

Blood & Brine

lyric · December 4, 2020

I wrote this a few days after Chris Cornell died. His passing really affected me, especially in light of the circumstances. I realize it is lyrically quite ambiguous, but basically the song is an exploration of why so many artists suffer with and are plagued by addiction, mental health and depression. The people; painters, writers, musicians, etc who bring us / the world such joy and inspiration with their work are often very tortured individuals, battling daily with their demons. Is their creativity a part of this darkness that they face? Can they ever escape it? I used the metaphor of a labyrinth in the song to illustrate someone trying to find the answers to these impossible questions.

Millions are inspired by the artist - and when that artist succumbs to their mental illness or addiction - this event in of itself, in turn, negatively -- or -- perhaps positively from a creative angle, affects those who loved and were inspired by them. A very intriguing, albeit dark cycle.

Nothing to do with this song, but enlightening to note that a few months after Cornell committed suicide - Chester Bennington (Linkin Park) killed himself. Again, really no answers as to why - but we know he battled similar demons. Another young and very talented artist. So sad.

While in the process of finishing up the song, I recalled the mysterious death of Jeff Buckley - and that hearkens the 'black water' passages that close the piece. The only answer one can be comforted by, if at all, is the notion that maybe all of this is somehow, however tragic, meant to be. And at the very least, perhaps peace for these individuals comes with the finality of their deaths.

You put the color of the clouds
Into perspective for me
You put the hi-beams on the lines
You showed me grace that I could not
Contemplate before you
Magic of the blood and brine

And now I paint the black abyss
Knife this canvas with a poisoned, sentimental kiss

From the shadows passages
Illuminated themselves
Maps and runes scribed marbled walls
My fingertips trace lines along the surface
Wet with weeping
A compass for the broken souls

Have you escaped these catacombs?
Where is the metaphor? The lesson? Or the path your lighted voice has shone?

A silver key hangs at my throat
It can't unlock this mystery
Symbolize the search within
The only answers lead to questions
Among these dusty tomes
Where the fuck do we begin?

As the creative fire consumes
The artists' thirst for inspiration suffocates within its lethal fumes

A careful balance is the cost
Between voices never heard, the songs of those we loved and those we've lost

Black water of the river wash me up
Upon your shores
A spell of deliverance cast me here
Carry me home

Black water of the river wash over me
Troubled and deep
I long to deliver flesh and bone
Carry me home