



KOMOREBI

Tom Houston

KOMOREBI begins

As 2024 began I was pretty certain that it made no sense to make another album. I had made six solo albums. Probably five too many for an 'under the radar' artist. Ha. No big drama, but the world was hardly crying out for a new Tom Houston Album.

Then came a phone call from my youngest daughter. She was being a bit vague and secretive. 'What's going on?' I asked. 'Dad I want to gift you a special present. I was thinking a songwriter retreat.' Was that not enough to melt a grumpy heart? I gratefully accepted the gift and the love and in so doing recommitted to songwriting and the creative adventure.

Not only did I book a songwriting retreat in October 2024 but I also got in touch with Neill MacColl (who had produced four of my previous Albums) and we agreed on recording a new EP.

By the time I went up to Moniach Mhor for the retreat (led by Boo Hewerdine and Hafdis Huld) Neill and I had produced 4 tracks of new material with a working title The Komorebi Adventures. I still couldn't justify expanding the project to make a full album, but it was heading in that direction. A new song emerged during the retreat 'Wishing For Snow' which was crying out to be recorded. But Neill got waylaid by winter of cancer treatment and by the time spring 2025 was upon us I had written 7 new tracks. Over the summer and early autumn of 2025 Neill and I worked on those recordings. KOMOREBI

So why call it KOMOREBI ?

In 2024 I had seen a Japanese film called Perfect Days which I very much enjoyed. I found out that it's original title was KOMOREBI which translates as *'the sunlight shining through trees'*. I adopted it as my working title for the project because I liked the idea of being playful in the shadows. It seemed to lie at the heart of a lot of my material.

When I started to write new material (such as Wild Pendulum, Across the River, Little Lies and As We lay on the Grass) it seemed like KOMOREBI was never too far away. I can't claim it to be too conscious attempt, but there is some sort of coherence. (perhaps).

Then when it came to choosing a name for the Album I was looking for a more 'conventional' name. My links to Japan are also 'fairly loose' and so I was wary of plucking name out of thin air. And yet it kept on popping up. And so I committed.



Let me introduce the tracks.

Moving into dangerous territory

I remember an interview with the late great Leonard Cohen. He is asked to dig a bit into the meaning of one of his songs. He paused and smiled gently 'Oh we are moving into dangerous ground here'. I think the smile and the look in his eye give me a clue. It's dangerous to analyse or explain art. Let it be.

However I'm going to give some random background to the songs which may be risky but of interest.

Under the Mat : it's always worth taking a walk in the great outdoors

Across The River : when Neill and I were working on this the first version was sung all the way through. It felt like something was missing.

Wishing For Snow : In a moment I was staring at winter. Bring it on.

Strange Birds : all sorts of gods looking down on Earth wondering.

Little Lies : Mixing thoughts of dams before they break with a true story from a colleague at work whose husband left the family home in a low key but unexpected manner.



As We Lay on the Grass : Originally this was an instrumental. Then I added an extra section, and then the ladybird came. With 7 spots.



Wild Pendulum : I remember in my youth having a good grasp on Newtonian Physics. Then when it went all Einstein and Quantum I couldn't get my head around it. My logical brain had finite limits and I veered into the world of instinct and imagination. Recently I started to get curious again. Let's see what you tube makes of quantum theory. What does Brian Cox say? I had this idea to merge nature with quantum physics in a song. I changed the tuning in my guitar and headed out into the woods near the shore. The title came from a book I started reading back in the day. Stalking the Wild Pendulum.

After The Gold : It starts with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, but it could end up in the white house.

Entonox : Only a fool would write a pop song about childhood visits to the dentist.

Russian Doll : Believe it or not this little fantasy tale starts as a rant about insurance. Big prizes if you find a connection, but do your own thing with the song. It's more fun.

Aspen Leaves : There are lots of great folklore stories about trees and their 'superpowers'.

Living The Dream : Although this Album is primarily song based Neill and I couldn't resist this mischievous tale.



Credits

All songs written by Tom Houston. Vocals and Acoustic Guitar.

All songs produced and arranged by Neill MacColl who adds instrumentation.

Hafdis Hund : Vocals on Wishing For Snow

Me For Queen : Vocals on Little Lies and As We Lay on the Grass

Kate and Amber St John : Vocals on Entonox

Mastered by Dave Izumi at Not In Kansas Studios

All artwork by Catherine Sargeant

A 16sillyducks production in association with Tom Houston Music

and now.....LYRICS



Under the Mat

Look in my eyes even though I can't seem to rest my gaze on anything much for too long

Look in my mind even though I can't seem to hold onto anything in there for too long

I remember the time / When things didn't shift

Quite as fast as they do now / Is it just me / And my monkey control

Who let him / Who left the keys / Under the mat / At my front door



Let's go for a walk up the glen and along the burn where the sun cracks through the trees

When we get to the top we gaze north and watch buzzards flying high above the snow

I remember the time etc

Let's drive to the beach walk barefoot on the sinking sand then run on through the waves

I remember the time etc

Across the River

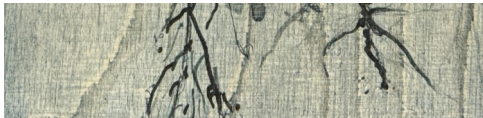
I take a moment of wonder/With a thorn in my side/ Lie back in the water
Closing my eyes/ And I hope against hope / You're alright

There across the river I see a house with a gate / There's a garden
in the sunshine / And in all the dream I make / I hold you in my arms
A new born babe / We share our love and wonder / Silent in the shade

I rise up from the garden / The thorn still deep in my side /
Dip my head below the surface / Closing my eyes / And I hope against hope
You're alright

Flying right above me an osprey spreads her wings / Disappears into the forest
As the young birds sing / Are we free from danger / Are the skies safe above
Let's remove the thorns / And bleed out our love

I take a moment of wonder / With the thorn by my side
Lie back in the water / Looking up to the sky / And I hope against hope
I'm alright
Held by the river
Floating
Like I'm not here



Wishing for Snow

I look down the track / Wishing for snow / To wrap me in silence
The only sound I want to know
We've all got a list / To crumple in fire / From now until Christmas
From now until Christmas / Holding on hope / Flames getting high

There's a sound in the hallway / That creeps through the crack
Please take me to Iceland / Where echoes don't talk back
We've all got a list etc

Let's fight for the moment / When the magic cuts through
All the noise and the chaos / Doors open soft wishes come true
We've all got a list etc

Living room laughter / Crackers for after / And dreams of a better life
Fairies and angels / Smiling with strangers / And dreams of a better life
Coming
Soft focus stories / Tinsel wrapped glories / And dreams of a better life
Coming
Snowflakes and sledges / Ice round the edges / Of dreams and a better life
Coming
Someday



Strange Birds

Little people running so far / Little people running / Little people getting so lost
Little people sweating / Little people running so scared / Little people wanting
Little people hoping so hard / Little people praying

Close your eyes lay down low / Close your eyes lay down low / Please
Don't let it be so

Little people searching for what was / Little people missing
Little people reaching for last straws / Little people grabbing
Little people creeping from what is / Little people hiding
Little people staring at what if / Little people hurting

Close your eyes lay down low etc

Little people breathing so soft / Little people floating
In some strange world beyond the waves
Little people screaming so loud / Little people choking
Strange birds trapped in their cage



Close our eyes lay down low / Close our eyes lay down low / Please Don't let it
be so / Please Don't let it be so

Little Lies

Before the dam breaks / There's not much to say / All is calm
It's a run of the mill sort of day
Ready for work / Quarter past eight / Toast on the grill
And a very faint crack on his plate

Before the dam breaks / It's quiet below / She calls out his name
It's time to go
Pressure builds / Something snaps / When there's nothing to lose
It's the best time to act

Before the dam breaks / It's damp and grey / He opens the window
Steps out into the day
Late for work / Quarter to nine / Cold toast
The rest of her life lying numb on the line

Living life side by side / Oblivious to what's inside / Dams can break
It's no surprise / Little lies grow in size

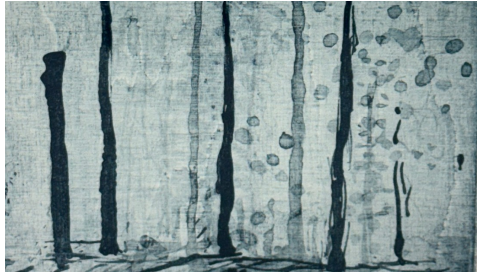
Everyday a mystery / Little cracks can set us free / Find the lock turn the key
Little lies grow in size / Dams can break it's no surprise
Find the lock turn the key



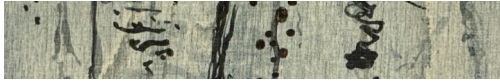
As We Lay On the Grass

There's a lady bird flying / There's a ladybird landing
There's a ladybird crawling on your knee
As we lie on the grass under the chestnut tree

We are counting the spots / Counting the spots
Counting the spots on each wing
As we lie in the grass under the chestnut tree



Wild Pendulum



We gazed out across the rocks / Listening to the wren and the willow warbler / Sunlight warm in our faces / The shapes and ripples on the water
Taking you to a distant poem / Bring it back / Bring it home

Meanwhile the atoms are spinning and waving / Weaving wonder on all sides / Here there and all ways / Spinning both ways at the same time
All of the time / Weird / and magnificent / Spinning both ways at the same time / All of the time / Weird / and magnificent

A seal pops up through the surface / Shining black in the sunlight asking the question / Heads or tails / Smiling or waving
The seal lies back and raises her tail / There you go / Heads and tails
It's both

The sun up there is smiling and shining / Through tunnels of wonder and tunnels of light / Here there and always / Bouncing on through bringing us life / Spinning and waving / Weaving and grinning / Weird
and magnificent

Bouncing on through / Bringing us life / Spinning and waving
Weaving and grinning / Weird / and magnificent

After The Gold



Love me or hate me / I won't complain / It's a feeding frenzy all part of the game / I'm raising the stakes / Playing to win / I'm the guru with a devilish grin/ After the body / After the gold/ After the willpower / I come for the soul

The crowds are cheering as my car rolls by / I'm the dude with a glint in his eye / I'm raising the stakes / I'm playing to win / I'm the guru living with sin/ If you want Nirvana/ I'll show you how/ Let go of the future/ Be here now

Let's move to the country buy some land / I'll build that city / It's part of my plan / I'm raising the stakes / Playing to win / I'm the guru with a devilish grin/ After the party / After the sex / while everyone's sleeping / I'll take what's left

Love me or hate me / I won't complain / It's a feeding frenzy all part of my game / I'm raising the stakes / Playing to win / I'm the guru with a devilish grin

Entonox

Just wait here Thomas / No distractions for a child / Sitting in the room, for
over an hour, watching that door / With the strange unfinished circles

And the shadow / The shadow of the blind Boy

Just smell this Thomas / I can't remember the rest / The black drill, taking it's
time, as it trundled and rumbled every bone In my body

I'm sure that he only drilled them one at a time / I'm sure that he drilled them
one at a time

Woke up to the taste of blood, and that frosted glass door / With the strange
unfinished circles / And the shadow, of the blind boy / Rocking In time

Ice cream was recommended / Didn't need the raspberry sauce though

Black jacks, a real amalgam fix, chewing and pulling out any loose fillings

I'm sure I only ate them one at a time / I'm sure I ate them one at a time

Making strange unfinished circles / the shadow of the blind boy

Rocking In time



Russian Doll

Losing / I'm losing the way / Step off the path to photograph / A strange
shape in the bay / When a Russian doll comes crashing in / Riding on a wave

Twisting / I'm twisting away / You do the math, I'm left with half / Floating in
the bay

That Russian Doll keeps rolling in / A never ending play

I understand it now / I understand my fate / A simple purse of lips is all

Is all / Is all it takes

Standing / I'm standing on the shore / You may laugh but a sudden draft /
Sweeps me out to sea / The Russian Doll looks on aghast / Then comes to res-
cue me

Drowning / I'm drowning beneath the waves / Come step inside no need to
die

It's the best way to escape / And the Russian doll just opens up / Before it
gets too late / I understand it now Is all / Is all it takes etc

I am a Russian Doll / I understand my fate / A simple purse of lips is all / Is all /
Is all it takes

Aspen Leaves



He let out a sigh / In the space between words

She let go the lie / And the hope in the touch / They'll be no more waves against the
sands of time / They'll be no more rustling of the leaves in the wind

She froze out the light / Between the kiss / He killed the night / With the chill in his lips

They'll be no more caressing the seeds of doubt / They'll be no more journeys in the
cold or the snow

No more waking in your arms my love / They'll be no more trembling in the warmth of
our night

No more no more trembling in the night

No more no more rustling of the leaves

Living the dream

Men in hards hats in a pristine pink onesie / Men in hard hats with a packed lunch made by mumsie / There's pickled onion, a tunnocks, two slices of ham some boiled egg, a cheese and a strawberry jam

Mumsie's a magician when packing the space / Her wardrobes and cupboards are things of grace

Men in hard hats discussing the game

The referee, the pitch, the manager and all of the players getting the blame

Then men in hard hats get back to work / Watching the digger dig up the dirt

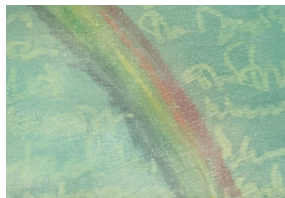
Men in hards hats knock off at four / Men in hard hats back home at the door
'How's your day been' mumsie cries from the kitchen
'Fine'

Men in hard hats don't indulge in gossip or bitchin

Then Men in hard hats throw their clothes in the wash. And off to the kitchen for some diluting orange squash.

Mumsie's cooking fish and chips with pistachio ice cream.

Men in hard hats
living the dream



A painting of a rainbow over a green landscape. The rainbow is the central focus, arching from the top left towards the bottom right. The background is a textured, painterly style with various shades of green and blue. In the lower right, a small figure of a person is visible, looking up at the rainbow. The overall mood is serene and natural.

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