

Long Shadows

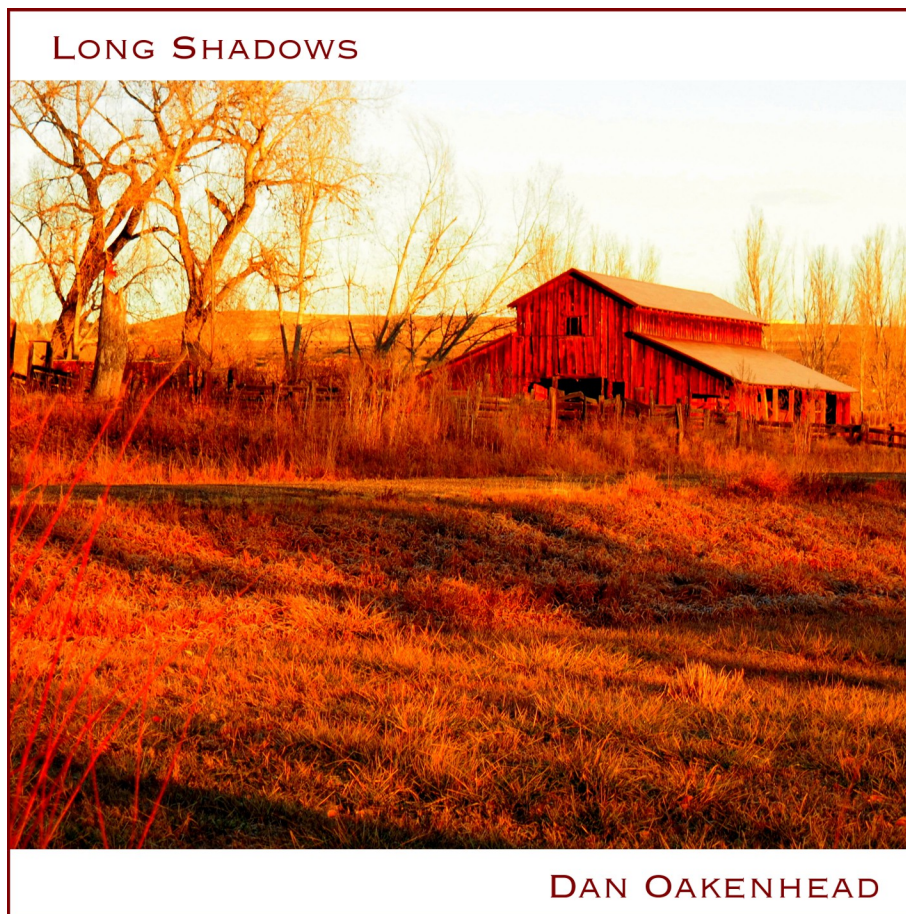
1. *Here We Keep The Fire (Guardians)* (4:34)
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All music composed, arranged, and performed by Dan Oakenhead.

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Dan Oakenhead: vocals, 1971 Martin D-35 guitar, D. W. Stephens 44-H Custom guitar, 1997 Taylor 410 guitar in DADGAD, Fender Bass, Yamaha U-1 piano, High Spirits F#m Golden Eagle flute, Korg Wavestation A/D, Roland JX-8P, Xpand soft synth, Animoog, PRS SE-245 guitar, Cervantes PE Crossover guitar, percussion arrangements.

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Here We Keep The Fire (Guardians) (4:34)

In the days that came before we had nothing
but a light came through the windows from stars in our eyes
and our hearts would shine like angels bearing candles
from the land of snow and peaks and wind in the night

the rough old table in the kitchen was the center
the deep dark wood scarred with the stories of old
with cupboards mostly bare we were grateful
for wind in the trees and the sigh of wings on the air

the grass grew long and sweet in the springtime
sometimes in summer music would fall from the sky
far away songs on the horizon
here we hold the fire til the morning light

footprints in stone, tracks of the long lone wanderers
who left word here hidden in the mist and the loam
mysteries of the worlds came in thunder
and rainbow light streamed over the secret home

windows open wide to the rainfall
one lone dog out there barking across the hills
love rolls in like fog across the waters
here we keep the fire along the endless years
here we keep the fire soft along the way

Silence Take Me On A Ride (4:13)

Silence takes me on a ride
tells me all I need
sets me down on fertile ground
the root of a tree
I love the way it flows
from the light of the stars above
the leaf, the earth, the wind and sky in me

sky never has much to say
that's just fine by me
now and then a thunderhead
rumbles through my dreams
I love the way it goes
above my head down through my toes
the deep, the light, the roarin' energy

hold on now
it's easy soaring
rolling through a cloud
of rain, love the rain, love the rain

eagle soars on rising air
I gaze out through his eyes
then glide away on sapphire wings
in summer high
these wings are strong and true
fly on by in a flash of blue
the air, the light, the easy going breeze

hold on now
it's easy going
rolling through a cloud
of rain, love the rain, love the rain

silence takes me on a ride
tells me all I need.

Roughed Up In The Heartland (4:08)

Could'a been a gardener
farmer or a carpenter
working hard with my hands
roughed up in the heartland
but I'm up here in the steel and glass
dying slow sittin' on my ass
feel the years as they come and go
need something that'll light my soul

gonna pull on these boots
leather belt and workman tools
head out to the land I love
with the rising of the sun
roughed up in the heartland

could'a been a wanderer
seeker and a messenger
meetin' folks who understand
it's all about a helping hand
comin' up on 62
ain't too late to make a change or two
head on out to the Northern Star
try my hand with this old guitar

how the hell did it come to this?
cold egos and sons of bitches
runnin' crazy all around these halls
on caffeine and alcohol

so take me out to the tumbling clouds
shake me 'round and wear me out
rough me up til my head is straight
great god almighty it ain't too late

never should have sold that truck
ol' 55 always brought me luck
step side Chevy with a cameo
and a push button radio
slap my hat against my jeans
turn my hands to a livin' means
get my feet back on solid ground
watch the sky as the sun goes down

spend all day in the wind and rain
s'how it's gonna be again
work like hell for all I'm worth
like a true son of the earth
roughed up in the heartland.

My Old Dad (5:16)

My old dad was a newspaper salesman
travelled many a country lane
selling space for advertisin'
from Chillicothe to Bellefontaine
but that was many years ago

and mostly I recall his coming home
sittin' down on a Friday evenin'
with a cold Manhattan and a TV show

uncle said he'd been a fine ball player
shortstop scouted by the major leagues
but he went off to fight the world's great battle
what hell that does to a young man's dreams
he would never talk about
what he did in the 2nd War
but he told me of a young black soldier
hailed him through the snow to the medical corp

that was enough for a young white boy
to see all men as men indeed
to know what happened in the Battle of the Bulge
in the snow and cold and two men's need

we'd settle in on summer weekends
set up a fire for a back yard grill
neighbors come by til all hours
kids running wild all over hell
humid nights before the sun went down
we'd get out and toss a ball around
maybe get a bat and hit a few
til the light grew dim and the swallows flew

years passed by and we all travelled
way up east to the coast of Maine
where granite rocks and pounding breakers
soothed his soul and eased his pain
down the way to Boothbay Harbor
Cadillac Mountain and Penobscot Bay
something took his mind off it all
unleashed his smile and smoothed his gaze

many's the night he'd drive on over
to the wide green fields above the great lake
let the old dog go running free
a distant look upon his face
my old dad went to meet his maker
late September of '68
he was 54 with a life half lived
but ready to go up and take his place

up with the stars and the light of the moon
where the base paths shine like diamonds
maybe get a bat and hit a few
with that wartime fella who carried him through

up among the constellations
out in the bleachers in center field
I'll be watching the all-star shortstop
with a big hot dog and a Weidemann beer.

Dawn Song (1:36) (flute instrumental)

All You Mercies (6:12)

Every Thursday night, at a table for one
he dines with his lifelong companion
as she fades into view and takes his hand
they share the special of the day
and he walks with her home
beneath lazy waving branches under street lamps
she whispers a secret song so low

come to us now all you mercies
in the sweetness of just holding hands
and when the moment fades
she lightly lifts away
and he walks up the old pathway to their door

if his life was a screenplay, he'd be cast as an extra
with a hidden romantic role of leading man
the unsung hero in the end
he'd pull the strings
unravel the mystery
save all the kind ones from heartache and tears
as a chorus rings up high, high in the air

come to us now all you mercies
deliver these fair hearts tonight
did anyone see, they'd say,
the one who saved the day
while he walks off all alone
as the credits roll

he no longer keeps up, with the news of the day
but he can feel when darkening winds move into town
and the rolls of thunder underground
he may be gray, and all but forgotten
even so, he's come to know a thing or two
as he sings the light of the moon

come to us now all you mercies

and sing and ring tonight
when the oak leaf falls
there's a lonesome far off call
and lanterns raised up high light the way on
and he walks on all alone
to the hazy edge of town
and fades into her arms going home.

Just Tryin' To Make Some Sense Of It (5:15)

It's a cold night without any light
the whole world is falling down
people hate us, want to annihilate us
without knowing us at all

these troubles all started centuries ago
handed down like the colors of our eyes
from father to son, mother to daughter
like something we're stuck with 'til we die

just tryin' to make some sense of it
when there ain't no sense in it at all
just some damn fools with so many tools
doing harm to us all

in the name of religion, for the sake of some old gods
terrible terrible things are done
instead of incense the holy implements
are bombs and knives and guns

we call out for help from far away lands
deliver us from fire in the sky
but it only gets worse, like a crazy man's curse
and deep down everyone knows why

just tryin' to make some sense of it
when there ain't no sense in it at all
just angry fools and twisted rules
turning hatred on us all

just tryin' to make some sense of it
maybe rise to a different kind of call
every morning moving with
a little less ferociousness
a little more gracefulness
and deep deep soulfulness
and a blaze of daylight for us all.

When Everyone Is Gone (5:31)

I live forever
ten thousand lifetimes and more
sailing spiral currents, puttin' in at every shore
landed here ages ago, cast up for repair
live here in the forest
gray beard and matted hair

I see all that happens
feel every love and crime
while all the bliss and anguish
in symphonies and rhymes

come here in waves
like wind in the trees
with darkness and hatred
where hearts are deceived
nothing you do out of your righteous rage
can ever touch us or those of our age
those of our age

who's lives will you take
when your enemies are gone
will you turn upon each other
when there's no one else around
only one more question and answer you must
how many hearts will you break apart before your bones are dust

when everyone is gone (when no one comes to see you)
when everyone is gone (just empty arms to greet you)
when everyone is gone (you've blown them all away)
when everyone is gone (how will you ever carry on)
when everyone is gone (the silent voice entreats you)
when everyone is gone (the inner light will lead you)
when everyone is gone (into a newborn day)
when everyone is gone, gone away (shadow in your heart is gone away)

now you come into the forest
before the break of dawn
behold the burning fire but I'm already gone
off to wander endlessly, yet I am always near
listening behind your eyes
knowing every fear

come sit by the fire
and the ten thousand songs
the rivers of heartbeats

as they flow along
now who will you love
in the morning light
who will you help then
beyond the fight
when you're gone beyond the fight

when everyone is gone (when no one comes to see you)
when everyone is gone (just empty arms to greet you)
when everyone is gone (you've blown them all away)
when everyone is gone (how will you ever carry on)
when everyone is gone (the silent voice entreats you)
when everyone is gone (the inner light will lead you)
when everyone is gone (into a newborn day)
when everyone is gone, gone away (shadow in your heart is gone away)

For Kindness And The Flame (3:51)

There's something in the wind and sky
never fully out of sight
smoke and light in every glance
take a look take a chance
see it in the lights at night
keep the fears and fright in flight
away from knocking on our doors
something with wings this way soars

out along high horizons
passions sing wings colliding
rain and light, thunder beings
turquoise eyes and golden rings
pathways into deeper sadness
rising seas, mounting madness
all the while knowing smiles
with views across a billion miles

all the worlds come and go
like leaves in autumn winds blow
tumbling 'cross universes
open rhymes and rambling verses flow
hear them flow

clouds that pass here in between
obscuring eyes and views and scenes
nothing but contracted dreams
and fractured continuity
there's something in the streams of blue
streaks of red that ring so true

like sky's the only mind to know
in all above and all below

calling to a high vibration
liquid sounds and incantations
shadows on the forest floor
passing through forever's door
in the sky far in the west
heal the damned and hold the blessed
through the power and the pain
all the more for kindness and the flame

all the worlds come and go
like leaves in autumn winds blow
tumbling 'cross universes
open rhymes and rambling verses flow
hear them flow
all the more for kindness and the flame.

Long Shadows (3:58)

I left last night for a long walk down a country road
in the secret rolling hills of my old home
pushed there by an urgent wind of a badly broken mind
and the faded hopes of some forgotten time

out here in the fields by these old standing stones
where long familiar voices hold me high
there's kindness here that steals within
like phantoms from beyond
this is where I am when I feel gone

in the home wood light I'll go wander
the old sweet days of summer
the dry leaves rustling high above
I'll go walking through the long shadows
in the light of the setting sun
in the light of the setting sun

feeling just a little torn and crazy
rattled by the winds of desperate change
I keep reaching out to the golden sky of August
glory days

there's an old red barn you always said reminded you
of your grandpa on his tractor in the fields
he's waving from the distance now and I can almost hear
hear him laughing on the wind over the years

won't you come with me and we'll go wander
the old sweet days of summer
the dry leaves rustling high above
we'll go walking through the long shadows
in the light of the setting sun
in the light of the setting sun.

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