

THE FIRELAND ABLAZE

EP1 + EP2

MARCH OF THE WHITE COLLAR WORKERS

DAYS, SPENT LIKE PENNIES / SITTING IN CHAIRS / WHITE OF-
FICE CEILINGS / FLOORS AND WALLS BARE / OH, LORD I'M
BORED / AND JUST A BIT / LAZY // I WAS NOT CALLED /
TO TOIL / IN / FLORESCENT LIGHT / I WAS NOT CALLED /
TO TYPE / THE GOOD TYPE / LORD, I'M BORED / AND JUST
A LITTLE BIT / LAZY // ALL THEY WANT IS BODIES / TO FILL
UP THE CHAIRS / ALL THEY WANT IS HANDS / JUST MOVING
EVERYWHERE / BUT WHEN THE POWER'S OUT / WE'RE ALL /
SO VERY SCARED / SO VERY SCARED / SO VERY SCARED

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS Though I often times love my job, there are times when it gets tedious, and I've gotta just hold on to the fact that our jobs aren't our lives...or at least, we don't have to let that hen. I also added in a bit about what happens to people in a technology job when the power goes out (like it does nearly every summer in El Paso, due to our rampant air conditioner usage).

MUSIC I've always liked the huge crunch of D.'s beats here...it always seems like a good song to start a show or an album with...we added on the final parts not long before the song was recorded, so there may have been people that saw us play this song about two minutes shorter? I wanted a grander melody to end it, and I think we at least got close. I like it.

DIEGO COMMENTS

LYRICS "Lord i'm lazy. Just a little lazy." This is the imaginary chorus sung only in my head.

MUSIC Written back in early 2001, this is the song that really showed us the direction we wanted to go in. You could call it our first born. We wrote a few songs before it, but when we finished this song, the others just didn't compare. So we left them for dead. It started the way all Fireland songs now start: with me on the computer trying to make neat sounds. I didn't know what I was doing when I wrote the crunchy beats or added the synthy blips. But when I left it looping and sat down with my bass, the loop became a song. And the song became the sound.

TV MOVIE

LET'S GET ON A / VICIOUS CYCLE / AND RIDE ON IT / TILL
MORNING / CAUSE THERE ARE MEN / BACK IN THE CITY /
WHO SEEM TO WANT / YOU DEAD // THEY SAY THAT SIN
/ HAS CONSEQUENCES / AND I FEAR / THAT YOURS WILL BE
/ A BULLET / THROUGH THE HEAD / A BULLET / THROUGH
THE HEAD // DID YOU THINK TO / CALL YOUR MOTHER / OR
ANY OF / YOUR FRIENDS? / TAKE A GOOD LOOK / AT THE
SKYLINE / LEAVE YOUR MEMORIES / UNDER THE BED / I DON'T
HAVE A GUN / TO KILL THE FEAR / OR SHOOT THE HOLES-
THROUGH THE PAST / WHERE YOUR PLOTLINE / GREW CONVO-
LUTED / AND CLICHE

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS I always explain this one as our 'Johnny Cash' song. Its an attempt to tell a story in a song, instead of bogging the song down with metaphors and cute words, I tried to tell a modern fable, with a lesson attached, just like Johnny. Did it work? I think it was a bit cheesy, but it gets the point across in the chorus (which I think is self-explanatory)...I imagined a bad made-for-TV movie (you know, like a Lifetime or USA movie on a Saturday afternoon) about someone who did something to the mob, and now they had to escape before they get 'what's coming to 'em'.

MUSIC My friend Phillip Tubbs and I have a shoegaze obsession. If you're not familiar with shoegaze, or dreampop, or whatever you wanna call it, it was basically a short lived late 80's/early 90's movement in music, where the guitars (and often keyboards) got really droney and fuzzed out, the music got somewhat slower, and the vocals got totally buried underneath waves of dream...um, noise. Anyway, to find out more, go buy Slowdive's Souvlaki, or MyBloodyValentine's Loveless and dig in. Anyway, I've always got some of this sorta stuff lurking in my brain, but this is perhaps the most 'shoegazey' Fireland song (guitarwise, anyway), where the chords and stuff are barely distinguishable from other chords, etc.

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC Originally, I called this song Opti744 because of the Optimus tape deck I had and the time that I finished working on it (7:44 PM). After I come up with an idea for a song and complete it, I like to play around with it just for fun. So I structured the song backwards, reversed it, and liked it even more. I think what I loved most about it was the way the kick and snare pattern that comes in at the halfway mark almost sounds like a turntable. This song was a challenge for us to learn because the changes were so indiscernible. I had a better idea of where they were since I had composed them, but if Shawn didn't hit them, I was as good as off. Practice makes perfect. Or at least gets you thru the song.

PROGRESS

HONEY, / TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT / AND GO / BACK TO
SLEEP / NO WEREWOLVES OR VAMPIRES / WOULD DARE /
COME BETWEEN / WHAT WE HAVE / / PROGRESS - IN THE
LEAST OF THESE / REGRESS - IF WE FAIL TO SCAB OUR KNEES
/ PENANCE- PROGRESS IS A MACHINE / PROGRESS- PROGRESS
IS A MACHINE / / HONEY, / DON'T BE AT ALL AFRAID / THE
BOOK OF THE DEAD'S / IN STORAGE / AND DRACULA'S BEEN
LONG DEAD / I SET HIS HOUSE ON FIRE / WHEN I WAS ONLY
TEN / TURNED ON THE STOVE / LIT A MATCH / AND RAN

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS Throughout the past several years (well, until I got married, anyway), I've had friends staying/living with me...whether they have their own bed, or a rolled out sleeping bag, they came and went as necessary. This song's about a dream I had about one of those friends. He likes old horror movies way more than I do, so it was fitting that I had this dream about him, telling his wife (though he wasn't married at the time) to go and 'take out the garbage' (he was always playing like he was real 'macho', but everyone who knows him knows he's a softy), and explaining to her not to worry about anything, its all just make believe. The song's also about this same friend and how he's grown and changed since he was younger... there's also a little factual information in the end, but I wouldn't wanna incriminate anyone, so we'll just let that go.

MUSIC Reversed guitar fun. I did some really low, mega-fuzzed out parts for fun, too, some of which we kept. There are a few countermelodies in there that I originally did on an acoustic guitar, but we took those out...there still isn't any recorded acoustic guitar in any Fireland Ablaze song yet! (well, except for that violet burning cover we did).

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC I had a case of musical writer's block and this song brought me out of it. So I called it Progress. The piano part was written on my casio SA series keyboard. It's basically a toy keyboard but I've taken so much from it. I took the casio piano sample and added a beat using isolated drum samples from a band called Karate. (If you've heard Karate, you know that their drum sound is excellent.) Then came more melodies using more casio samples. Telephone and twinkle echo are my favorites sounds from the casio. After using them here, they've popped up in quite a few Fireland songs. When I showed Shawn the bassline, he said it reminded him of a classic This Boy Loveless bassline. Those words were the only encouragement I needed.

WHISPERS AND FUZZ

THERE'S GHOSTS IN THE STEREO / ALL WHISPERS AND FUZZ /
THERE'S BLOOD ON THE RADIO / AND STEPS RINGING DOWN /
THE HALL // GHOST CLUBS GET STARTED / WHEN THE DEAR-
LY DEPARTED / LEAVE A BIT TOO SOON / ITS BEEN REGARDED
/ AS PRETTY COLD HEARTED / TO LEAVE AT ALL // THERE'S
GHOSTS IN THE STEREO / WORDS OF DEAD MEN / WON'T LET
GO / THERE'S OLD HOMES WITH SADDENED WINGS / WHERE
THERE'S STEPS RINGING / DOWN THE HALL // THERE'S OLD
GHOSTS IN MY HOME / SOUL / AND SONGS ABOUT STEREOS
/ I'VE TRAMPLED ON ALL THOSE DREAMS / HEAR MY STEPS
RINGING DOWN / THE HALL

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS The song's based on two things: 1) my weird thing about listening to music recorded by people who have died (oldies, etc), and 2) the strange feeling I got when I left one of the houses i'd grew up in, after my grandfather died...when I could swear I still heard him in the bedroom, or in the hallway. There's a slight sentiment here that when people leave us (whether they just leave town, or actually die), we feel a hint or resentment about that. The 'ghost clubs' thing comes from this Discovery channel show I saw about a bunch of people in England who get together to go check out supposedly 'haunted' houses and castles, and whatnot. This idea blows my mind. If you believe in ghosts (which I don't in the normal sense, the only ghosts I believe in are the memories that don't fade), then wouldn't nearly everywhere you go be haunted?

MUSIC This is our longest song (is it still?). It actually has two choruses and three verses...wow. The hardest thing about playing this song, guitarwise, is trying to control the backwards delays that happen on my second amp, because they can easily get out of hand...but I think they're worth it. That wobbly sound is the way a Fender Twin's vibrato channel sounds when you crank both knobs all the way... its a cool, but not necessarily usable sound...well, I guess I used it, but...

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC It started with a sample I found on the internet of ten footsteps. I looped the ten steps and started playing with the speed and pitch of them. The original sample pitched two octaves up and two octaves down makes for five total speeds. With these five speeds I started creating patterns which I later chopped up to create the beat we have now. I wrote the piano melody with the casio and added distorted sci-fi synth on the computer. I felt that the song needed to be huge at the end so I sampled one of my favorite beats from the hip-hop group Digable Planets. I chopped that up, slowed some pieces down, and rearranged them to make different patterns.

INSP

COME ON / OUT FOR A RIDE / WITH ME TONIGHT / CASSETTES
ARE BROKEN / BUT IT'LL BE ALRIGHT / AND THERE'S NOTH-
ING ON THE / RADIO / EXCEPT OLD SONGS / AND NEW ONES
WE DON'T KNOW // I'M GONNA KISS YOU LIKE / A TEENAG-
ER / I'M GONNA HOLD YOUR HAND / ALL NIGHT LONG / I'M
GONNA PRESS MY LIPS / TOO HARD / AGAINST YOURS / TILL
YOU SAY THAT / I'M DOING IT WRONG / DOING IT WRONG //
I'M GONNA TAKE THOSE / VARSITY JACKET BOYS / DOWN /
I'LL GET ELECTED / STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT / OF YOUR
HEART

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS Not that it has to be taken this way, but this EP feels like a concept record (oh no!), which is something I always appreciate. Basically, its about love...which as alot of people know, isn't something I write about very often, but due to so many circumstances (both good and bad) in both mine and D's lives over the years, love has become a big theme in my writing, regardless of how I feel about using it as such. The first part is basically a declaration of that 'first' tingling feeling you get when you first fall in love with someone...it makes you 'giddy', like you're the cool kid in high school (I realize some of you may be in high school and be thinking that's a load of B.S., but I mean the romanticized 80's version of high school...just for the record, I pretty much hated high school and the best advice I ever got there was that life gets better for most of us after it...and that was absolutely true). Anyway, I'm also by no means trying to say anything promiscuous with these words, either, its supposed to be taken as a sweet thing...so take it that way.

MUSIC It's by far the 'poppiest' song we've written, and is probably an anomalie (won't necessarily happen again). The opening guitar part was supposed to be all David Bowie/T-Rex doubled harmony style guitar but came out a bit different...which i'm glad about ultimately. This is probably one of the only songs we'll have that ever showcases any of my slightly metal tendencies (from back in the day)...but you've gotta look for it to see it. Basically, I think I butchered the original song that D. wrote, but it turned out for the best...?

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC In the beginning, I was inspired by the album Pop Loops for Breakfast by B Fleischmann. But as the song evolved, it it got further and further from the Fleischmann sound. The clicks you hear were taken from my casio SK-1. I sampled them and cut them up to make them clickier. More casio was added in the form of a delayed twinkle echo during the chorus. (I just love that sound.) The song took a turn towards the 80's when I added the bassline. It wasn't until we were ready to record that I felt it needed something else. I added a subtle melody under the verses that now reminds us both of the Cure's "Close to Me". Could this song get any more 80's? We wish. Seriously.

LAST MISERY

I COULD BE SICK OR DYING / BUT YOU WILL NOT EXPLAIN /
HOW I GOT HERE / CRYING / PLUCKING OUT THE SHAME /
THOUGHT I HAD SOMEONE / THOUGHT I HAD SOMEONE / IT
WAS ALL GLASS / SMEARED WITH INK / PLEASE // IT WAS A
LAST / MISERY

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS I had three different sets of lyrics for this, but none of them fit. I finally wrote these when we changed the music for the song (for the second time). They fit into the theme of the EP...here the main 'character' gets hit with a reality check (after being over-joyed in INSP), and starts to get those sick feelings...like the whole relationship is falling apart right in front of them, and they can't do anything about it. The 'glass smeared with ink' part refers to two things: loss of clarity, and words becoming issues (get it..ink?) between people. I also really like the title of the Ingmar Bergman film: Through a Glass, Darkly. The 'please' part, is supposed to be half begging, half the character trying to use his (or her?) pride to push the other person away.

MUSIC We spent a long time trying to get that delayed guitar right...we even busted out with some math at one point. The main melody we've had since the early days of Ireland. If you listen close, there's a slide right before the halfway point. Yeah...

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC For the longest time, we we're calling this song High/Dry because all the beats were taken from the beginning of Radiohead's High and Dry. I sampled the beginning of the song (before any real music comes in) and cut it up, rearranged, and added a few filters. I had a bassline for the longest time but felt that the song needed more. A piano. So I picked up my bass and began writing another melody. I found that I liked the original bassline as a piano part and the piano part as the new bassline. The thing I love about writing with Shawn is how much he changes the songs for the better. I could never write a song like Last Misery without him.

NIGHTINGALE

ROBERT REDFORD SOLD ME / A BILL OF GOODS / ABOUT BE-
ING / A CHARMING YOUNG MAN / JUST A WINK AND A SMILE
/ AND SAY SOMETHING FUNNY / ONCE IN AWHILE // BUT /
I WANT A BRAND NEW LIFE / I'M SHOPPING FOR IT / ALL THE
TIME

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS Robert Redford didn't really sell me anything :). He's just one of the 'coolest' guys in movies, and he signifies the kind of 'idol' we men try to be like when we watch a bunch of old movies... There's also a tip of the hat to Morrissey there, but there's not much more substance than that. Its just the point after a relationship ends where you realize, its time to decide what to do with the rest of your life...with your new life.

MUSIC On my end of things, I wanted it slightly jazzy, but still 'Fireland-y', not all out smokey club jazz or anything. There's a bunch of little parts hidden here, including a little Cure-ish line buried after the choruses. I did actually do a version that went all 'Santana-ish' at the end...but it just made us laugh...alot. Oh yeah, some of you who have seen us play this live in the past may remember that it used to be longer...quite a bit longer. Well, we shortened it.

DIEGO COMMENTS

MUSIC The song is built off of a sample of my favorite jazz singer, Anita O'Day. The song is called "A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square" and it makes me want to fall in love. I took a sample of the chimney intro and slowed it down twice. It was interesting for me to hear how the bells sounded when they were slowed down that much. Like a guitar and a Fender Rhodes. I wanted to use reverbed drum samples for this song because when i slowed the Nightingale sample, it gave me a lonely feeling. Nothing says lonely like playing drums in a big empty room. The first version had the drums going insanely fast at the end, but we decided it was too much and it was best to leave the song with a slight pick me up and not a marching band on speed.

BLUE PILLOW

I'VE HEARD THE SOUND / OF WEDDING BELLS / RUNG BY
OTHER MEN'S HANDS / STRONGER THAN MY OWN / TAKING
ALL THE GIRLS / HOME // I'VE SUCKED THE LIFE / OUT OF
ROMANCE / I'VE SMOTHERED / ALL I COULD HOLD / I'VE
CRIED THE BLUE / OFF MY PILLOW(S) / AS THEY / MUFFLED
THE SOUND // NOW I MAY NEVER MEET THE ONE / I'LL
TRULY FALL / IN LOVE WITH / BUT ONE DAY / I'LL BE / THE
BRIDE

SHAWN COMMENTS

LYRICS This is supposed to sum up everything else. Once you've found love, broken it, and lost it, what do you have left? You can move on and look for someone else (which is fine)...but ultimately, if we're looking for happiness in others, we're looking for trouble. Other people, no matter how wonderful, no matter how loving, will always fail us, even when their intentions are good. We can only rely on one thing: Jesus. Basically, it was my summation at one point in my life, that even if I never found someone wonderful (which I did, by the way) and fall in love again (which I did) and get married (which I did), that I still had the love of my God, and my love for Him... and he promises that one day He'll take us up into His arms, and make us His Bride. There's a lot of beauty and reassurance for us to be found in the promise of God's love...and mostly, I suppose there's a great hope that comes from that, too.

MUSIC Pretty simple on my part. Nice little melody, some slightly weird chords, etc. When we get up to the E-Bow parts, I tried to stack 3 different melodies together... I think it worked out pretty well, though it was a pain in the butt to do... okay, it was fun, really. I also had some fun with feedback, which I hadn't done that much of since the Casket Vs. Carriage days.

DIEGO COMMENTS

LYRICS ISA 62:5 "As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you." REV 22:17 "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life."

MUSIC Ever since I discovered chenille pillows, I try to sleep on nothing else. When one wears down, I toss it and buy a new one. (I toss throw pillows.) This song was written on a day that I purchased a new blue chenille pillow. I used the usual casio piano pushed back in the mix and the occasional casio elec piano sample because of the bell-like sound it has. As the song moves on, the reverb is slowly being turned up on the beats and synth. It's subtle, but compare the beats towards the beginning with the beats at the end and you'll hear the difference. Especially in the kick and snare which reverberate longer as the song nears its end. The bassline is simple and effective.

THANKS FOR LISTENING

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