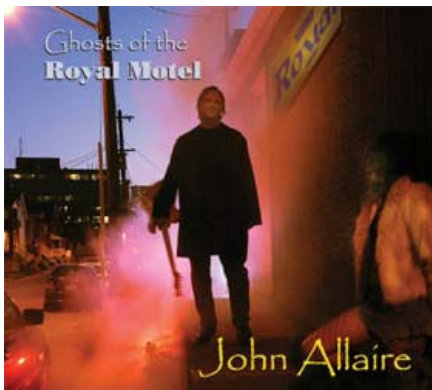


# John Allaire

Lyrics from *Ghosts of the **Royal Motel***



Produced by John Allaire and Chad Nesrallah  
Recorded at Fat Dog Productions, Ottawa  
Mastered at Joao Carvalho Mastering, Toronto  
Manufactured by IndiePool, Toronto  
Photography by Sean Sisk  
Graphic Design by Dookie  
Flat and Black Records 2007 (FBR-009)  
All songs written by John Allaire;  
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## ***THE SONGS***

### **ANGELS**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass  
Amanda Rheame – Vocals  
Anders Drerup – Slide guitar, Baritone guitar  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*“Angels’ was a little bit autobiographical and a little bit inspired by the great work my sister the social worker does. Amanda’s duet vocals are awesome!”*

Daddy said “Johnny, one day all this will be yours”  
Then Daddy got a girlfriend and ran away  
Momma put the house up for sale as soon as  
daddy left she said the place had no soul anyway.  
The only thing that saved it from the wrecking ball  
Was Johnny’s friend needing a place to stay  
Well Johnny was down and out he rang the bell he  
made the call  
But a finger pointed Johnny the other way

*And he said Hey Hey Hey  
There ain’t no Angels here today  
We’re just putting in time we’re just doing our job  
Keeping the world at bay  
There ain’t no higher call, there ain’t no heroes  
here  
You know we all collect our pay  
And in the evening, we wash it all away*

Well little Mary quite contrary said she had no  
home  
The Sally Ann was where she ate her meals  
She tried to help the others out,  
A hat some gloves a blanket  
Just to see how the other half feels

The first one on the totem pole  
Is the last one to burn  
Hey while the irony’s out can you press my shirts?  
We’ll all just fade away in turn

One day there ol’ Johnny he passed Mary on the  
street, he said “Hey girl your time has come  
To pass the hat the other way, take a chance and  
spin the wheel  
You know we all can’t be the chosen one”  
She said “Hey there Johnny, you know one day all  
this can be yours” as she pulled out her shopping  
cart. And a book that Johnny once read, well it  
done gone hit the ground and shot a nail right  
through his heart

### **BOURBON**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, harmonica  
Jeff Tanguay – Bass  
Anders Drerup – Pedal steel  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*“...just a story about things that were, are, and may be...”*

I hate this town for reasons that I’d rather not discuss  
in polite company  
And I hate this town but if you ask around  
The town folk would declare the mutuality  
Is that even a word?

*Yeah there’s nothing keeping me here, that much is  
true, ‘cept for the woman who pours my bourbon  
And you*

I hate that man as he shakes my hand just to feel the  
texture of my calluses  
Yeah I’m a working man, off the back of an open  
wagon, through the muck and the moats  
Up to those palaces, I never say a word

As I stand upon this bridge and I look down  
I can wave goodbye to the photographs as they  
drown

I love this town, specially when I’m 500 miles away  
If anyone asks, that’s my territory  
And I love that man, sometimes I pay a visit  
On the Kentucky blue down at the cemetery  
I never say a word

*Yeah there’s nothing keeping me here, that much is  
true, ‘cept for the woman who pours my bourbon  
If I never had another drink or had occasion to hear  
the ice rolling ‘round in my glass, I could do  
But not without you. I love this town.*

## KEEP THE RHYTHM

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass, harmonica  
Amanda Rheame – Vocals  
Anders Drerup – Banjo  
Tony Dunn – Piano  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*"...meant to be a saloon singalong...played this one a lot while touring in the Southern States..."*

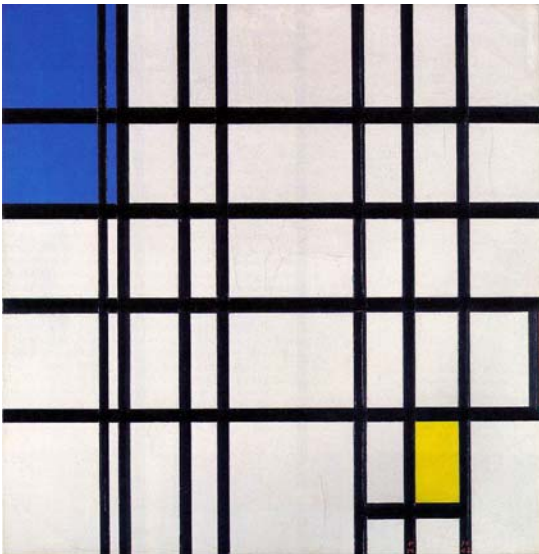
I got time, you got time, looks like we both got time  
I'll take the wheel if you take the map  
Cuz I don't know where the hell we're at  
We both know that I won't ask  
Look where it got us in the past  
So turn on the light and tell me where we are  
And pray to God we don't have to sleep in the car  
(again)

*Keep the rhythm, go on display it on that shelf  
But the time it took, you keep that to yourself  
Keep the rhythm,  
you know that you can tap your feet  
But you gotta feel my heart,  
so you can keep the beat*

Can we switch to the other side  
Cuz the motel lights are flickering in my eyes  
I appreciate it might make us late  
But I need that extra hour to decide, how we gonna..

All that time we spent just laughing in the rain  
Those birthday candles burn the wax into your veins

I got burned, and you got burned,  
Looks like we both got burned  
You keep a diary of all the stupid things I say  
But when the sun goes down  
You always seem to stay



## CORNERSTONE

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass, harmonica  
Amanda Rheame – Vocals  
Anders Drerup – Pedal Steel  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*"...a love story about being patient..."*

Like a stone at the bottom of a muddy river  
Hiding from the sun  
And the leaves changing colours as they start to quiver, trying to hang on  
I'm in a 3 dollar suit and a 100 dollar tie  
And a shirt with a mocha coffee stain  
Standing at the bus stop waiting for a ride  
And hair that's getting messed up by the rain,  
Hair that's getting mess up by the rain

*If my body was a castle and my arms the bridge  
My eyes they were the ports, my heart the throne  
I could build the kingdom walls 8 miles high  
Cuz you're my cornerstone*

On a clear day I can see beyond the meadow,  
Right to your front door  
As you take in the paper and survey the day  
Over top the moors  
If you ever get the money you'll fix that gate  
The one that keeps your dreams so close to home  
But for the moment you'll let them escape  
That way you're assured to be alone  
That way you're assured to be alone

Oh, rolling single wheels down old dirt roads  
Oh, the wheelbarrow's carrying quite a load

Scraping off the frost from your kitchen window  
The one that's blown its seal  
And the pictures drip with droplets from the steam of  
the kettle as you're making your oatmeal  
If I ever get the courage I'll remove that gate  
The ones that keep your dreams so close to home  
But for the moment I'll just sit and wait  
For you to get so tired of being alone  
To walk right through that archway on your own.



### **CHEST OF DRAWERS**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars  
Jeff Tanguay – Bass  
Tony Dunn – Organ, Sax  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*“...a place to hide stuff...”*

I watch the yellow line,  
Headlights don't even cross my mind  
A 747 and I'm feeling fine  
A flash of acid rain  
Tear down the walls build them up again  
I think I'll wait to call you up this time

*I find a chest of drawers to house the things you  
hold so dear  
But each reflection casts a shadow where the  
mirror isn't clear, and objects are closer than they  
appear*

I met a girl, of insurmountable patience  
She needed jumper cables to start her mind  
A performing arts school drop out  
Tried her hand at set design  
She wouldn't use the stage door  
She'd just stand in line

The music has started, it's time to go  
You don't need a ticket, you're in the show  
The curtain has lifted I see your face,  
The curtain has lifted

Again the yellow line, last night just crossed my  
mind  
A Greyhound bus and I'm feeling fine  
A simple compliment a nod a wink from a  
malcontent  
I think I'll wait to call you up next time.

### **MIDNIGHT BLUE AND GRAY**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass, vibraphone  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*“...lonely, I guess that's were I'm from... crap, did I steal that  
from Westerberg???”*

Woke up on a Sunday morn  
You're underneath the covers  
Got my brush to paint your face  
But I can't find my colours  
I can't find my colours anywhere.

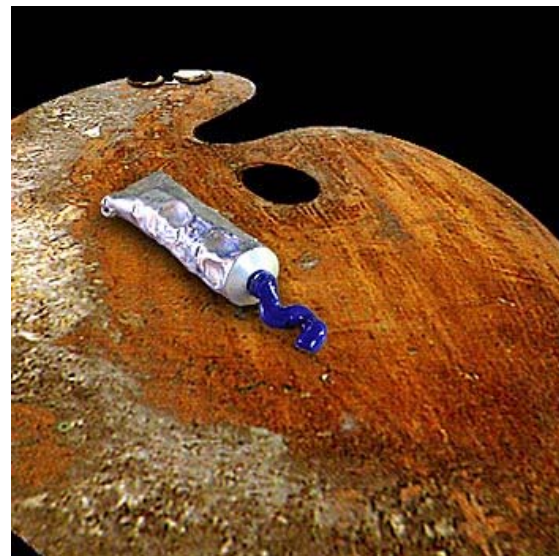
Best laid plans take a different shape when I'm  
Sitting in your kitchen  
Dingy walls need a coat of paint  
But I'd rather take the bitching  
I've come to that conclusion anyway.

*Cuz it's midnight blue and gray  
It's midnight blue and gray  
The only colours I've left upon my tray*

I guess I won't paint your face today

Asked the newsman on the street  
If he saw you leaving  
Read the note you left upstairs  
Well I guess that makes us even  
Your letter made good reading anyway.

Woke up on a Sunday morn  
Alone and on top of those covers  
Got my phone to call you up  
But I can't find your number  
I think you changed your number anyway.





## PORCH LIGHT

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, harmonica, strings  
Michael Hicks – Announcer voice

*"Inspired by the memory of two brutal and horrible murders in Ottawa over the last couple of years. As a parent of two daughters, these murders really hit home. RIP Ardeth and Jennifer."*

You took that job because you needed the money  
You took that job so you could pay the bank  
You took the bus each day  
Sometimes they'd make you stay  
In that uniform that never fit you right  
Never once I heard you complain  
The customers all loved you when they came  
On that eve I felt a chill  
As the clock was standing still  
And I did not hear your footsteps in the rain

*Mother and I will leave the porch light on for you  
We know that you'll be coming home again  
And in case you've lost your key  
We'll lift the latch you'll see  
At least that's what the police recommend*

I watch enough TV to know that this is not good news  
5 days gone by we haven't heard a word.  
Did you just leave with your friends  
Just call, we'll make amends  
We're sorry if we seemed to blow a fuse

How long has that light been out  
I never noticed it before

You took that job because you needed the money  
You took that job so you could pay the bank  
You took the bus each day  
Sometimes they'd make you stay  
In that uniform that never fit you right  
The hat's too big the jacket was too tight  
Just call us if you're staying out all night



## AVENUE D

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass, congas  
Amanda Rheume – Vocals  
Elmer Ferrer – Guitars  
Tony Dunn – Sax  
Dookie – Drums

*"About touring in Manhattan... Elmer and Tony are awesome in this one."*

Driving through Manhattan about 5<sup>th</sup> and 43  
Fumes got me dizzy from the Lincoln Tunnel  
Passing cabs in NYC  
Taking a right on the FDR yeah  
I'm sinking in my seat  
By the time I got to Tompkins Square yeah  
My fingers were starting to bleed

*Oh, drop anchor and take to the street  
With a backpack on a 2 guitars  
We stop to survey the scene  
We're stuck on Avenue D  
No place for a Canadian boy to be  
We're stuck on Avenue D  
I can see the river but I hope it don't see me*

Now I'm not one to worry too much you know  
I like to roll the dice  
I told the man that the tinted windows  
On his SUV were nice  
He looked at me and furrowed his brow  
Like he didn't hear what I said  
Then he got back in and he drove away  
Even though the light was red

Each step that I took made me feel like I was walking  
a line  
When the sun went down I said  
"Take me back to anyplace north of 49"  
I ducked into an empty bar  
And the bartender set me straight  
He said "A to C is OK by me  
But further east ain't no pearly gate" oh lord!

## **ROCK 'N ROLL**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, harmonica

*"...I do spend a fair amount of time on the road..."*

Wear a different sweater  
That one bears the scent of a steel town  
We left behind us last December  
Pick a different colour  
Last time you wore red it was Summer but you had  
Changed your mind by September  
Said goodbye to your father  
Was it just in my mind or was he  
Happy to see the vanishing glow of my tail lights  
Round the corner  
Drove for 300 miles before remembering  
I had left my favourite jacket hanging on a nail  
In your corridor

*Daylight's breaking but I still can't see  
The fog is lifting on old Route 3  
My radio's broke and the tape deck's old  
And I just want to hear some rock n roll  
I just want to hear some rock n roll*

Please don't wear that necklace that I gave you  
When we went to see that concert in the bandshell  
by the river  
And just don't go to Memphis oh no no  
That's where we bought that velvet Elvis  
You still have hanging in your bedroom

Please don't play that record by that guy we saw  
In that club with the funny name over on that street  
I can never remember  
And just don't park your car beside the canal  
Near the drawbridge where we sat and watched  
the workers split the timber.



## **BLUE SKIES**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, harmonica  
Hilary Allaire – Vocals  
Elmer Ferrer – Guitars  
Jeff Tanguay – Bass  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*"A heartfelt duet with my 13-year-old daughter about the passing of my mother."*

Blue skies on an April morn  
It was the last time I saw you  
And even though there were no clouds in the sky  
I had lost my way it's true  
Blue skies and your smiling face  
It has left a trace of love  
And goodbyes are so unfulfilled  
I can see you in the mourning doves

*And these are the words I write as I think of the days  
That you would watch me play  
At the side of the road  
And if I can find a way, I will play for you again  
But it's not time for me to play that show*

Blue skies, if I close my eyes  
I can feel like I'm 10 years old  
And time flies, as your angels grow  
They will always know of you

## **I NEED YOU**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars  
Elmer Ferrer – Guitars  
Tony Dunn – Piano  
Jeff Tanguay – Bass  
Justin Mellor – Cello, viola  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*"I don't usually do 'epic' songs, but the opportunity arose in the studio to really let the talent in the room shine..."*

I need you  
Is this a bad time for me to come out and say  
Never leave you  
Though you turn around and walk the other way  
The discomfort that I feel when you're in the room  
You tease me  
The message never gets to me too soon  
I need you  
Your elusiveness that always takes me back  
My hands shake  
The uncertainty is something I don't lack

*Did it slip your mind that I was waiting here for you  
I'll accept your apology when it comes from you*

I need you  
Even though you make me look the other way  
My hands shake  
When you undress and the curtains start to sway  
Believe me  
When I say that I will never let you down  
You tease me  
Are those the roses that I sent you on the ground

I need you  
Through all the haze and all the pale blue light  
You tease me  
Your dressing room door is still locked tight  
My hands shake  
With the thought of someone else behind the door  
Believe me  
When I say I don't know who I'm waiting for.

## **ON THE HILL**

John Allaire – Vocals, guitars, bass  
Anders Drerup – Banjo  
Elmer Ferrer – Guitars  
Tony Dunn – Piano  
Jeff Tanguay – Bass  
Kevin Breeze Smith – Drums

*"Kinda like getting thrown out of a motel room... naked...."*

I left your ass up on that hill  
In the tall grass while you were drinking swill  
You were talking on your cell phone you were spitting  
on my car  
So I left your ass, and I drove far

Well you kicked my dog and you drank my wine  
You broke into my piggy bank, you swine  
You made out with my best friend and you broke my  
heart at will  
So I left your ass up on that hill

Any man in uniform sure would turn your head  
You made it with those service men while I was  
baking bread  
Policeman and the fireman came  
Knockin' on the door  
When the paramedics left  
Well you were lying on the floor

So I left your ass up on that hill  
In the tall grass while you were drinking swill  
You were talking on your cell phone you were spitting  
on my car  
So I left your ass, and I drove far

