relocated from the USA to the UK.

It was a time to reflect on life and the things that were important and also look back on some periods in my early life.

It is intended to be played as an entity with an intro and an outro, which is not cool in this time of streaming, but ultimately that is personal choice.

1. **Flo’s Tune**

An Acoustic Guitar instrumental written watching the lake from the snug in Venice, Florida. This became my staple warm up for my fingers prior to any gig or set. I dedicated this to my youngest daughter as it was first written just after she left home for University.

1. **Missing**

 This song was inspired by a post I saw on Facebook one day, of a healthy looking guy in his twenties who had gone missing a year before. His sister had posted it and was in the hope that he would be be found, recognized or reappear. I wondered where she found her strength to maintain faith and keep posting. I also wondered how many seemingly normal young people just disappear each year.

1. **The Darker Side of Paradise**

In 2017 I went on the Cayamo music cruise to the carribbean, which was a fabulous experience. We stopped at Cozumel and also the island of Roatan . Roatan was a small island which away from the glossy shops by the port where cruise ships docked, was an essentially poor community. In one of the shops I saw a book written by a girl from the Island called “The Darker Side of Paradise” and whilst I had an hour to kill before the boat sailed, I sat on the beach and wrote down the words which ultimately proved to be the germ for this song.

1. **Simple**

A song written in the night time in Florida as the true impacts of the arrival of Donald Trump in the White House became apparent. To see how far moral values had fallen made you question what was important, at a time when the principles you grew up with and believed in were being eroded by someone in a position of extreme power. I look back on that time and realise it was only the beginning, but seemed bad enough at that moment.

1. **Lost in a Moment**

In many ways this song picks up where Rose Tattoo left off and covers a later period of growing up in Bath. It is a partner song to the next song Sally, sharing characters. It’s a song of lost innocence and teenage years, and in particular the impact of addiction on a life. Some of the inspiration came from a re-union a few years before, of people I had grown up with in the early 70’s. The Garraway referred to is the Garraway Boy’s club, where for a period we ran a Saturday night youth club and disco , which proved to be very popular. The Music from that time is ingrained in my memory, much of which I was reminded of when we first moved to Florida .

1. **Sally**

This song is essentially a ghost story linked to a real episode from my life. In the Summer of 1973 two of my friends were involved in a car accident in Sally in the Woods , a windy section of Woodland road between Bath and Bradford on Avon. Shirley was killed, but Julian survived although his life was never the same and a combination of drugs and alcohol probably contributed to his early death a couple of years ago. I never understood what happened exactly as I was on holiday in France at the time of the accident, but after Julians death,more recently, decided to research it and discovered the story of how the woods got it’s name. It is the site of a number of unexplained accidents and sightings of a ghostly figure in the road. The Tower on the hill is Brown’s Folly, known locally as the Pepper Pot .

1. **Up in the Clouds**

This is a song inspired by a feel good story from the British TV . Tony Foulds was a young boy in 1944 when he was playing in a Sheffield Park , and he saw a bomber coming in low overhead . He waved to the plane and as he did they changed course, away from the park and crashed into nearby woods killing all 10 crew members . He believed the pilot saved his life and avoided crashing into houses by turning again. He created a memorial to the plane and it’s crew in the park and tended it every day .One day he bumped into a BBC reporter in the park and told him his story and his dream of a commemorative flypass and dedication to the 10 US Airmen who gave their lives. 6 months later, courtesy of the BBC , he got his wish, and on the 75th Anniversary 10,000 people crammed the park and he got his flypast by the RAF and USAF. I think this is a great story of dedication, honour and humanity, in contrast to so much going on in the news in current times.

1. **Ultimate Nightmare**

An old song resurrected with a new verse and style . Originally inspired by my boyhood love of “Hammer Horror ‘ Movies .

We appear determined as a race to completely screw up this planet which we have been fortunate enough to inhabit and experience .

1. **A Life in Words**

A song written for my Dad after he passed away. He was a Printers compositor for many years creating pages of books from Lead type , long before the advent of computers and word processing technology. In order to do this job, he spent many years reading backwards setting type. He was fundamentally a good hardworking father who always did his best for his family.

1. **Wildflowers**

After our rapid exit from the USA I resumed my Chemotherapy treatment in the UK. We moved into a small house in a village in Oxfordshire, and on days when I felt well enough I would walk my dog around the village and lanes . It was spring and I grew to appreciate the beauty of the English countryside and spent a lot of time, in a chemically induced state, thinking about life and its purpose. It was only at this time , after more than 2 years that the death of my mother finally sank in. This song emerged from that process.

1. **Taken Away**

Another slightly older song but the chorus is very self- explanatory. This was written after the death of my sister, and the first song I wrote on the Tenor Guitar .

I, more recently, started playing it on the Bouzouki and that is the case for this version . In Florida I occasionally played it live with Rick Hardeman on flute, and was lucky enough to be able to record it with him on a trip back to the USA in 2019.

1. **The Swamp (The Florida Project)**

We moved to Florida in 2014 for a 4-5 year “interlude” in our lives . When we arrived the building boom was on hold and there were large areas of natural swamp land, woods and scrub , even fairly close to the suburban centres , intermingled with developments.

By the time that we left, building had exploded ,with every green space seeming to be developed . This involved a process where all natural life was completely removed to reveal a barren sandy wasteland which was then built on and new palm trees planted to make it feel “natural”. This was happening all over Florida, with a clear interest in maximizing profit without any care for the environment . I then read the book “ The Swamp” by Michael Grunwald , and this song emerged.

1. **Learn to be Still**

This is a song written by James Hawkins a singer/songwriter who I met during my stay in SouthWest Florida . This track was on his CD (with a very different arrangement) , but it stuck in my head and I decided to start to play it live ,. It’s a beautiful song which carries a great message.

To find out more about James go to [**https://www.facebook.com/folkie3**](https://www.facebook.com/folkie3)

1. **Sunrise after the Storm**

After my recovery from the Chemotherapy and my experiences with the US Healthcare system, Florida was never the same. Add to that the crazy building development and the even crazier political landscape and the decision was taken to return to the UK. This song was written on my first extended return trip to Florida after the treatment when things became a bit clearer.

1. **Toby’s Tune**

An experimental re-working of Flo’s tune, dedicated to our big hairy dog, who seemed to be ever present during the recording process.

Wildflowers Lyrics

**Missing**

It was just a normal day

Did you chose to slip away

Leaving things she never knew

Like the thoughts that haunted you

Was there a trigger she'd not seen

Or a deeply hidden dream

Or a second life that finally won through

One of the Missing you became

Another Facebook smile looking out upon a page

One of the Lost Boys on his way to Neverland

There are things she’ll never understand

In Winters Darkest Moments

Do you find warmth out on the streets

Just a doorway giving shelter

From a dampness cold and bleak

All the seasons now have turned

And passed without a word

In her silent place she only thinks of you

One of the Missing you became

Another Facebook smile looking out upon a page

One of the Lost Boys on his way to Neverland

There are things she’ll never understand

Posting the same message everyday

"There but for the Grace of God go I"

One year on, where are you now

You're not a number, still a name

Her life revolves around you

Every night and every day

Pulling strength from tiny things

And not a phone that never rings

Finding comfort in some distant memories

One of the Missing you became

Another Facebook smile looking out upon a page

One of the Lost Boys on his way to Neverland

There are things you'll never understand

Posting the same message everyday

"There but for the Grace of God go I"

**The Darker Side of paradise**

She was an island girl, raised in poverty

The life she knew so different from the ones who came by sea

She worked every day, taking any job she could

Just to earn the pennies that would keep her family fed

She's living on the darker Side of Paradise

She’s born upon the wrong side of the tracks

There's a line drawn in the sand

Which she can't understand

And now they build a wall to keep her back

They came every day, the idle and the rich

But see little of the island, and the things they need to give

They are joined by faith, but do they share the same ideals ?

It leaves a burning question what is fake and what is real

She's living on the darker Side of Paradise

She’s born upon the wrong side of the tracks

There's a line drawn in the sand

Which she can't understand

And now they build a wall to keep her back

She dreamed of her escape

from a life that had no end

The drudgery of everyday

on which she could depend

Never giving up her hopes

Or the dreams she craved

One day she might escape

To catch that perfect wave

She's living on the darker Side of Paradise

She’s born upon the wrong side of the tracks

There's a line drawn in the sand

Which she can't understand

And now they build a wall to keep her back

**Simple**

Sometimes we will fail to see ,

the simple needs of the one we love

And sometimes we can not agree so we just accept, but that's not enough

The thoughts that crossed your mind today

You wonder what this world is coming to

Still you wouldn't have things any other way

You just need to believe the truth

Sometimes we will fail to see ,

the simple needs of the one we love

And sometimes we can not agree so we just accept, but that's not enough

It's one of those days

And we all talk about them

The things you'd come to lean on turn around and let you down

You still believe that every good will conquer evil,

 Keep your faith on solid ground

Sometimes we will fail to see , the simple needs of the one we love

And sometimes we can not agree so we just accept, but that's not enough

Feeling naked as the day when you were born vulnerable exposed, and on the ropes

This endless pressure never seems to give you peace don't let it rob you of your soul

**Verse**

Life is over complex

Everyday is filled with trivia and charm

If you need to, take a little time away

Learn to Switch off lifes alarms

**Chorus**

Sometimes we will fail to see the simple needs of the one we love

They says it should be obvious

But it's not to me

These things are tough

These days are tough

**Lost in a Moment**

It was gone in a Moment

Just a few short seconds that changed a life

It was lost to the moment

An indecision or the slip of a knife

Funny how the darkness hides

That damaged heart that lurks inside

Until it’s lost in a moment

Saturday Night at the Garraway, as we grew up we learnt of life

 I still remember every tune we played, how every face was so alive

 Looking back may be a game of fools ,you never know where it will lead

It was gone in a Moment

Just a few short seconds that changed a life

It was lost to the moment

An indecision or the slip of a knife

Funny how the darkness hides

That damaged heart that lurks inside

Until it’s lost in a moment

You don’t forget those first love flings, The new friends who let you down

Old friends return to haunt you now, in the shadows around this town

This was the age that formed opinions , where did those spirits go

They were gone in a Moment

Just a few short seconds that changed your life

They were lost to the moment

An indecision or the slip of a knife

Funny how the darkness hides

That damaged heart that lurks inside

Until it’s lost in a moment

Reunions can never work when your lives grow so far apart

Yet those records keep on turning round , with the songs that touch your heart

Theres an innocence in 70’s radio ringing on and on and on

70’s Radio ringing on and on

70’s Radio ringing on and on

**Sally**

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

The birds no longer sing

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

You could lose everything

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

It’s dark and silent there

Please don’t out walk in the mist Sally

No good will come from It

 They thought they were invincible

 They were just a bunch of kids

 On a crazy Summers night

 Doing things that all kids did

 Just taking things too fast, they hit the curves

 They almost think that they can fly

 In one split second through the trees

 Then only steaming silence cuts the night.

 Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

The birds no longer sing

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

You could lose everything

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

It’s dark and silent there

Please don’t out walk in the mist Sally

No good will come from It

Legend tells of a young girl

Locked in the Folly on the hill

Each night you could hear her cries

Across the valley to the Mill

Sometimes she’d make it to the road

White apparition in the trees

Another young life would be taken then

No chance to tell what they had seen

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

The birds no longer sing

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

You could lose everything

Don’t go down to the woods, Sally

It’s dark and silent there

Please don’t out walk in the mist Sally

No good will come from It

There is no cloak of invincibility

Things aren’t always what they seem

One small decision now can change the course of life

Beware the ghosts that circle in your dreams

**Up in the Clouds**

Early Spring of 44 as this country was at war

 A group of young boys playing in the park

They saw a shadow in the sky, a wisp of flame the engine died

A silent pause in time’s eternal arc

 Looking down the pilot saw a wave

 And he slowly turned the plane towards the tree

 For one young boy that moment shaped his life

 He never would forget their sacrifice

Each morning as he walks the park the images still taunt his heart

memories of that day so long ago

He sits a while by the stone, a tribute to the fallen ones

And realises he is not alone

A young reporter catches his routine

He tells him of his story and his dream

And how that single moment shaped his life

He never could forget their sacrifice

 He lived his life up in the clouds

Always thankful for the men he never knew

 Farewell Mi Amigos, the words he never got to say

 One day he’ll build your souls a home

The park is full 10,000 here , electrify the atmosphere

Waiting for the shadows to return

The flypass through the clouds appears, a gaze in awe a silent tear

A shared respect for families not here

The young boy stands again and waves

A dream fulfilled upon that winter’s day

A tribute to the 10 who saved his life

But he never could forgive their sacrifice

He lived his life up in the clouds

Always thankful for the men he never knew

 Farewell Mi Amigos, the words he never got to say

 One day he’ll build your souls a home

**Ultimate Nightmare**

Wolves howl in the shadows of the Silver Moon

Bats fly, flapping wildly around your room

White bodies, cold faces on the window panes

Red blood from the silver bullets melt the snow again

Is this your ultimate Nightmare

And will it’s pictures fill your dreams

Is this your Ultimate Nightmare

No-one will tell you what it means

Wax models moving slowly, or so very still

A silver silence, broken only by a call so shrill

The blood of goat, the Eye of Newt you hear the witches call,

A swirling chasm of drifting images in which you fall

Is this your ultimate Nightmare

And will it’s pictures fill your dreams

Is this your Ultimate Nightmare

No-one will tell you what it means

A silent morning, a mushroom cloud that fills the air

A parched country, fly-filled eyes that only stare

The jungle giant, murdered, a bloody sign of one mans greed

This waning planet, boiled and spoiled by things we shouldn’t need

Is this your ultimate Nightmare

And will it’s pictures fill your dreams

Is this your Ultimate Nightmare

No-one will tell you what it means

**A Life in Words**

From tinkers to turrets, to the frailty and the pain

You remained a natural artist all along

You would make me laugh, you’d make me cry

 you could make wild you could make me smile

But in your heart you always did the best for us

It’s just another life in words

Running backwards one by one

Just another life in words

Until it’s over, turn the page

 Looking back it’s bonfire night, the sparklers out we feel alright

Bats and Jacks are Jumping everywhere

You sit and watch the world fly by, on Solsbury Hill you see them climb

But in your head you’re high above them in the clouds

It’s just another life in words

Running backwards one by one

Just another life in words

Until it’s over, turn the page

It’s the time of year when darkness draws a veil on you and me

But there’s only silence where the laughter used to be

It’s just another life in words

Running backwards one by one

Just another life in words

Until it’s over, turn the page

**Wildflowers**

Wild Flowers, they are the strangest thing

 Forgetting just how beautiful they make the English spring

Simple things that help provide a spark

And the light a little brighter when everything seems dark

Where oh where is the beautiful mind, where, where did it go

As the walls all around come clattering down, I need to know, where did it go

Verse

Wildflowers, Red Kites upon the wing

Sometimes you keep it simple and let that heartbeat sing

And you 're unsure, what it is that you should do

When you struggle for direction these simple things can help you through

Where oh where is the beautiful mind, where, where did it go as the walls all around come clattering down, I need to know, where did it go

Somewhere on the way confusion reigned

 Something had unwound, it could never be the same

WildFlowers, they are the strangest thing,

Forgetting just how beautiful they make the English spring

Simple things that help provide a spark

The light a little brighter when things can seem so dark

**Taken Away**

Sometimes it seems, so long ago

Is it still etched in your mind like a child’s first vision of snow

Some things you regret, some you wish you had done

Untethered emotions, let them free in the sun

Out there in the night, is that where you should be

You will sit with a glass and your thoughts, are you finally free

Although it seems strange at the end of the day

That the best things in life are the ones that get taken away

We all have our ghosts, and some have their dreams

Every Orphan of war, every soldier, every man with a scheme

We often sit back, and say nothing at all

It’s all too far away to be real just fast forward don’t pause

Out there in the night, is that where you should be

You will sit with a glass and your thoughts, are you finally free

Although it seems strange at the end of the day

That the best things in life are the ones that get taken away

It’s so hard to change, so hard to be true

Long forgotten love’s, haunting you

Out there in the night, is that where you should be

You will sit with a glass and your thoughts, are you finally free

Although it seems strange at the end of the day

That the best things in life are the ones that get taken away

**The Swamp ( The Florida Project)**

First there came a railroad man, saw the money made a plan

Dam the rivers dry the land then he’d sell the Swamp

Politics will help the cause, damn the natives, change the laws

Everything gives way to Golf down there in the Swamp

A Project of the 50’s

Promised Paradise and Fun

Replace the green and Pleasant land with

Concrete in the Sun

Paradise will pay the price, of nature being sacrificed

One day they will realise the true value of the Swamp

Developers will scorch the earth, Grease the Palms, build their worth

No care that in a 100 years there may not be a swamp

It’s building a divided state, fueling bigotry and hate

How much longer can they wait to try to save the Swamp

Those that hold the power fueled by ignorance and greed

The strength of corporation, growing things that you don’t need

Time to motivate the troops , take the battle to the roots

 You don’t need an alternate truth , choose to save the swamp

A Project of the 50’s

Promised Paradise and Fun

Replace this green and Pleasant land with

Cardboard condos in the Sun

Paradise will pay the price, of nature being sacrificed

One day they will realise the true value of the Swamp

**Learn to be Still**

There was a time when all was simple

And our paths were plain to see

We had no enemies to speak of

And the world lay at our feet

We cast our worries to the wind

And we walk with our heads held high

We had no fear of growing old

We ran free in the night

And now I stand upon the shore and watch that river flow

Of all the things that I've seen there's one thing that I know

You must learn to be still

Let the world go on without you

Tell your kids you love them

and hold them when you can

You see life for what it's worth

And don't take it all for granted

For tomorrow comes too quickly

and it melts away too fast

Verse 2:

Now I've burned many bridges

And laughed when I should've cried

Had some friends along the way

Who lived forever in my mind

And through it all I held my parts

Close against my breast

Kept the truth within my heart

and discarded all the rest

And now I stand upon the shore and watch that river flow

Of all the things that I've seen there's one thing that I know

You must learn to be still

Let the world go on without you

Tell your kids you love them

and hold them when you can

You see life for what it's worth

And don't take it all for granted

For tomorrow comes too quickly

and it melts away too fast

For I will say a prayer

For the ones who gave it all

The ones who fought the good fight

And answered the call

Because of who they are

I can live my life

Unashamed of who I am

A Candle in the night

And now I stand upon the shore and watch that river flow

Of all the things that I've seen there's one thing that I know

You must learn to be still

Let the world go on without you

Tell your kids you love them

and hold them when you can

You see life for what it's worth

And don't take it all for granted

For tomorrow comes too quickly

and it melts away too fast

**Sunrise After the Storm**

Today, I sat and watched the dawn

 The rays above the lake

The birds across the lawn

And I was clear, this was the great escape

 Houdini could be proud

His legend speaking loud

Just like the Sunrise, peeking out after the storm

Afraid to raise your head

Emotionally torn

Your thoughts will clear and then perhaps will see

 The bigger things in life

 The forest not the Tree

Like the Wind across the Water blew you home

To find a better life that you had known

Like a ship lost on the ocean, seeks a port in every storm

 You hope you find a peace that’s true

And hope to find a place for you

Today, I walked along the beach

The birds were flying south

Their Paradise in reach

But the anger, it still bubbles in your heart

Defies its better sense

And tearing hopes apart

Take a moment, to think of what you do

The things you leave behind

The legacy of you

What kind of world will your children live to see

The beauty they might lose

Experience reduced