



STEVE STRAUSS

A very thin wire

1. Somebody Tell Me

I got home and you were gone
Note said you were moving on
But you left your perfume on the air
And feelings scattered everywhere

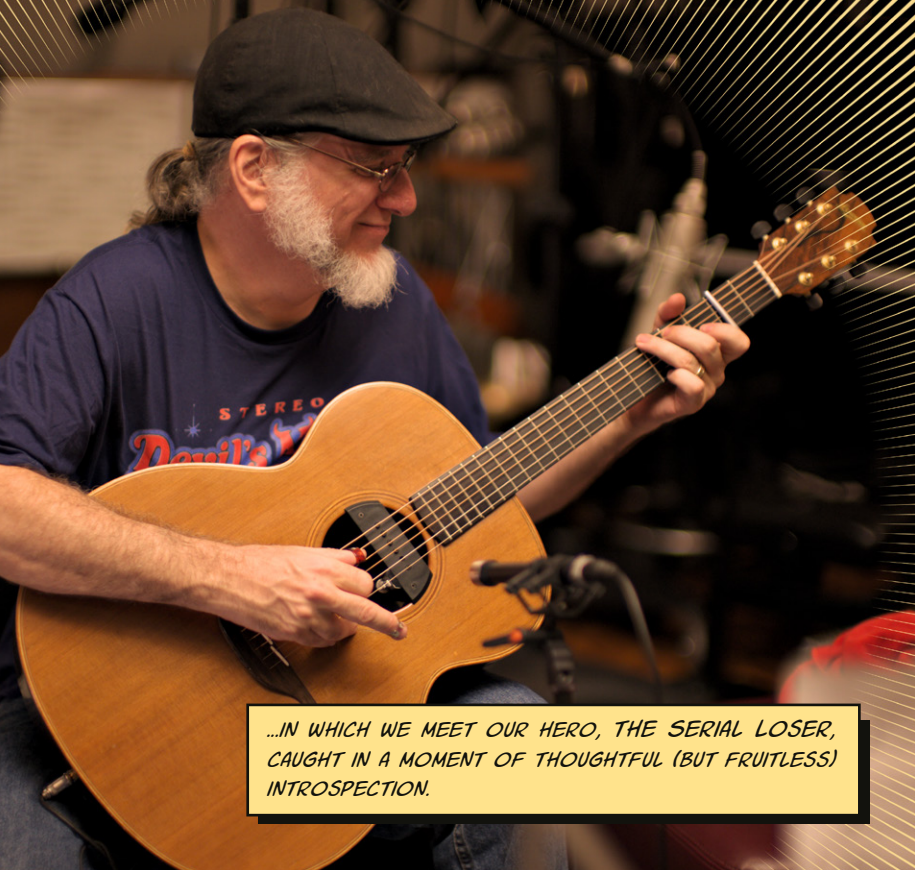
Somebody tell me
Somebody tell me
What it is I done to break your heart

So I got me a broom and pan
And swept it up the best I can
I sorted pieces through the night
But I just couldn't get it right

And so there goes another one
To have a few and dwell upon
But that's the way the story goes
Just line 'em up like dominoes

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar, electric guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*





*...IN WHICH WE MEET OUR HERO, THE SERIAL LOSER,
CAUGHT IN A MOMENT OF THOUGHTFUL (BUT FRUITLESS)
INTROSPECTION.*

2. Blue

Deep in my head
All crowded and hiding
That's where the troubles brew
I cannot turn them off
How do you turn them off?
What am I gonna do?

Cuz I don't want to be blue

I can be any color of crayon
Deep in your box of hues
I can be angry red
I can be good as gold
I can be green like you

But I don't want to be blue

Day in and day out
Stuck on the low road
In that there's nothing new
When will I ever learn
Why don't I ever learn
How will I ever learn

That I don't want to be blue

I have been doing psychotherapy with troubled children and youth for 25 years now. I have learned over time that sadness is one of the most difficult emotions for them to express. It makes them feel far too vulnerable, and it hurts much more than anger.



Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar, electric guitar*

Ian Melrose *guitar*

Beo Brockhausen *baritone saxophone*

Wolfgang Roggenkamp *hammond b3*

Lars Hansen *bass*

Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

3. A Very Thin Wire

A glance in the mirror
A quick inventory
Another day older
Another sad story

It's the one where the visions
To which we aspire
Hang just out of reach
On a very thin wire

A matter of yearning
A word of defiance
A moment of passion
A measure of silence

There's a delicate balance
Between faith and desire
But we walk with our eyes closed
On a very thin wire

The way is uncertain
In every direction
So many choices
So little protection

We play follow-the-leader
Into unfriendly fire
But we hold it together
With a very thin wire

*Life is often an unsteady walk on a rope through the dark.
But at least we don't always have to do it alone.*

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*

Ian Melrose *guitar, low whistle*

Beo Brockhausen *bowed psaltery, mellotron*

Hans-Jörg Maucksch *fretless bass*



Wolfgang Roggenkamp



Heinz Lichius



Lars Hansen



Beo Brockhausen

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*

Ian Melrose *guitar*

Wolfgang Roggenkamp *hammond b3*

Lars Hansen *bass*

Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

4. Every Broken Glass

*When we do not know the way, and we can no longer bear the load,
together we must rest and talk awhile of the future.*

Baby you're like a hare
Darting from here to there
Eyes all open wide
Trying to hide
Before the hunter knocks an arrow

It's kinda like that dream
The one that always
Makes me scream
I'm fumbling along
Every turn is wrong
And every passageway is narrow

Baby I know it's hard
To gather up all the shards
Of every broken glass
That comes to pass
When all the world
Is in your keeping

Baby I know it hurts
And it feels like you're gonna burst
But baby don't you cry
Cuz when you cry
It's like all the world
Is weeping

All the words that I wanna say
They grow a little grayer every day
I reckon that is why
As time goes by
It all gets harder to remember

But baby when it's dark
And you've only got a little spark
You gotta get down low
And gently blow
A breath of life
Into the embers

5. Here Comes Old Splitfoot

I hear a whisper, I hear a low
I hear somebody just over my shoulder
Could be the corn king, could be a crow
Could be the devil come creepin' up slowly

Creepin' up, creepin' up, creepin' up
Could be the devil come creepin' up slowly

Some got a dollar, some got a dime
Some they ain't got but a dirty old penny
Ain't it a shame, lord, ain't it a crime
Up go the few and down go the many

Up and down, up and down, up and down
Up go the few and down go the many

Man, on the left of me, man on the right
Man, I just don't get what you're tryin' to tell me
One says it's black and one says it's white
But I ain't gonna buy what you're tryin' to sell me

*History spins around and around like a carousel full of thieves
and fools, while nobody watches out for the children.*

I ain't buyin', I ain't buyin', I ain't buyin'
No, I ain't gonna buy what you're tryin' to sell me

Didn't I warn you, didn't I say?
Someday it's all gonna have to be reckoned
No time to parlay, no time to pray
Here comes Old Splitfoot to take you away

Here he comes, here he comes, here he comes
Here comes Old Splitfoot to take you away

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar, dobro*
Wolfgang Roggenkamp *hammond b3*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

6. Please Be With Me

Music and lyrics by Scott Boyer

Upon my word what does it mean?
Is it love or is it me
That makes me change so suddenly
From looking out to feeling free?

I'm here lying in my bed
Wondering what it was I said
That made me think I lost my head
When I knew I lost my heart instead

So won't you please read my signs
Be a gypsy
Tell me what I hope to find deep within me
And because you can find my mind
Please be with me

Of all the better things I've heard
Loving you just makes the words
And all the rest seem so absurd
In the end it all comes out I'm sure



Steve Strauss with Ian Melrose



Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar, weissenborn-guitar*
Lea Morris *backing vocals*
Beo Brockhausen *hang, kurzweil keyboard*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

7. Like It Used to Be

Why do we fear the passionate voices of our kids? Wasn't it only yesterday that we were just like them, and all we wanted was to change the world?

When the mind was sound
All the clockwork wound
I was ticking off rhymes
And pondering time
Now I go into my head
And it just furrows my brow

Cuz it ain't like it used to be
It ain't like it used to be
It all just confuses me now

We reveled away
The magnificent days
And we passed the nights
At delirious heights
We spent all the blood
That the heart would allow

But it ain't like it used to be
It ain't like it used to be
It all just bemuses me now

The children change
They get stranger and stranger
But we stopped changing long ago
(Can't you tell by our clothes?)
So, we keep astern
And let the kids take the prow

Cuz it ain't like it used to be
It ain't like it used to be
The future's a mystery now



Ian Melrose

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar, dobro, low whistle*
Beo Brockhausen *kurzweil keyboard*
Lars Hansen *bass*

8. Bathsheba

A meditation on the ever mysterious world mover that is Woman.

On the rooftop
Seeking solace in the shade
With her seven maidens
Bathing in the gardens
Bathsheba
(Her eyes like chocolate pools
That make kings behave like fools
And fools like martyrs)

Lets the last drop of wine
Fall from her empty cup
And slips into the tepid waters
Scented with milk and honey

In her chamber
On the endless velvet bed
Where all the world could lay its head
Among the tangles
Bathsheba
Whispers from her book of dreams
A tale that cannot be believed
From any angle

Then she closes her eyes
And opens her arms for you
On ten thousand satin pillows
Warm with the down of angels

Down the river
Where the recently departed
Go to weigh their weary hearts
Against a feather
Bathsheba
In her flowers and her veils
Stands behind the golden scales
And thumbs the measures

Until at last
Every soul has passed
Like sand through an hourglass
Into the fields of Aaru



Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar*
Beo Brockhausen *clarinet, flute,
udu, percussion*
Lars Hansen *bass*

(Looking for)

9. The Heart of Saturday Night

Music and lyrics by Tom Waits

Well, you gassed her up
Behind the wheel
With your arm around your sweet one
In your Oldsmobile
Barrelling down the boulevard
You're looking for
The heart of Saturday night

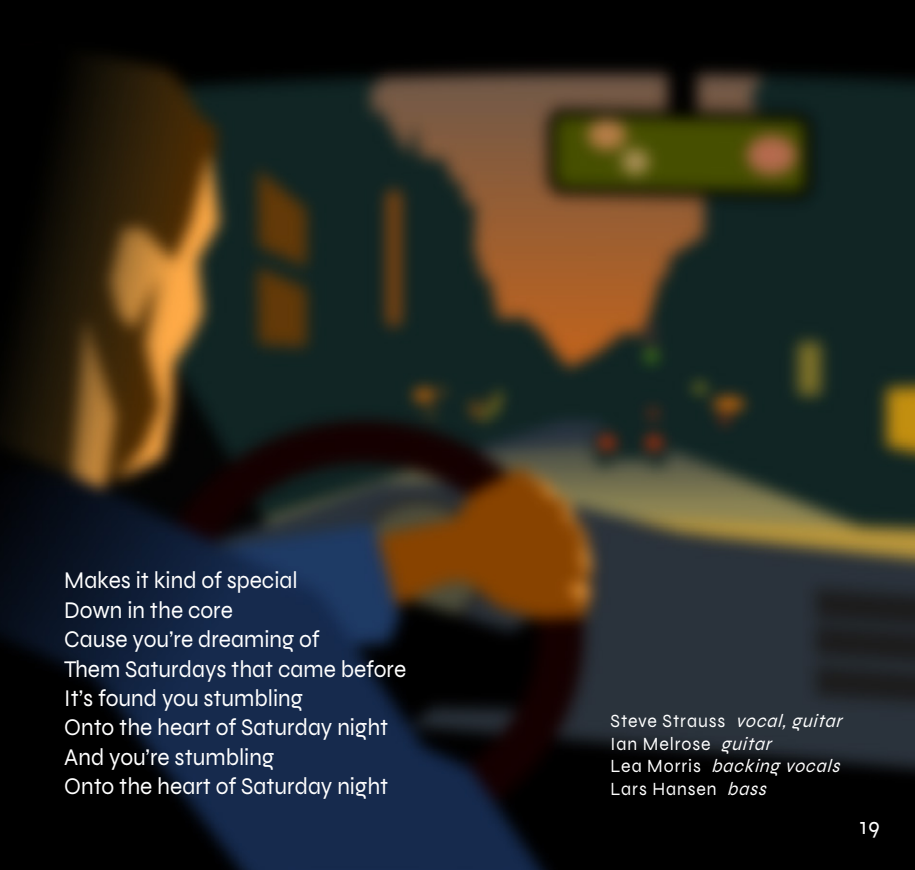
And you got paid on Friday
Your pockets are jingling
Then you see the lights
And you get all the tingling
'Cause you're cruising with a six
And you're looking for
The heart of Saturday night

Then you comb your hair
You shave your face
Trying to wipe out every trace
Of all the other days on the week
You know that this will be the Saturday
That you're reaching your peak

Stopping on the red
Going on the green
'Cause tonight'll be
Nothing like you've ever seen
You're barrelling
Down the boulevard
Looking for
The heart of Saturday night

Tell me, is it the crack of
The pool balls
Neon buzzing
Telephone's ringing
It's your second cousin
And is it the barmaid that's smiling
From the corner of her eye
Magic of the melancholy tear
In your eye

Makes it kind of quiver
Down in the core
'Cause you're dreaming of
Them Saturdays that came before
And now you're stumbling onto
The heart of Saturday night



Makes it kind of special
Down in the core
Cause you're dreaming of
Them Saturdays that came before
It's found you stumbling
Onto the heart of Saturday night
And you're stumbling
Onto the heart of Saturday night

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar*
Lea Morris *backing vocals*
Lars Hansen *bass*

10. In The Flood

Well the sky was brewin' bad weather
And it rained, and it rained, and it rained
Didn't it feel like forever and ever
That it rained?

So we gathered our sons and our daughters
And it rained, and it rained, and it rained
Singin' 'God's gonna trouble the waters'
And it rained

Then the sun rose over the river
And he rose, and he rose, and he rose
Didn't it feel like we'd been delivered
When the sun rose

But the river rose up to the levee
And she rose, and she rose, and she rose
And the levee said 'this is too heavy'
When the river rose

Well she left a whole bunch of us scattered
In the flood, in the flood, in the flood
And we lost lots of shit that don't matter
In the flood

Pictured here is my home town of Binghamton, New York, at the confluence of the Susquehanna and Chenango rivers. In 2006, and then again in 2011, this small corner of the globe was hit with catastrophic flooding. I wrote this song in the wake of those floods, for all of us in the world who are facing the ever rising waters.

And we gathered our sisters and brothers
In the flood, in the flood, in the flood
Who had nothin' left but each other
In the flood

Well the sky was brewin' bad weather
And it rained, and it rained, and it rained
Didn't it feel like forever and ever
That it rained?

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *high-strung guitar,*
weissenborn-guitar
Lea Morris *backing vocals*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *percussion*





11. Home

However far afield the path may lead, the light of love will always guide you home.

From the fields and from the woods
And from stranger neighborhoods
Mamas calling in their broods
“It’s time to come on home”

Another working day’s gone by
And you still sit there sorting alibis
You dot your t’s and cross your eyes
You’re so weary and alone

So why don’t you go home?
Why don’t you go home?
Why don’t you go home?
Your supper’s getting cold

It’s time to lock the lonely door
It’s time to mop the killing floor
You can’t drink here anymore
And you got nowhere left to go

So why don’t you go home?
Why don’t you go home?
Why don’t you go home?
Your love is getting cold

I’ll give up my wicked ways
And my simian displays
Sure beats counting off the days
And ain’t we getting old?

So can I please come home?
Can I please come home?
Can I please come home?
The night is mighty cold

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar, electric guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

12. Sisyphus Jones

*Everybody's got a Stone to Roll,
but only some get pie.*



You're up with the rooster
And out with the owls
You work like a dog
And you sneak like a prowler
You worry your collar
And smile for the master
The days pile up
Like a railway disaster

You sit there and wait
For the traffic to move
What are you trying to prove?
Lost like a needle
Feeling around for the groove

So what do you do
What do you do
How do you manage
What sees you through?

I roll a stone
Way up a hill
That's what I do
How about you?

Your mama once told you
The world is your oyster
So you looked for the pearl
In its dark little cloister
You found only sand
And a note from your wife
“Thanks for the memories
Bye, bye – have a good life”

Open up wide now
And stick out your tongue
Mama will tell you what’s wrong
Oh my poor baby
It seems that you’re no longer young

But what can you do
What can you do
What holds you steady
What keeps you true?

You can’t sell your soul
Cuz there’s nobody buying
It’s hard to keep up with
The high cost of dying

So you run the rat race
Right down to the wire
To get all the cheese
That you need to retire

You could burn your bridges
As you run across
With one final bird for the boss
You should be somewhere
Resting and gathering moss

So what will you do
What will you do?
You got some time
Coming to you

I’ll roll this stone
Over this hill
Someday I will
Someday I will

Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar, lapsteel guitar*
Lars Hansen *bass*
Heinz Lichius *drums & percussion*

13. The Company You Keep

We gravitate together, those who think in one way or feel in another, so that we do not have to be alone. Yet sadly, in doing so, we find ourselves divided from the world, which in the end is us all.

Look at what the cat dragged in
How you doing, where you been?
You look kinda pale and thin
(But now the party can begin)

Horn of Plenty, Well of Souls
Witching Hour, Rock n' Roll
Skippin' naked through the coals
Trippin' down the rabbit hole

And I can't sleep
But that's part of the deal
When the company you keep
Is so surreal

Empty spray cans in the hall
Urban legends on the wall
That don't make any sense at all
But they keep us so enthralled

And I count sheep
But the sheep all run away
When the company you keep
Comes out to play

No one here feels any shame
Cuz in the dark we're all the same
And so together bear the blame
(After all, that's why we came)

And I'm in deep
But I haven't any hope
Cuz the company you keep
Holds all the rope





Steve Strauss *vocal, guitar, electric guitar*
Ian Melrose *guitar*
Beo Brockhausen *soprano sax*
Lars Hansen *bass*

- 1 Somebody Tell Me
- 2 Blue
- 3 A Very Thin Wire
- 4 Every Broken Glass
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“Please Be With Me” by Scott Boyer

“(Looking for) The Heart of Saturday Night” by Tom Waits