

CATHARSIS: A FOLK ALBUM INSPIRED BY GREEK THEATRE & MYTHOLOGY

by

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## ABSTRACT

Ancient Greek Mythology is one of the longest surviving collections of stories and legends still told today. Folk music is a genre of music that stems from the practice of passing down traditional songs and poems from generation to generation. Though folk has evolved and found itself with more contemporary styling, the inherent storytelling nature is still at its core. Both of these storytelling devices and concepts have always fascinated me, and I felt there to be an opportunity to create a piece of music that allows the two to intersect. So, I have written and recorded a folk album, titled “Catharsis”, that details the downfall and subsequent healing from a modern romantic relationship, as told through the lens of ancient Greek Theatre and Mythology.

My composition of this album prompted a great deal of research of several of these Greek myths, allowing me to gain a greater understanding of their story and significance, so I would be able to find parallels to the modern relationship the album describes. In songs like “Athena”, that compares feeling like you’ve lost a best friend after a breakup to Athena and Ares’ conflict in the Trojan War, I dug deep into the mythical history of the war itself — why it started, how it ended, and who all participated — so I could create purposeful allusions and references to the mythical while keeping true to the modern storytelling of the folk music I was writing. On songs like “Anagnorisis”, I instead researched the theatrical concept of an anagnorisis, finding examples of it in many Greek tragedies, and applied this knowledge to the arc of my story, determining what the narrator’s “anagnorisis” in their healing process was.

Overall, this process has taught me a lot about my abilities as a writer — I have long been fascinated by songwriters’ abilities to tell stories about themselves while alluding to other famous works, and had never been successful. However, upon my extensive research, I was able

to build a strong foundation of knowledge of Greek myths and concepts, and applying it to the story I told became much more attainable and successful.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To the musicians who gave me the confidence to create this record — Edward, Taylor, Sophia, Kaitlin — thank you for making me feel like a musician. Your kind words are the reason this album exists.

To Grant — Thank you for your supervision over this project. I could not have done this without your help!

To Jordan — Thank you for your mentorship and for giving me the grace to make the album I've always wanted to make. You allowed me to see that when something isn't working, you change your approach.

To my best friends — thank you for listening to fifty versions of each of these songs. Your patience, feedback, and love mean everything to me. Marlo, Sam, Jess, Stacy, Andrew, Katy, Sophia, Ella, Sarah, Yasha, Liz, Wallis, Devon, Manali, I love you all.

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To my parents — thank you for always supporting me and encouraging me to follow my dreams, no matter the capacity (and thank you for funding several of the recording sessions for this record).

Lastly, to anyone who listens to this album — I hope you love it. I hope it helps you sort through whatever difficult emotions you are facing. I hope you find yourself in these songs, and that they find a life through you. I hope you one day reach your catharsis.

## TRACKLIST

- I. Aphrodite Rising
- II. Icarus
- III. Hamartia
- IV. Perseus
- V. Athena
- VI. Anagnorisis
- VII. Catharsis

## I. APHRODITE RISING

They say that roses start to bloom in the Springtime

Well, I don't think that's really true

'Cause it was winter when I met you

The tides were rising

They were pulling me under

The ground was shaking

From the crack of the thunder

And everyone was telling me to go home

The Gods were raining down in all of their glory

Then on the surface

It's our origin story

And I don't ever want to leave you alone

And now it's you and me by the seaside

Oh babe, I want to take a deep dive into you

My deepest blues

Are painted pink with your sunrise

And every color is showing me something I never knew

Thank God that I found you

In the birth of something beautiful from the sea foam

I found my mourning dove, my muse

And every song I write, it'll be for you

And I can see it all coming together

They say you know when you find forever

And all I'm seeing for the rest of my life

Is you and me by the seaside

Oh babe, I want to take a deep dive into you

My deepest blues

Are painted pink with your sunrise

And every color is showing me something I never knew

Thank God that I found you

You're my Aphrodite rising from the Salton Sea

They said it wasn't meant to be

And somehow you're here with me



## II. ICARUS

It all happened so fast

You were Midas, I was gold and

Just like Icarus, I flew too close

Can we make it last

If I'm still running from the rising tides

But I'm afraid of flying?

Were we doomed to fail from the start?

Did they prophesy it?

If I'm the fool to think we were Gods

How could I just stay quiet?

I don't want this to be just another midnight long drive

Love me when it's dark outside

I want to wake up with you

And hold you in the morning

I want to let the whole world know that

You're mine

But paper wings weren't made to fly

Now I brace for the crash

It's a tumultuous descension

We didn't start, but still we're ending  
In a moment past  
You're just like all the ones who came before  
A beautiful disaster

We were doomed to fail from the start  
So what's the point in fighting?  
I'm a fool to break my own heart  
And tend a fire dying

But I don't want this to be just another midnight long drive  
Love me when it's dark outside  
Want to wake up on a Tuesday morning  
Rain and coffee pouring  
All my feelings out all over the floor  
I couldn't love you anymore than I do now  
And somehow I think we could touch the sky  
But the sun's too bright  
Paper wings weren't made to fly

I don't want this to be just another midnight long drive  
Love me when it's dark outside  
Want to wake up on a Tuesday morning

Rain and coffee pouring

All my feelings out all over the floor

I couldn't love you anymore than I do now

But the sun's too bright

Paper wings weren't made to fly

But the sun's too bright

### III. HAMARTIA

If I were a better man

I would've held you with patient hands

If I were a wiser man

I would endure what I don't understand

For lately when love comes to call

My fervor is my fatal flaw

Too soon to scale the garden wall for you

When comes the time two lovers end

One heart begins to mend again

But one is left there wondering

Would you have stayed

If I were a better man

If I held you with patient hands

If I were a kinder man

Would you stay here with me in the end?

For now your love has come to call

But fervor is my fatal flaw

You left me waiting at the wall for you

Here comes the time two lovers end

My heart can't seem to mend again

And I am left here wondering

Would you have stayed

If I were a better man...

#### IV. PERSEUS

January, first fall of Texas snow

We slow danced to a song I didn't already know

And you were laughing 'cause I got the steps wrong

And I could've stayed in your arms forever

But it's a long road and navigating it's hell

And broken hearts don't serve either one of us well

You waved your white flag, moved to the sky

And I've been waiting years for a hero to pass by

I don't know what it's like to be frozen

But I'm here stuck in stone

When they opened, I looked in the snakes eyes

And I heard your goodbye

And I'm here waiting for Perseus

Oh, but he's up in the stars

And I can't find a way to move on

'Cause I can't move

And it's hard to cut the head off

Without letting go of you

Summer weather made me think you changed your mind

But all your pretty words were just a trick of the night

Nothing but false hope  
Another ghost to haunt what could've been  
If I wasn't paralyzed

I don't know what it's like to be frozen  
But I'm here stuck in stone  
When they opened, I looked in the snakes eyes  
And I heard your goodbye  
And I'm here waiting for Perseus  
Oh, but he's up in the stars  
And I can't find a way to move on  
'Cause I can't move  
And it's hard to cut the head off  
Without letting go

Oh, don't want to have to forget all the parts of you I remember  
Oh, you don't know how bad I wish that we could've met in December  
I see the sweater that you wore on the night we met in the bar  
I hear your favorite song you played me that first ride in your car  
And I swear, it takes me back to winter, making out in my bed  
And I know I may never get to love you again  
But oh, standing in your old apartment, I wish I'd begged you to stay  
Oh, 'cause I love you even more than then today

I don't know what it's like to be frozen

But I'm still stuck in stone

When they opened, I looked in the snakes eyes

And I heard your goodbye

And I'm here waiting for Perseus

Oh, but he's up in the stars

And I can't find a way to move on

'Cause I can't move

And it's hard to cut the head off

Without letting go of you

Oh, I don't want to let go

I can't make it alone if I lose you

It's hard to cut the head off

When I don't want to let go of you



## V. ATHENA

Time was something we had an abundance of  
Until you messed it up  
And now you're getting on the next plane out of town  
I watched you leave and my Aphrodite fell  
I was screaming out for you  
To give it up and make them turn your plane around

You were married to the fire  
But you were making love to war  
Thought you were God of my desire  
But I don't know anymore

Who knew that fighting a lover  
Would feel a lot like losing a brother?  
It's hard to stay the course  
When you lose the one you belong to  
Can't find the right way to guide you home  
And there ain't no Trojan Horse  
But you can call me Athena  
Cause I know I couldn't leave you if I tried  
You can call me Athena  
Forever I am hiding in plain sight

Pride is something I have an abundance of  
When they leave, they mess that up  
But you could've been the only one who stayed

If we were side by side on a fault line  
Would the front line still try to take us down?  
Is it right to call it friendly fire when the gun for hire  
Went from someone you love  
To someone you just see around?

Who knew that fighting a lover  
Could end in losing a brother?  
It's hard to stay the course  
When you lose the one you belong to  
Can't find the right way to guide you home  
And there ain't no Trojan Horse  
But you can call me Athena  
Cause I know I couldn't leave you if I tried  
You can call me Athena  
Forever I am hiding in plain sight

## VI. ANAGNORISIS

Every waking hour

My mind spent on you

Then the sun goes down and

I dream about you too

Can't get ahold of this

I can't resist the hope

That every waking hour

You think of me too

And I'm miserable

Don't close the door

I'll you upside down to find the key

Can't wrap my head around

You're leaving town

Am I a fool to think you're leaving me?

Every waking hour

I'm praying you don't leave

I'm pouring out my heart

In letters you don't read

And I'm miserable

You closed the door

I turned you inside out to find a key

But it's a prison cell

This living hell

Of who you are and who I thought you'd be

Every waking hour

I'm letting go of you

Every hour

Just so I'm not miserable

Every waking hour

I won't spend on you

## VII. CATHARSIS

If you told me when I moved to this town  
That I'd spend all my time on you  
I'd like to think I wouldn't turn around  
Cause I loved you  
I still do

There's nothing left to say  
But you know I've loved these days  
And I kept coming back to  
The way that it was when we were in love  
But now I'm turning the page

I'm not the kind of man who takes his time  
When I love someone, like I'm out of my mind  
But it's hard for me to leave sometimes  
When I love you  
The way I do

There's one thing left to say  
And I can't keep running away  
From the terror of the truth  
Is there a freedom in pain

If I show it all to you?

That's a chance that I just have to take

So I told you why I wrote this down

Cause I've spent all my time on you

You didn't falter, didn't turn around

I love you

I still do

All I've had are little endings

But this feels like a new beginning