

Reflections (Of Life & Death)

This is the third recording I have made for Women & Meth. I wanted to record a song that was going to be different from the previous two recordings, as well as be mellower sounding. This recording is more bare bones, with only guitars in the recording. After the two previous songs having a larger and more synthetic sound, I wanted to move to a more stripped down sound for a more human element in the music.

I took inspiration from Jill's second interview. In the beginning of the interview, she goes through a period of reflection, triggered by the death of the son of a fellow drug user she used to know. This has her reflect on her past, especially on the neglect that her children went through, as well as the children of other addicts she knew. She describes a feeling of responsibility in how that boy grew up in that life, and having put her own kids through it. Children who had no choice but to live with what their parents offered. She describes feelings of guilt in how "it really broke my heart to think that I was partly responsible for the end result of what happened the night he died. Because, um, you know, back then I didn't care who was around or who wasn't around." (Interview 2: Lines 44-46)

While there is this feeling of guilt and sadness, there is also a feeling of thankfulness for life expressed. Jill is thankful that she managed to escape the life of meth use. That she was able to start a new life with her children. A thankfulness for life.

I tried to capture both of these polarized feelings in the song. There is a sense of melancholy throughout, and while there is not a grand feeling of joy in any of the sounds, there is a sound of what I may describe as hopeful. The song is divided into two parts, opening with a slow, sad mix of acoustic guitars, eventually joined by a few electric guitars. I feel this section represents the reflections of death, and life that led to death. This is followed by a separate section connecting to the first part. It is an acoustic playing, mixed with a slide guitar. While it is not exactly what I would call a happy sound, it is a change from the previous section. This is what I hope represents reflections on life, with Jill having escaped death, to create a new life for her and her family.

Overall, the song is meant as a moment of reflection, considering Jill's past, as well as her present and future. In the second interview, Jill says "It just reminded me of how people see the things that – that meth addicts or drug addicts or alcoholics do. They don't see the person." (Interview 2: Lines 51-53) As I mentioned in the opening paragraph, I wanted a more intimate, bare-bones, stripped down sound for this song. Part of it is to keep that human element alive; to see the person and not just the addictions.