

# Alice in Chains Hitting the Grunge Wave

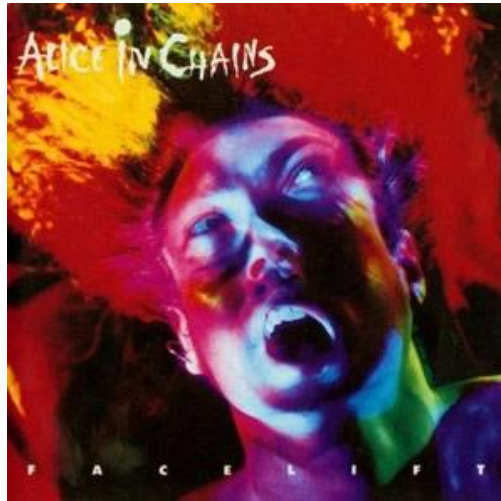
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## Introduction

This influential band needs no introduction (But I will give one cause why not.) Alice in Chains a Grunge band formed in 1987 the members consisted of Layne Staley (1967-2002) the lead Vocalist, who written most of the lyrics alongside Cantrell, Mike Starr Bassist, (1996-2011), Jerry Cantrell, Lead Guitarist and founder of Alice in Chains and, Sean Kinney Drummer (Co-founder). Even Mr. Cain (A Spectrum English Teacher for those random people stalking this website) went to one of their concerts and attempted to evade the mosh pit, yet he didn't quite prevail.

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## Facelift

Then you got hit (That's a We Die Young reference you Karens) by a chart topper. Facelift Was released in 1990 just three years after the band had formed and everyone's ears exploded. Alice in Chains Facelift, their first and their most powerful album yet. It was the first Grunge album to hit top 50 on the Billboard of 200 hitting at No. 42 As well it sold over 2 million copies. Fun fact: The person on the cover of the album is the bassist Mike Starr. Eventhough Facelift wasn't a success at first only selling about 400,000 copies it finally became popular and Grunge wasn't 'dead' alongside Nevermind the grunge wave began. Not to mention, Ozzy Osbourne said it was one of his favorite top 10 metal albums to listen to. Their main hits of Facelift were; "Man in the Box", "Would?" "I Stay Away". The Facelift cover is something else you wouldn't find on a different album. It's actually all of the band members' facial features morphed onto Mike Starr's face, created by the artist Rocky Schenck (put link!).

### Songs:

(Here's all the songs listed with the duration.)

*We Die Young* 2:32

*Man in the Box* 4:46

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*Sea of Sorrow 5:49*

*Bleed the Freak 4:01*

*I Can't Remember 3:42*

*Love, Hate, Love 6:27*

*It Ain't Like That 4:37*

*Sunshine 4:44*

*Put You Down 3:16*

*Confusion 5:44*

*I Know Something (Bout You) 4:21*

*Real Thing 4:03*

1.) "Man in the Box":




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Starting off with the song that made Alice in Chains who they are, the opening was the imperfect, perfect grunge tune. Reaching No.18 on the billboard, with it being the "second most-played song of the decade on mainstream rock radio with 142,000 spins." It even reached No.19 on VH1's "40 Greatest Metal Song". *Man in the Box*. Speculation of the song varies yet, while people say that the lyrics are Layne's prayers. Yet the true meaning behind the song is about Layne comparing himself to an animal, who lives inside a box and will never break free unless he dies. The lyric "I'm the man in the box buried in my shit -" The box is also symbolic of his heavy drug addiction he battles with, to be short. This covers being trapped in a box and only being fed with what you know and how all people just live and die. This is a typical song for Alice in Chains, hard-hitting dark lyrics that are quite hard to analyze. Yet we still enjoy their creativity as they ...

(Here's an Interview with Jerry Cantrell about the song)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5JowwfAVLw>

⇨ Song:  Alice In Chains - Man in the Box (Official Video)

<https://genius.com/Alice-in-chains-man-in-the-box-lyrics> (Lyrics)

## 2.) "We Die Young":


The songs just keep on getting better for Alice in Chains ' 'Facelift', "We Die Young" took some inspiration from Black Sabbath, especially Tony Iommi guitar style. The opening of the song is where you will get the most chills from, with Layne's sinister groan coming in to give you a bit of a goosebumps.

"I'd just temporarily moved in with Susan Silver because Sean [Kinney] and I had just had a fight. So I was riding the bus to rehearsal and I saw all these 9, 10, 11 year old kids with beepers dealing drugs. The sight of a 10 year old kid with a beeper and a

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cell phone dealing drugs equaled "We Die Young" to me."" From the linear notes of the Music Bank box set (Written by Cantrell)

"*We Die Young*" covers the gang violence in Seattle, especially where tweens are now involved with gangs and smuggling drugs. Most Tweenagers die due to the gangs, which is where Jerry Cantrell got most of his inspiration from. It covers the death of young children hence the title name 'We Die Young'.

⇒ Song:  Alice In Chains - We Die Young (Official HD Video)

<https://genius.com/Alice-in-chains-we-die-young-lyrics> (Lyrics)

### 3.) "Love Hate Love":

This song is the longest track in the album, about 6 minutes long probey the longest song I had ever listened to. 'Love Hate Love' has shed light on Layne's life as his lyrics express a heartbreak. The lyrics cover a man finding out his partner is cheating and dealing with such a tragic heartbreak (Can't relate). The line "Sweet Angel you should have run." Yet the lyrics aren't that shallow as it seems, even in this line Layne has raging anger towards his ex, although he still feels pity for her instead of resorting to violence. "Innocence creates my hell" (My fave line) this displays Layne blindly walking into this so-called relationship just to cheat on even if he thought his girlfriend wouldn't be loyal to him. Adding on, the line "I want to peel the skin from your face." This covers the ex, fakeness where Layne is experiencing a toxic relationship. Even Layne talks about himself being abusive to his ex in the song. The song is seen in the 2nd person point of view while the whole premise of the song is Layne talking to her about their relationship before he actually kills her. Apparently the man is supposed to be a sociopath (That's not fun). Yeah I know that's a lot to unpack here it feels like I'm just scratching the surface. Layne's vocals here in this song is probably the best in the entire album.

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⇒ Song: [Alice In Chains - Love, Hate, Love \(Song\)](#)

<https://genius.com/10308317> (Lyrics)

4.) "Bleed the Freak":



My #1 song by Alice in Chains, followed by "The Devil Puts Dinosaurs Here ",

"The song is us against the world, those people who a put you down: "I put up with many years of you putting us down and watching us bleed, now I'd like to see you bleed some back."" (From the Music Bank Liner Notes by Jerry Cantrell)

The song mainly revolves around the idea of religion, with Biblical and Satanic references in the song. For example "Satan got your thigh." Also "Name your god" declaring your belfies there are many more references to uncover. The song is not too keen on religion yet, the dark side of it and exploiting the media from it. The song as a whole with religion is perceived as a metaphor for others not bonding while everyone is pointing fingers at one another and using scapegoats all the time. Additionally, someone would blame their problem on "Satan" for being a bad omen, instead of being independent and taking the responsibility for themselves.

⇒ Song: [Alice In Chains - Bleed The Freak \(Official HD Video\)](#)

<https://genius.com/Alice-in-chains-bleed-the-freak-lyrics> (Lyrics)

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## Recording:

Alongside producer Dave Jedren the band recorded *Facelift* in *London Bridge Studio*. Even Sean was drumming with his broken hand but he didn't want to miss the band's "first big break". 'We Die Young' is the first gateway open to the world of Grunge and Alice in Chains. In fact the first demo for the album was named *The Treehouse Tapes*, and soon made its way to managers;

And Man in the Box received its first grammy for Hard Rock alongside Hollywood"" Steve Huey of AllMusic citing *Facelift* as "one of the most important records in establishing an audience for grunge and alternative rock among hard rock and heavy metal listeners.""<sup>1</sup>

▶ Alice in Chains In Studio - Recording "We Die Young" 1990 (Recording Process of 'We Die Young')



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<sup>1</sup> Huey, Steve. "Facelift". [AllMusic](#). Retrieved 2008-05-03



## **Layne is Gone What Now? (The New Alice in Chains)**

While Layne was struggling heavily from his severe drug addiction, which soon ended up taking his own life. On April 5, 2002 Layne had passed away from a drug overdose located in his Seattle apartment. Apparently Layne had overdosed on a drug named "Speedball" which consisted of Heroin and Cocaine mixed together. Eventhough maybe one of the pioneers of Grunge and, my personal favorite Grunge band to ever exist. Alice in Chains still prevail, and still have the same charm as they did with Layne. So far the "New Alice in Chains". Now, we have new members joining Alice In Chains and still make each of their albums better. The new Alice in Chains consists of Willam DuVall (Vocals, Guitar) Mike Inez (Bassit) Sean Kinney (Drums) and Jerry Cantrell (Lyricist, Vocals) the band consists of With the lead singer now being Jerry Cantrell and lyricist. Here's Slash giving his opinion on Alice in Chains, and other Grunge bands.



"Personally, I thought Nirvana were cool – I have four of their albums – but they weren't as heavy or riff-oriented as Soundgarden or Alice In Chains, so those were actually my two favourite Seattle bands. I guess Axl [Rose] and Kurt Cobain had some issues, but Dave Grohl is on my album with Duff [McKagan], so at least one member of Nirvana didn't hate me!"<sup>2</sup> As well Elton John had been featured on the album "Black Gives a Way to Blue" himself had also been struggling with addiction and going back and forth from rehab. "I had a lot of support when I was ill and [in] rehab," John said in 2021. "You support your friends through thick and thin. I had a lot of support when I went through the thin end of the wedge, and I never forget that." The song was as a tribute to Layne Staley, where John had contributed in one chord with the band.<sup>3</sup> Alice in Chains, now have been able to collaborate with other talented musicians and bands. For example, they had collabed with Korn to do a Summer tour with them. With Korn performing a few classics from Alice In Chains like "Would?" (From the Dirt Album). So far the New Alice In Chains have composed 3 glorious new albums, with it being a new generation of Grunge music for all fans to listen to, I still get the same nostalgia listening to their new songs just like Facelift and other Albums with Layne Staley. A personal one that I enjoy a bit too much is the "Devil Put's

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<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, Brett. "Slash Reveals If Alice In Chains Are Good Without Layne Staley." *AlternativeNation.Net*, 23 Apr. 2019, [www.alternativenation.net/slash-reveals-if-alice-in-chains-suck-without-layne-staley](http://www.alternativenation.net/slash-reveals-if-alice-in-chains-suck-without-layne-staley).

<sup>3</sup> Rapp, Allison. "Odd Couples: When Elton John Sang on an Alice in Chains Song." *Ultimate Classic Rock*, 22 Apr. 2022, [ultimateclassicrock.com/elton-john-alice-in-chains-odd-couples](http://ultimateclassicrock.com/elton-john-alice-in-chains-odd-couples).

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*Dinosaurs Here*” Album. Not to mention some people have confirmed that Alice in Chains might drop a new album this year, as they will probably finish their ‘All American Tour’ but were still unsure. Alice in Chains still keeps the Grunge movement alive today, with many new fans entering the gates of Grunge.