



ANCESTOR

A Sunsetters EP by Blind Man's Book

(Lindsay Taylor and Jordan Dooling)

v4

Ancestor is an EP. That means it is a release of music that is not long enough, or at least not considered *prominent* enough, to sustain a full album (an LP). This one, at over 30 minutes, blurs the line a little, as it is in fact longer than many real LPs, but we've always considered it an EP and that's the way it's staying.

The concept for this record is twofold, there's an Inside and an Outside. Inside the music, the lyrics explore a scene in the life of Chiyu, leader of the Nine Li tribe in Chinese mythology. Outside the music, in the universe where the [Sunsetters](#) are a real rock band, this is a disc directed by rhythm guitarist Remy Larson, his triumphant return to the band after a brief and strange hiatus. Before this EP was the Sunsetters' fourth album, [No Entry](#), featuring Sally Death in place of Remy. Where he went during that time is an unceremonious question with a mysterious answer. You might be able to find something about it on the Sunsetters website (linked above) if you look for it. Regardless, he's back now, and on his return his bandmates had missed him and proposed to make one of his more ambitious ideas a reality, so they produced *Ancestor*, a plodding slow grand metal EP.

The actual, like, trivia factoid of *why* this music was made is [Nine is God](#). That was an ARG that Jordan ran for the Fear Mythos for a while. He wanted to release some music that somehow tied into the game, and this resulted in some easter eggs related to the number 9 within the music. The original release (which was, compositionally, quite different than what you have in front of you now) was accompanied with a mysterious code that led to two rewards– a secret remix of “Prelude,” and a little RPG Maker game. We have elected not to include those in this release. You're not missing much, but if you're really interested, it is not impossible to locate the original *Ancestor*. It will require some old-fashioned Internet Digging, but that's keeping with the spirit of the ARG. Anyway, the point is this EP came from a spontaneous idea. In service of that, Jordan asked Lindsay for any loose musical pieces they didn't want to do anything with and got the three core songs, which he then edited together.

We first wrote this nearly a decade ago, releasing it in February 2016, shortly after finishing the first Sunsetters album [The Mythology of Empathy](#). Starting in 2020, we began revising and polishing all the Sunsetters albums, finally finishing that process in 2025. It was always our intention to eventually revisit *Ancestor*, particularly when we reached the point in the Sunsetters “story” into which it fits, and now we've finally done so. It should be a lot better now. Please enjoy.

PRELUDE

(composition by Lindsay)

Lindsay: I mentioned in the commentary of *We Excavate*, since the title track borrows a lot from this piece, and probably also in the commentary for the old version of *Mythology* wherein *Ancestor* appeared as a bonus track, that this song was originally an improvisational expression of grief over the death of a longtime pet that I played the night of and then wrote down at some point in the days following. As far as I can tell, it appears here almost, if not entirely, unedited from that original transcription.

It's certainly been long enough that I'm able to look at it from a more objective standpoint. It's definitely rough; some of the transitions between sections are kinda sloppy, and I think it probably goes on for a bit too long, but I paradoxically think that all of the aforementioned flaws make it Better, make it so that the listener can Tell that there's emotion and feeling and pain in it, both in service of the narrative of the EP and as an expression of the writer.

All in all, it holds a special place in my heart, for better or worse, and it works in context, so I have no gripes about its inclusion.

BY DAY...

(composition by Jordan, playing with a bass lick by Lindsay)

Jordan: So *Ancestor* used to be quite different. I was happy with its constituent parts, but its large-scale structure always left me wanting more. For this 2025 release, I elected (quite spontaneously, I might add) to dig into the thing, roll my sleeves up, and change some things around. I got rid of the bookending movements, moved track 3 to track 1, completely rewrote track 4 from scratch (now track 5), and arranged some new transitional pieces. “By Day...” is one of those. It’s based on a bassline that originally bookended “The Fog,” and in fact functionally these transitions are *still* those bookends, but they stretch out longer now, they serve the larger purpose of giving a skeleton to *Ancestor* as a whole.

“By Day...” is a plodding thing. The onus of the piece, emotionally, is actually “Prelude.” Putting “Prelude” at the start is a new change, after all, and I spent a few hours one day just *listening* to “Prelude” as the beginning of a long composition, feeling what that *brought* to me as a Listener. It brought anticipation, anxiety, impatience– “Prelude” is a slow six minutes focused entirely on one sound, and if when it ended we were treated then to *even slower* and *repetitive* bass, that... that produced an effect on me, an effect I wanted to cling to and explore. It’s *pure* anticipation. We want to see where this goes, and we want it to build *to* something, and we kinda want that to happen *right now*, but the music keeps us waiting, keeps pulling us along slowly. There are other midi pieces in the works, mainly for the other band Coestts, which explore a similar slow plodding large-scale structure, because it’s something I’ve always wanted to execute with some skill. “By Day...” is my attempt to do that with the Sunsetters.

I had considered having this be more of a *song*, with other instruments playing along and even harmonizing, developing the repetitive bassline, but *Ancestor* does have a deliberate pace to it. “By Day...” is here to raise your anticipation. The next song gives *some* release but is still ultimately *very slow*. This is purposeful.

THE FOG

(composition and lyrics by Lindsay, with Jordan's touches)

Lindsay: This was one of my earliest attempts at writing something in the vein of doom metal, which, if you're unaware, is primarily known for being downtempo music with a notable sense of despair or sadness or whatever. I just kinda wrote it one day, don't really remember why I did. I wouldn't call it the best thing I've ever written, but I've always had a soft spot for it nonetheless.

In terms of lyrical concept, this one draws from Chinese mythology, specifically the war between Chiyou and the Yellow Emperor, wherein Chiyou conjured a thick fog over northern China, with the Yellow Emperor creating a chariot that always points south as a countermeasure to allow for his forces a more even fight, eventually leading to Chiyou's defeat at the hands of the Yellow Emperor, who would then go on to rule over all of Huaxia, the confederation of tribes living along the Yellow River who are said to be the ancestors of the Han ethnic group who comprise the vast majority of Chinese people today.

I remember, originally, this song was called 'the Nemesis Moon' as a Lovecraft reference and the lyrics were more along the lines of Vaguely Occult. I don't think the original lyric has survived, and it probably wasn't even that good anyway, seeing as how I wrote it when I was eighteen and didn't really know how to write lyrics all that well, but I know at the time I thought they were real cool. None of this is relevant; I just thought it was a Fun Fact worth sharing, or something.

Jordan: For years I didn't touch this song much. Ultimately I handled the guitar solos, and I've also been tinkering for years on fleshing out the rhythm section without interfering with the core composition. This song sounds very good with the Sally Death guitar in it, but it made little sense to keep that sound this time, as the context of this EP has changed. Besides, *Ancestor* is Remy's baby. It needs his guitar. This may actually be one of my favorite Sunsetters pieces; I can most easily listen to it.

BY NIGHT...

(composition by Jordan, playing with a bass lick by Lindsay)

Jordan: This is the other transitional piece, developing what was originally an outro to “The Fog.” Like “By Day...” the emotional onus here was teasing the listener’s anticipation, while also this time explicitly building and *building and building* intensity to take us into the final song. *Ancestor* was, in fact, going somewhere this whole time.

So “By Night...” is super basic. The next song begins on an E, and the “Fog” outro bassline is Bb and A, so guitars over the bassline start at A (or maybe Ab, actually) and slowly raise in pitch until we hit that E. The juxtaposition of the raising guitars over the repetitive bass feels effective to me, simple but effective. This is a whole specific metal mood.

It’s going somewhere. That’s this piece. It’s going somewhere.

THE DROUGHT

(composition by Jordan, based on some riffs by Lindsay)

Jordan: This used to be a song called “Deep Cuts.” That song was a heavy metal surgical strike pieced together out of riffs that had been cut from *Summer Sucks*. Frankly, I was fond of “Deep Cuts,” and the song had taught me a lot about the work ethic of song editing, was a necessary stepping-stone to me becoming the Sunsetters director I am today. Up until literally 2024, “Deep Cuts” was still what *Ancestor* built to. But in 2025, when I took a serious look at *Ancestor*’s large-scale structure, I had to accept that “Deep Cuts” was a messy patchwork with *cool ideas* but that could not hold its own weight. I did try editing it, rather intensively in fact, but that just was not going anywhere. So I ditched it outright, taking *a couple* of its ideas and building something new instead, something that would meet the intensity required by the new *Ancestor*’s structure.

“The Drought” is what I came up with. Its primary mode is a downbeat quarter-note chugfest with bouncing drums and a bassline that’s *based on* a “Deep Cuts” riff. This produces a controlled medley effect rather than a bunch-of-sections-stitched-together effect. Even with this somewhat-dance-song drumbeat, the chords employed give “The Drought” a vibe of crushing finality, a metal mood I find addictive. Pieced throughout are similar riffs (all *based on* “Deep Cuts” riffs) which, here, function as variation. There are also sparse vocals, with repetitive lyrics citing *Ancestor*’s song titles. The real focus of “The Drought” is not vocals, nor melody, but chord and rhythm.

“Deep Cuts” did have some cool reprisals of “The Fog” and of “Prelude,” and I wanted to keep those around, but the “Fog” reprise has instead been made less overt. The vocals execute the reprise while the instruments continue the motifs of “The Drought.” The “Prelude” reprise remains, though I was able to give it some much-needed elaboration in its drums. Towards the end we have a cool little breakdown, where the repetitive vocals finally reach their purpose. Originally that section was played straight, a lot of repetitive instruments for a lot longer period of time, but as “The Drought” called for bouncier rhythms, I think I found a sweet balance where I could still keep the breakdown effect but without losing the momentum of the song.

What else to say here. Uh. I definitely didn’t begin the big Sunsetters 2025 revamps *expecting* or even *wanting* to rewrite a significant chunk of *Ancestor*. I’m really glad I did, though. “The Drought” is a whole new song now, a whole new Sunsetters song in 2025, transitioning us towards a much more elaborate (and strange metal) style that we can expect from the mysterious fifth album. It also gives some sweet headbanging release after a whole EP of slow anticipation. I think it is the finale *Ancestor* deserves.

Sunsetters are:

Elsie Carr

Lead Vocals, Keys

Ganymede “Degan” Allen

Guitars

Remy Larson

Guitars, Lyrics, Composition, Art

Paul Blackwood

Bass, General Vocals

Fin Jensby

Drums

Blind Man’s Book are:

Jordan Dooling

*Arrangement, Composition, Lyrics, Editing,
Production, Design, Visual Art*

Lindsay Taylor

Arrangement, Composition, Lyrics

Shreddage

“Sally Death” guitar sound

& Knuckles

All Instruments

Special thanks from Lindsay to:

Muscores versions 2 and 3 for being great and also free Muscores version 4 for existing now and developing into something even better than the preceding versions, all the bands/singers I like for doing good work, the Fear Mythos for still existing and creating cool content and being generally cool people. And our fans; it feels pretty good after all these years to know there’s more than one of you out there. And Jordan, for doing what you do best and making cool prog.

And everyone who listen to the album. We hope you have enjoyed listening, and that you continue to do so.

Special thanks from Jordan to:

Muscores versions 2 and 3 were used in the decade of this piece’s production.

Audacity was used for additional sound editing.

Wind and Waves SFX by pixabay.

This album was originally made in connection with the Fear Mythos ARG *Nine is God*, and I’d like to thank those who collaborated with me for that, as well as those who were players in the game.

The album art is rooted in a photograph my father took of Mevagissey harbour. Thank you to Cornwall for being beautiful, and thank you to dad for being a pretty good photographer.

(I took the photo of the houses on the hill.)

And thank you to Lindsay. This album is very much your work.

See you next album!

