

## Epitaph by King Crimson

Written by bluesever  
Monday, 26 October 2015 15:19 -

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*"And nothing can we call our own but death And that small model of the barren earth Which serves as paste and cover to our bones. For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground And tell sad stories of the death of kings." - William Shakespeare, King Richard II*

## Epitaph

**The In the Court of the Crimson King** album is generally viewed as one of the first works to truly embody the progressive rock genre, where King Crimson largely departed from the blues influences that rock music had been founded upon and mixed together jazz and classical symphonic elements.

**Epitaph** is a microcosm of the album. Like the album, Epitaph travels through time, though the album travels in one direction (future to past), while the song travels in the other direction (past to future). This is one way in which Epitaph is a reflection of the album as a whole. Beginning in the past tense, by referring to the walls on which the prophets wrote, Epitaph continues in the present tense, and concludes in the future tense with *"I fear tomorrow I'll be crying"*.



## In the Court of the Crimson King

The song music written by King Crimson (**Ian McDonald, Greg Lake, Michael Giles, Robert**

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### Fripp

) but lyrics written by **Peter Sinfield**. Sinfield, poet and songwriter, sometimes wrote visionary lyrics that at the end of the '60s were common in bands like King Crimson who were doing progressive rock. LSD was trendy and many songwriters went through it, some more than others. Sinfield is apocalyptic in his writings, just like many other artists who were also seeing gurus. People had a deep curiosity and the mind had just been discovered and marketed:

*"The only way out is inside"*

said Timothy Leary. Vietnam was still on, there was an inner war in society, a big generation gap. Fear was in the air sometimes too. So take mind-expanding drugs, the growing power of the media, revolved and curious minds, gurus talking about how bad our society was doing, etc. and it reflects on many lyricist works, Sinfield as well.



### King Crimson, 1969

**Ian McDonald, Michael Giles, Peter Sinfield, Greg Lake, Robert Fripp**

This song title as well as the lyrics of this song refer to the message that is displayed on a gravestone. In this song, the singer is facing a struggle and fears that his epitaph will be *"confusion."*

Greg Lake, explained:

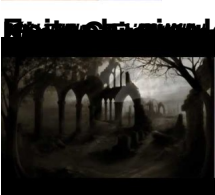
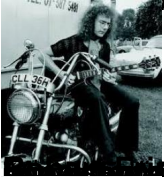
*"'Epitaph' is basically a song about looking with confusion upon a world gone mad. King Crimson had a strange ability to write about the future in an extremely prophetic way and the messages this song contains are even more relative today than they were when the song was originally written."*

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