

Secret Adversary

Music: Herin, Truax / Lyrics: Herin

Drums: Gary Craig

Bass: Kevin Chown

Lead guitar: Kim Mitchell

Electric & acoustic guitars: Chris Herin

Lead & backing vocals, tambourine: Randy McStine

Keyboards: Matthew Parmenter & Hugh Syme

The Story

The album boasts more exceptional lead guitar courtesy of Canadian icon *Kim Mitchell* (*Max Webster, solo*) on "*Secret Adversary*" – a performance that stands out as an emotional *coup de gras*. Widely and equally known for his work with *Max Webster* and an even more successful solo career, *Mitchell* has graciously lent his fiery soloing to TILES albums since 2004's "*Window Dressing*" – so why not an offshoot *Herin* project too? Also of note is *Brown's* suggestion to bring in *Gary Craig* on drums. Unknown to *Herin* but not the Canadian music scene, *Craig* is notable for his work with many artists including *Bruce Cockburn, Red Ryder, Ann Murray, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings*, and dozens of others. Maybe an odd choice on the surface for a heavy-ish rock tune, but *Craig* delivers a fresh approach that ties the guitar and bass interplay together and avoids worn out clichés you might expect for this style of song.

"*Secret Adversary*" also features one of *Randy McStine's* three lead vocal performances on "*Hiding in Plain Sight*". *McStine* is no stranger to the Prog world with his band *Lo-Fi Resistance*, duo with drummer *Marco Minnemann*, solo albums, and as the recent touring guitarist for *Porcupine Tree*. *Herin* relates how he became an instant fan after meeting and hearing him at ProgStock in 2019 when he was guesting with the *Jane Getter Band*.

(Herin): "We chatted a bit about Randy's various projects and plans and I mentioned my solo project, asking if he might be willing to check out a couple tunes. A great (and quick) collaborator, Randy took just enough creative liberty to enhance the vocal melodies and eventually ended up singing lead on three songs, plus he became my go-to guy for miscellaneous background vocals and instruments. I hope we work together again."

Lyrically "*Secret Adversary*" is about the stealth of dementia and how it gradually progresses beneath the surface without obvious outward appearances. Although mystery still surrounds the causes, progression, and cure of the disease great effort continues to be expended by many organizations, thousands of volunteers, and research professionals to raise awareness and make significant medical strides in the 20-years since *Herin's* father was diagnosed.

Secret Adversary

In between the rights of way
Fumbling lines writ on your sleeve
In a shadow box behind a silken screen
 Talking back to front
 Words drift and meanings shift
 Poetic echo in dissonant decay

*A trick of light
A trick of memory
See shadows crawl
Unaware of a secret adversary
Standing you up against the wall*

In the haze behind your smile
Wheels grind slowly in reverse
As confusion obfuscates a cruel truth
 A knight without his armor
 A king without his crown
 The mercenary draws his sword

*A trick of light
A trick of memory
See shadows crawl
Unaware of a secret adversary
Standing you up against the wall*

*A twist of fate
Adrift in jeopardy
Chance did befall
Unaware of a secret adversary
Standing you up against the wall*

Thee, enemy within
Nemesis unrecognized
Distant early warning signs
 too well-disguised
Hiding in plain sight
From this vantage point
It's hard to understand
The how and why and when

*A trick of light
A trick of memory
See shadows crawl
A twist of fate you're
Adrift in jeopardy
Where chance did befall
A trick of sight
A trick of scenery
In absentia
Unaware of the secret adversary
Standing you...
...and us...
...up against the wall*