



LUNARITY

40 Years In



# LUNARITY

## 40 YEARS IN

1. Post Due 2:04
2. Cup of Tea 3:46
3. 40 Years In 3:47
4. What If 4:45
5. Letters to You 4:39
6. What You Are 4:17
7. Take Her Down 3:43
8. Sailer 3:13
9. Flying 3:55
10. You and Me 3:45
11. Forever 3:45
12. Brand New Day 4:12

Post Due, 40 Years In & What If © 2017 Insular Moon Productions®  
Album & all other songs © 2020 Insular Moon Productions®  
insularmoonproductions.com

All songs © Inclement Weather Publishing®. Used with permission.  
inclementweatherpublishing.com

### **FORWARD...**

From lifeguard to mad hatter in the attic, carpenter apprentice to university professor, it has been a journey of interest. 40-plus years now since a letter from the attic turned life upside down; 40 long, winding years of apparent detours & distractions that turned out to be destinations in their own right.

This album, the culmination of the past four years, is dedicated to family & friends, past & present, near & far, who have in one way or another helped shaped the journey.

Humbled by all who have guided & protected along the way; still bathing in the light of the night's fool moon; still searching for the way forward...

JKV, Lunarity®, October 2019  
lunarity.com

### **1. POST DUE**

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*I wrote this in 1978 while still living in the attic, shortly after sending off the tape; one of my first "real" songs. The acoustic intro is the original version; the updated arrangement was added in 2016.*

A letter, signed, sealed,  
delivered post due.

Don't matter if there's no reply,  
still know I get through.

I'll send you the key to my heart,  
from behind barred door.

Just when you thought it'd gone for good,  
back once more—

That sweetened chill on a hot summer's night,  
a breeze tugs your hair.

A leaf falling from the tree outside my window,  
and your picture on my wall,  
Turn, and there's nothing there at all.

### **2. CUP OF TEA**

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Written in the mid '80s, during my (more) naive years, when love and angst still made sense.*

Wake up in morning, smelling the coffee,  
stir out of bed and start my day.

I think of you, and then try not to,  
I'm having coffee, not a cup of tea.

Turn on the TV, try and clear my head,  
tell myself I really ought not crawl back in bed.

Can't help thinking 'bout what you said to me,  
said I just wasn't your cup of tea.

I'm always up and down, lost somewhere between,  
like the moon, half the time I can't be seen.

Always sailing out to sea, it's what I do,  
though how I'd love to sit and sip some tea with you.

So one lump or two, I know you don't like it plain,  
you want tea made in the sun, I'm tea made with rain.

I'll just smile, dream what could be,  
if I was your cup of tea.

### 3. 40 YEARS IN

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*My first recent work, an attempt to come to terms with the dreams stashed in the bottom drawer and the everyday life that keeps them there. And to see if I could break a 30-year songwriting dry spell...*

Glance over at you over coffee,  
catch stolen glances tossed past me,  
wonder how love ended this way.

Dreams stashed in the bottom drawer,  
bags on stand-by the door,  
polite conversations fill up empty space,  
waiting for someone to come steal us away.

Someone to sing to so tenderly,  
gaze in wide wonderin' what it all means.  
Caught up in the rush of the incoming tide,  
their face on our dreams.

A shy smile from across the way,  
longing rushes in; doubt wipes it away,  
leaving only lonely ties that bind.

Prayed you'd come take me away,  
realized it just don't work that way,  
a turn of the page, shut up in our cell,  
we can only save ourselves from our own hell.

Yet we cling to someone so tenderly,  
gaze in wide wonderin' what it must mean.  
Swept up by the rush of the incoming tide,  
their face on our dreams.

A love forever for always,  
will another come along?  
change some words, rewrite a few lines,  
I'll be yours as long as you can be mine.

We'll sing to each other so tenderly,  
gaze in wide wonderin' what it could mean.  
Dive into the rush of the incoming tide,  
your face on my dreams.

Gaze at you over morning coffee,  
catch you steal a glance at past me.

### 4. WHAT IF

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Another attempt to sort the last 40+ years out, plus more than a little experimentation with chord progressions, riffs and effects. The title is from an essay of the same name written in the late '80s.*

What if I hadn't sent that letter to you?  
Just stayed up in the attic, howling at the moon?  
Taken the time to think it all through,  
before say-in' hell-lo?

How to capture a lifetime of things not said,  
cut loose the voice running in my head?  
Scratch a couple lines up on the wall,  
a simple song to say it all.

Tell me, will all our dreams come true, if I send another letter to you?

Will it make things better, everything alright,  
stop you from crying, avoid another fight?  
Can I take back the love, pay for all the pain,  
if I send another letter to you.

What if I'd danced with her spinning' in the wing?  
Shook the old man's hand, let the caged bird sing?  
Been able to walk out the front door,  
and say just hello?

Could I have met expectations, tales untold,  
mastered the psychosis, turned madness into gold?  
Or just traded cages, wheels spinnin' 'round,  
if I'd said hello.

Tell me, would've all our dreams come true, if I'd sent a letter to you?

Would it've made things better, everything alright,  
kept you from crying, stopped all the fights?  
Could I've taken back the love, paid for all the pain,  
if I'd sent a letter to you?

What if I could call the clouds, live-giving rains,  
calm the raging storm, soothe the savage pain?  
But who to give to, from who withhold,  
to who not say hello?

Tell me, will all our dreams come true, if I don't send a letter to you?

If souls are universal, free to fly,  
where have we come from? What am I?  
Where are we going? Is there a master plan?  
Who to send a letter to?

Tell me, will all our dreams come true, if I send a letter to you?

## 5. LETTERS TO YOU

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2019 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*This one just slipped out of a chord progression I'd been playing around with—the core lyrics wrote themselves in two hours, the final form over the next two days. While obviously channeling a healthy dose of GOT, this actually popped out after re-reading James Nelson's Viking Saga, the tales of Thorgrim Night Wolf.*

Brave the darkness to stare in the flames,  
Find you sitting in front of the fire,  
Looking more beautiful than the day you said goodbye.

An undying love, held so close,  
Living, breathing the memories,  
I catch your eye but you slowly turn away.

Back to my room, staring at walls,  
On padded feet wandering halls,  
Another sleepless night spent wondering what to say.

When I catch you watching me watching you,  
Rewriting letters never sent through,  
An unsigned collection of unspoken love,  
Letters to you.

Wondering why I'm still shut up here,  
Not like there's nothing better to do,  
Worlds to save, evil to overcome.

Tell myself first I have to heal,  
Stop paying for the wonder of having loved you,  
And a hundred other reasons for not doing a thing.

But sit here watching you watching me,  
Singing of things never meant to be,  
Another leaf in this volume of love,  
Letters from you.

Gazing down from high above,  
Running free in the morning dawn,  
Watching from the shadows hidden in the leaves.

Waiting, living for just a chance,  
To catch even the briefest glance,  
Of the light that is the lifeblood of my soul.

Watching you watching me,  
With emerald eyes burned into my dreams,  
Singing songs of undying love,  
Letters to you.  
Letters to you.

Brave the darkness to warm by the fire,  
Looking for your face in the flames,  
Wondering what I'll say if I ever see you again?

## 6. WHAT YOU ARE

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2019 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Written in late 2018, this one woke me up in the middle of the night after several days of watching news coverage of the aftermath of the Tree of Life shooting (along with several others). The song finished itself over the next two weeks. On a production note, the guzheng (Traditional Chinese zither) and erhu (Chinese fiddle) just seemed to fit the mood of the song better than any of the many other instruments I tried.*

The shimmering sunset ripples on waves,  
Searing light leaving me half-blind.  
The pounding surf drowns out the world,  
Leaving me alone with you.

A chilled breeze dances 'cross the sand,  
A long cool draught of a dusty rain.  
Smoldering embers bring tears to eye,  
Leaving me alone with you.

How I wish I had told you while you were here,  
'Stead of hiding behind this foolish pride.  
For just one more chance for you to hear  
What you are to me.

The mid-winter sky blazing with light,  
The full moon roaring up overhead.  
The bite of the cold as I inhale  
Memories of you.

Wandering fields in the broken dawn,  
Grasping at stars as they fade away.  
Frosted leaves on the well-worn path,  
Memories of you.

How I wish I had told you while you were here,  
'Stead of hiding behind this foolish pride  
Give me one more chance for you to hear  
What you are to me.

The punch of gunshot, the acrid smell,  
The ringing deafness left behind.  
Holding you close while you slipped away,  
When you were taken from me.

A gentle caress, a tender kiss,  
The smell of you lying here with me.  
This empty space you used to fill,  
Memories of you.

How I wish I had told you while you were still here,  
Damn this foolish pride  
I'll say it one more time hoping you will hear  
What you are to me.  
Everything to me.

## 7. TAKE HER DOWN

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Another "old dude emo" song from my mid-'80s period. The lead guitar riffs are the first-takes I laid down some four years ago; just can't seem to improve on their grit.*

Here I go, I take her down,  
I'm going under out to see.  
Sink in my loneliness, swim through the tears,  
Seems there's never anyone here with me.

Am I that hard to deal with,  
Do I make you feel that way?  
Isn't there anything left to say?

I'm gonna fly away one of these days,  
But for now color me blue.  
Guess I'll ride this wave out, swept by the tide,  
Wonder missing me like I do you?

If you are how come you're not here?  
You never call.  
Still afraid I'll only take you for a fall?

So here I go out to sea,  
Waves'll wash my tears away.  
I won't hear it raining, I won't hear you not call,  
Won't hear much of anything at all.

## 8. SAILER

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2020 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Another "old dude old song" song, offered here for the historical record. As was written in 1979, with the exception of changing "lady" to "love" throughout and adding instrumental backing.*

How are you today, my love?  
Fine as you can be?  
You know I see a ray of sunshine  
when you smile for me.

Wondering when we'll sail away,  
High above the breeze.  
Underneath a clear blue sky,  
'Cross the seven seas.

We'll cast our souls up to the wind,  
Take us where it may.  
Ever forward sailing onward,  
Living day to day.

So come with me down to see,  
We'll dance on golden sands.  
Waves a'singing a sweet lullaby,  
Take us by the hand.

Wind a'gently a'whispering  
songs of old for you and me  
Telling us our way back home,  
Where we shall be.

And if a tempest rips at your sails  
Or another mine,  
We'll keep each other from going under  
With our love's life line.

So how are you today, my love?  
Fine as you can be?  
You know I see a ray of sunshine  
When you smile for me.

Oh, won't you smile for me?

## 9. FLYING

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2017 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Also written in the mid '80s, after a failed attempt to find love and success in LA. After running out of money I spent a long night hiking back to the airport under an extremely full moon, and an even longer day waiting for my flight back home. This song was one result...*

A terminal case at LAX, watching people go 'bye.  
I'm going 'board a different plane, yes I'm gonna fly  
up into the wild blue yonder shining in her eyes,  
stretch my wings, catch the jet stream, touch the sky.

And fly away,  
and leave it all behind,  
and fly away.

Overcast again today, a grey-blue sky,  
keeps the sun from shining but I know it'll try  
to melt these blues, this gray in my eyes.  
I been too long out to sea, I'm gonna fly...

...up into the air with my love,  
take her hand and fly away.  
Spread our wings, touch the sun,  
together, forever, and today,  
with my love.

## 10. YOU AND ME

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2019 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Penned in the early '80s, yet another of the old dude, old song bunch. Still mostly as written then, with minor lyric updates for contemporary issues and inflation.*

Looking around,

Tell me, do you like what you see?  
Blackened skies and plasticized oceans,  
You and me?

Earth a'trembling from thinking  
'Bout the fire in the sky.  
Thinking this is no way to be living,  
And one hell of a way to die.

A handful of fools with their bunker-mental rules,  
Made it how it's got to be.  
A nuke freeze'd only lead to nuclear winter.  
We've got to be stronger to be free.

I don't think I understand,  
What we think we trying to prove?  
Why be able to blow us up thousands of times?  
You'd think once or twice would do.

Spending trillions on defensive postures  
while multitudes die political famines.  
What a way to run a world.  
A beginning or the end?

Don't you think it's time we took our place,  
Being a species inhabiting this space?  
Rise up and take our place among the stars,  
Instead of ending up a nuclear waste?

Well, what are we going to do?  
What will we decide to be?  
We're making the future right here and now.  
What will we choose to see?

You and me.

## 11. FOREVER

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2019 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*Also penned in the mid-'80s. Most of the song is as written then with some minor tweaking of the verse 3 lyrics and the addition of the last verse. And the lead guitar riff—I can't help feeling it's channeling something from the '70s, but I can't figure out what...*

Ain't got much money, ain't been making none,  
don't got the power to call forth the sun.  
But I got a song that I can sing for you,  
and if you listen you'll hear me shining through.

I know I've no right to even drop you a line,  
you've every right to expect a hook or sinker.  
But I've been caught on you for quite some time,  
and always find myself wound around you.

I've searched high and low, mountains, the sea,  
never finding what I'm looking for.  
The gate to the garden,  
the key to the door.

But you seem to be the one who makes my sun shine,  
chases the clouds out of my sky.  
Brings my stars out to shine all night long,  
even if I can't have you forever, my love, I'm gonna try.

Yes, I'll be the one who makes your sun shine,  
chases the clouds out of your sky.  
Brings your stars out to shine all night long,  
I'm gonna have you forever, my love, by my side.

Our love will make the sun shine,  
chase the clouds out of the sky.  
Bring our stars out to shine all night long,  
We're gonna have each other, my love, side by side.



## 12. BRAND NEW DAY

Words & music by John K. Varden  
© 2019 Inclement Weather Publishing®

*I had thought the album play list was set, but then this popped out after a recent trip back home, most likely in response to the seemingly endless news coverage of raging wildfires and storms. It was originally intended as a busker piece (market-place style acoustic guitar and vocals only), but then I discovered the pitch bend wheel on my MIDI keyboard...*

Pickin' up pieces as best we can,  
    Make a new start in a brand new day.  
Findin' a reason to keep on keepin',  
    A way to make everything ok.

Wonderin' how we ended up here,  
    Takin' for granted all we had.  
Our lives together, our families,  
    Then watchin' everything turn to sand.

Where do we go now you and I,  
    Now that the wind swept our lives away?  
These trials by fire, floods of emotion,  
    Who's gonna tell us everything is ok?

Don't know how this fighting began,  
    Can't understand these separate ways.  
We should be facing these trials together,  
    Instead of turning away.

Stand together or fall apart,  
    That's the choice we have today.  
Make that new start, that brand new day,  
    Before the waves wash it all away.

Where do we go now you and I,  
    Now that the wind swept our lives away?  
These trials by fire, floods of emotion,  
    Who's gonna tell us everything is ok?

Where do we go now you and I,  
    Now that the storm washed our dreams away?  
These trials by fire, floods of emotion,  
    How we gonna make everything ok?

Pickin' up pieces as best we can,  
    Make a new start in a brand new day.  
Findin' a reason to keep on keepin',  
    A way to make everything ok.

Pickin' up pieces as best we can,  
    Make that new start, that brand new day.

## AFTERWORD

Lunarity, from lunar clarity.

From drifting off to sleep on the *Dark Side of the Moon*; to tapping on the cage of One Brown Mouse, never daring imagine the subsequent roller coaster ride; to the gradual lessening of the tides under a waning moon...

It's hard to believe it's more than 40 years since I sent that letter on through. I can still recall the days before the storm like they were yesterday: the crystalline clarity of quiet sun-lit mornings, house plants and a wild cat named Skitzen for company; treasured time with friends in front of fires on the beach and in the moon-lit park. Back when things made sense. And then one day it's 40 years in, and the bottom drawer holding dreams seems stuck much tighter, so much more dust has accumulated since the last time it was cracked open...

I produced and engineered this album solo first and foremost to maintain artistic control, but also to maximize learning and development along the way. It is, after all, all about the journey, isn't it? It's also easier to be creative that way—working alone, trying ten different things twenty different ways as the mood strikes, mixing liberal amounts of learning, experimentation and reflection. Here's trusting I've done enough of all three the second album won't take 4½ years to finish.

Thanks to the authors of the many books, manuals, online courses and indie musician blogs I consulted during this project; invaluable instructors and mentors all. Likewise the physicians, researchers and authors who have written on mental and physical health and the human condition. And to the hardware and software developers who have provided us with the phenomenal tools we have available today—shoulders of giants, indeed.

Thanks especially to family and friends who kept me going through the tougher times, and to everyone who helps support this project and the next.

—JKV, Lunarity®, February 2020  
lunarity.com

Lunarity is a registered trademark of Lunarity LLC  
Inclement Weather Publishing is a registered trademark of Inclement Weather Publishing LLC  
Insular Moon Productions is a registered trademark of Insular Moon Productions LLC



# Lunarity 40 Years In



Produced by Insular Moon Productions®. Songs © 2017, 2019, 2020 by Inclement Weather Publishing®. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Unauthorized duplication or distribution in any form is a violation of applicable laws. Insular Moon Productions, Inclement Weather Publishing & Lunarity are trade & service marks registered with the U.S. Patent & Trademark office.

