

“The ones that need me got me
The ones that doubt me can’t stop me
Even the ones who said “forget him”
you bet they ain’t forgot me
You either wanna hit me or hold me
Those who hate me don’t know me
The ones that don’t trust anybody, trust me
The ones who like me love me...”

Brantley Gilbert
The Devil Don't Sleep

Brantley Gilbert lives in Jefferson, Georgia rather than – like so many country stars -- Nashville. It’s not that he’s not serious about his music, or his career, but somethings run deeper. Or as he sings in “Grown Ass Man” from his platinum *Just As I Am*, “I got a home.” That home is rich with life, truth, friends, history – and those are the raw materials that have made Gilbert one of only four country artists with back-to-back platinum certified albums.

For Gilbert, who won the 2014 American Music Award for Favorite Country Album for *Just As I Am*, every album is another chapter in the life the unrepentant good ole boy has led. Whether it’s raising hell, standing tall or bottoming out, Gilbert’s truth speaks to the heart of blue collar life in the 21st century: hard working, fun loving and deeply committed to the people he loves.

With *The Devil Don't Sleep*, the songwriter/rocker delivers sixteen songs that consider life after letting go of the bottle. But this is not a sober record: it takes on love, getting the girl back, finding the thrill in the moment, standing up for those you love and remaining vigilant in a world filled with temptations and bad deals.

“Every love song I’ve ever written,” the man nominated for the CMA Song of the Year for Jason Aldean’s “Dirt Road Anthem” admits shyly, “has been about my wife. Meeting her, loving her, losing her – and getting her back. Life takes you a lot of places, but how I felt about Amber never really changed.

“The rest of the album are songs from my life. ‘Bro Code’ isn’t what you think. It’s putting a guy on notice about how he’s treating his girlfriend – and ‘Bullet In A Bonfire’ tells an abusive old boyfriend how it’s gonna be. To me, that’s what it means to be a man: stand up for the people who need it, especially women.”

Again working with Dann Huff (Keith Urban), the slow burn electric guitars, crashing drums and acoustic flourishes define the heavy country fused with hard rock edge of Gilbert’s musical attack. Not for the faint of heart or the hardcore traditionalists, these songs are the anthems of the BG Nation, a fan-base so devoted they braved the worst of winter to make last year’s Blackout Tour of arenas across the heartland standing room only and his summer Take It Outside shed tour sold out all the way through two packed night’s at Denver’s iconic Red Rocks.

With the worked hard for it lead single “The Weekend” and *The Madden NFL 17* track “It’s About To Get Dirty,” Gilbert continues his full-throttle take on letting off steam. That velocity continues in the title track, “Bullet In A Bonfire” and the forewarning “Tried To Tell Ya.” All the high impact you’d expect from the man who’s run with bikers, almost died and come back stronger than ever.

There’s a sexiness present, too. From the silky ballad “Baby Be Crazy,” where Gilbert recognizes the power of a woman to pull him back, the creeping realization that she’s “In My Head,” the hip-switching funk of “You Could Be That Girl” and the slow groove return to the one you first loved “Way Back,” Gilbert shows a romantic streak that suggests how deep his passions truly run.

There’s a more thoughtful undercurrent on *The Devil Don’t Sleep* as well, songs that have less bombast and more room to think. “We’re Gonna Ride Again” is an elegy for one who’s gone, the pensive truth-taking “Outlaw In Me” considers who he is and the stark salvation ballad “Three Feet of Water,” a simple piano part and a more reserved vocal deliver a mortal man to redemption.

“Forgiveness is a matter of choice and surrender,” says the preacher’s son. “It’s a promise we’re all given, but we have to make the decision. Then we have to work hard and remember why we put here.”

Part of why Gilbert was put here is to serve as a talisman for his fans. Singing for the unrepresented, the unheard and the unseen, he gives voice to the heart of America. It’s simple truths, the kind of basic common sense and grace that gets lost in the talking heads, the cognoscenti and the powerbrokers who forget this country runs on real people doing actual jobs and not worrying about how they’re seen.

For Gilbert, who’s done USO Tours, put together and headlined a benefit show for 80,000 on the river bank in Chattanooga after a sniper killed 5 servicemen at a recruiting facility, met with countless Make-A-Wish kids and wrote the #1 “One Hell of an Amen” to celebrate a life lost after a hard fight to cancer and a pair of friends – one who died in the other’s arms – in the Middle East, it’s how we hold each other up that matters. It’s also what made *The Devil Don’t Sleep* take so long – and be so large.

“I don’t make fast albums: I have to live my life, let it sink in and then write the songs,” he explains. “For me, I don’t rush the music. I want it to be right. But then I also want to give the fans as much music as they deserve. To me, this is a conversation – and these songs are catching them up, telling them about what’s happened since *Just As I Am*.”

“There’s been a whole lot of good. There’s been some time to think. And there’s also been a whole lot of real. Knowing you can get to a good place is one thing, staying here is another. That’s why this record is called *The Devil Don’t Sleep*: he doesn’t, and you’ve always gotta be aware. You don’t have to live in fear, just know and pay attention.”