

# Song Descriptions for “The Key”

## SHINE

*Shine* is a memorial song for an early lover — a special lady of art and letters called Joy who was thirty-seven when I was nineteen — who shone out thunder from the sun, who gave me glimpses of my life to come, who was a star around which I spun. I worked this rather naïve song lyric from some equally naïve notes I’d made in my teenage infancy. Recently, I discovered she’d had her time called out by destiny’s dealer. Death and love are always closely related — just as it should be. Only a few clicks here and we’re done. Live every day with love, relish and gratitude.

## ANGEL DOOR

There are some special souls who can turn up at any point in your life and you can pick up with them exactly where you last left off on the wheel of love at any point in life before. Even if you’ve long ago gone your separate ways, the door which (surely) angels opened between you is always open, no matter how hard you may try to close it shut. It’s as if there’s a silver cord between your hearts binding you together endlessly, which can never be severed. This song is dedicated to the door which cannot be closed.

## PLEASE DON’T TREAD WHERE IT’S RED

Here is a cry from the artist’s heart which longs to be understood in a dysfunctionally misunderstanding world. When it’s red, it’s sore. People are so often quick to shun or condemn art or an artist which they do not understand. But unless one has plumbed the depths of metaphor and allegory and stood in the soles of his shoes, one should refrain from treading carelessly on the rawness of her soul.

## POWDER AND LIES

Sometimes a kind of anger that I call “righteous” can be justified, so long as it is enacted lovingly and non-destructively. It’s like the sigh of the raw and naked soul. Words can well up from that place like a raging geyser in a wilderness. So here we have an anguished exclamatory song about the “suits” who think they run this world (mendacious actors — hence powder and lies). But while longing to wake up from the nightmare of this planet, the lyrics also yearn for such brutes to wake up and see themselves for who they really are — to see the aching hole at the centre of themselves and to realise that it can be filled with something other than malicious acts and malcontentedness.

## I GAVE UP LONG AGO

A slightly “tongue-in-cheek” treatment of a Knight’s fruitless search for his Lady. So fruitless that he gave up on finding her long ago. In the vocal bridge, a stark behind-the-scenes reality is presented on the matter (for giving up is never a fulfilling option for a true Knight).

## VIRTUAL EMBRACE

Commonly, when two people meet after a long time of not having seen each other they mutually pretend to be doing fine. Yet, each one knows the other is not being honest. So, between them, there is a vast but unfulfilled embrace waiting to happen — a virtual embrace. This song was born out of an actual experience of mine that became an important lesson for me about the need to show our true feelings at all times — to wear our hearts on our sleeves.

## AURORA

Here is a message for the brokenhearted. When a friend told me that his one true love had left him for another, he was devastated and vowed that he would never love again. But true love is never really lost; and if you’ve been able to love once, then you can surely love again. The reservoir of love is always there. For such love does not really come from the other, who merely evokes what is already always within us. The strength to overcome apparent loss and find new love comes only from within, if we will look for it. When we do so, we will discover a tremendous light which I call Aurora — a new dawn as ravishing as the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) will grace our life empowering us to love.

## **THE FADING LINE, part 2**

A long time ago, I attended a songwriter's workshop in a well-known UK university. They had a lot of rules about how to write something which they kept calling "*a hit song*". Length no more than 2 minutes 59 seconds. Subject must never be anything connected with death, illness or war. At that point, I walked out of the door. So here, unashamedly, is a song about death which is a paean to its inescapable power, a celebration of its mystery and — from a purely human standpoint — its mind-blowing absurdity and surrealism.

## **FOR SOMEONE'S CHILD**

The true victims of war are the children maimed and killed, who those that wage war refer to as "collateral damage". This song is a requiem for those children. The earliest version was written in April 2003 in a torrent of uncontrollable tears in the top-floor restaurant of Il Corte Inglés in Plaça de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain, after a terrible fever gripped me in my soul when my lover at the time saw some photographs of the many children killed in Baghdad and exclaimed: "*That's someone's child!*" It was performed a short time afterwards with a cellist at an Amnesty International gathering in Perpignan. Ten years later I added a vocal bridge. On this album, the song (no less relevant now than it was thirteen years ago) has come of age.

## **THE SELF-AWARENESS SONG**

There are two "wake-up" songs on this album — one focused on waking up internally in self-awareness (this one), the other focused on waking up externally in self-actualisation. In a short story I wrote set in medieval times, a trader arrived in a town and set up his stall at the local market. He sold high-quality stones at low prices. Soon, the other traders (who sold low-quality stones at high prices) began to resent his presence and conspired to drive him from the market and out of town. When they angrily confronted him at his stall, he picked up his lute and this is the song with which he serenaded them.

## **TIME TO CHOOSE**

Increasingly, this world — with all its deception, falsehood, electronic insanity, media madness and hegemony masked as democracy — is shaping up into a straight choice between darkness and light. This is the other "wake-up" song (external). We can either acquiesce and collaborate with the darkness of this dying aeon or we can renew ourselves and celebrate the light of the new which is already shining brightly through the hearts and minds of those across the world who refuse to be polluted by endorsing a redundant order that is long due for destruction.

## **VICTIM**

When a very close friend was regularly choosing men (narcissist 'peacocks') who inevitably didn't respect her and who usually ended up abusing her, I decided to write her an inspirational song which could rekindle in her a sense of self-respect and self-worth, while at the same time shocking her into taking remedial action. I wanted her to grasp that she was both playing the victim and demeaning herself with empty men of clay, when she deserved a lot better. I'm happy to say that it worked!

## **HEART ON MY SLEEVE**

Some songs speak for themselves and need no description. I wear my heart on my sleeve. I hope you will too. There is nowhere else for it to be. End of.

## **THE KEY**

To be able to live in this crazy world — no matter what happens to us, around us, in us, for us or against us — with a quiet confidence that somehow everything is going in the right direction, regardless of how things may appear, is a way of life for which we need to find *the key*. For there is a love which throbs in, through and behind everything and which, when it streams into our hearts, will prevent us from descending into a pit of darkness and fill us with a firm faith that the universe has been created for a purpose (us too) infinitely beyond anything which can have material form. For, as Saint Éxupéry's Little Prince rightly said: "*That which is essential is invisible to the eyes*". This is the key.