

"Better Angels".....The Story Behind the Song

November 1, 2018, All Saint's Day. JD and I had been writing and recording songs for our new album for over 7 months. We loved the direction we were heading, but it was clear that we still needed a strong up-tempo opening song that would set the tone for the entire album.

We've always loved Abraham Lincoln's heartfelt quote from his first inaugural address, the one about the Better Angels of our nature. 1861 was a deeply troubled and divisive time in America. The country was on the brink of civil war, and Lincoln, as the newly elected president, was imploring the people to put aside their differences and come together to form a more perfect Union.

*"We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by **the Better Angels of our Nature.**"*

Well, there was our inspiration.

JD and I started writing the music with the same soulful 6/8 rhythm as our song "Already Home" because we have always loved that drum feel. I put in my request to the song angels for lyrical ideas, and spent a couple of relatively sleepless nights listening to phrases that came through in that magical space between dreams and waking reality: "Seeing the world through the eyes of a higher vision." Images flooded in. Hope and Heart showed up: "The essential invisible heart of all creation, living inside of us now and singing us home."

JD got out his guitar and tuned the strings to DADGAD, which knocked us out of our ordinary way of looking at chord structures. Soon we had a compelling rhythmic foundation, and the melody took shape easily on top of that.

JD switched from guitar to piano, and we recorded the basic outline of the song in our studio, with our vocals taking the lead. Christian Teele added the perfect drum track, and we traveled to Steamboat Springs so that Brent Rowan could lay down his brilliant guitar parts. Once we got our dear friend and country music singer Kellie Coffey to sing high harmony we were almost there. But we felt like the song needed a high plaintive Irish voice, so we added Nashville session player Jim Hoke on penny whistle. And now this track feels to us like an exhilarating and uplifting ride, from start to finish.

We hope that the songs on this album, and the intention behind them, will now go out into the world in a powerful way, inspiring in all of us more aliveness, a deeper soul connection, determination, and aligned right action. With our feet on the ground and our hearts wide open, miracles can start showing up in the most ordinary and surprising ways....as we all call in, and embody, the Better Angels of our nature.