

# SEVENDUST

Sevendust never follow a linear path. Instead, they continue to bulldoze a lane of their own with a proven one-two punch of rumbling grooves, unpredictable riffing, and stirringly soulful vocals unlike anything else in hard rock. As a result, their music connects straight to the heart as evidenced by their full-contact live shows and diehard “family” of fans. It’s why they’ve been around since 1994, tallied global sales of seven million, logged three gold-selling albums, delivered three Top 15 debuts on the *Billboard* 200, and garnered a GRAMMY® Award nomination in the category of “Best Metal Performance.” They’re the rare force of nature who not only graced the bills of *Woodstock* and *OZZfest*, but also *Shiprocked!* and *Sonic Temple* and some of the largest stages around the globe. Along the way, they’ve notably collaborated with everyone from members of Deftones, Daughtry, and Staind to Alter Bridge, Periphery, and Xzibit. 2020 saw them deliver one of the most-acclaimed albums of their career with *Blood & Stone*, which *Metal Hammer* christened “Sevendust’s best work in years” and *Outburn* dubbed “everything a Sevendust fan could want.”

However, the Atlanta quintet—Lajon Witherspoon [lead vocals], Clint Lowery [lead guitar, backing vocals], John Connolly [rhythm guitar, backing vocals], Vince Hornsby [bass], and Morgan Rose [drums]—defy expectations yet again on their fourteenth full-length and debut for Napalm Records, *Truth Killer*.

“We really cared about the process,” notes Clint. “It’s never a straight line with Sevendust. We’ve always made left turns and dip into super heavy and very melodic sounds. We still try to do things a little differently. I think we recreated the magic on this one, and we overcommitted to making sure every song was great.”

In order to do so, the guys regrouped as friends first. Initially, they decamped to Lajon’s farmhouse. Over the course of four days in 2022, they demoed out the bulk of the record, rekindling the spark that defined their seminal output.

“We wanted to be friends again, shoot the shit, and become that garage band we were,” Clint goes on. “It set the tone for our relationship, and the creativity opened up. We got back together and made another fun record.”

Once again, they recorded in Florida with producer Michael “Elvis” Baskette [Alter Bridge, Mammoth, Trivium]. This time around, they expanded the soundscape, incorporating programming by Clint and adding cinematic heft to their signature style.

“We took our time on this record,” he goes on. “We pulled in a lot of electronic elements. In the past, I hired outside programmers, but I did the programming myself. I tried to create a musical bed that made it easy to sing cool vocal parts. We always set a goal to have a certain sound, and we followed through with it. We didn’t compromise.”

As such, the album opens with perhaps the biggest departure, the slow-burning “I Might Let The Devil Win.” Piano pierces glitchy beat-craft as Lajon’s delivery borders on magnetic and manic as he confesses, “I want to give in, oh no, the devil won’t win.”

If Trent Reznor produced The Weeknd, it might sound something like this...

“When we agreed on the song, we realized we could do anything,” says Clint. “The vocal is really upfront and in your face. It seems like he’s whispering the lyrics in your ear. You keep resisting temptations, but finally you’re like, *‘It’s just who I am. I’m going to do it.’*”

On the other end of the spectrum, the first single and finale “Fence” goes right for the jugular with pummeling drums, a chugging riff, and guttural barks from Lajon. It crashes right into a hammering hook before spiraling into an incendiary solo.

“It has the old school Sevendust vibes,” he smiles. “It was really a product of collaboration at the farmhouse. Morgan was playing, and we all started jamming in the same room. I’m so glad we got a chance to do a headhunter like *‘Fence’* for this album.”

The title track “Truth Killer” fuses searing orchestration with a rush of distortion and powerhouse refrain.

“Nobody wants to hear the real truth,” laments Clint. “They want things sugarcoated and watered-down, so they can feel better. It definitely spoke to the overall tone of the subject matter.”

Then, there’s “Everything.” A jarring guitar melody underlines an affirmation on the catastrophically catchy chorus. “You’re basically saying, *‘I’ll be anything you need me to be, and I’ll be there for you in every way possible’*,” he elaborates.

As if baptized in frustration, “Holy Water” snakes through an off-kilter bounce over incisive synths towards a massive chant, *“Someday I’ll see the light. I hope before I die.”*

“None of us are perfect, so there’s no reason to judge,” Clint observes. “We’re all trying to figure it out, but a lot of people will sling their holy water at you and act like they’re better than everyone. I have a definite belief and relationship with God, but I’m not here to make anyone believe anything.”

“Superficial Drug” intoxicates with a sinewy bass line and head-nodding groove as one of the record’s most melodic moments takes hold.

“Everyone needs the *‘follows’* and *‘likes’*,” he continues. “The social media world is very superficial for the most part. It’s part of the design, and I’m guilty of it too. So, the song says, *‘Go ahead and take your superficial drug. I’m over it’*. I want to be around people where there’s depth to the conversations. We have enough friends. We would die for our fans and the Sevendust family. That’s all we need.”

In the end, *Truth Killer* reaffirms there’s only one Sevendust—and they’re here forever.

“As a kid who used to wait in lines to see concerts, I want to deliver the artistic quality I was looking for as a fan,” Clint leaves off. “I want people to know we cared, took some chances, and still have the creative spark. I want them to know we have more to say and more to prove.”