

I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A SORT OF RELIGIOUS AWE OF GEOGRAPHY So here are the names of the places where I wrote these songs: FAIRBANKS, ALASKA; STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN; SEATTLE, WASHINGTON; SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA; and at home in DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

SAX ROHMER #1

WRITTEN IN MY CAVE-LIKE OFFICE IN DURHAM

SAX ROHMER WROTE PULP SPY NOVELS, AND THERE'S LOTS ABOUT THEM THAT'S PRETTY OBJECTIONABLE; THE CHARACTER FU MANCHU IS HIS BEST-KNOWN INVENTION.

BUT THERE'S A FEELING OF MENACE AND THREAT IN HIS STORIES THAT'S KIND OF ADDICTIVE, AND THE TIGHT-FRAME ATMOSPHERE HE CRAFTS HAS A REAL APPEAL TO IT, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE WORKING IN A ROOM WITH CONCRETE FLOORS AND WITHOUT ANY NATURAL LIGHT. SECOND GUITARS HERE, THE ELECTRIC ONES, ARE BY ANNIE CLARK OF ST. VINCENT.

San Bernardino

THIS IS A SONG ABOUT A YOUNG UNMARRIED COUPLE GIVING BIRTH IN A CHEAP MOTEL OFF THE 10 FREEWAY OUT TOWARDS THE HIGH DESERT IN CALIFORNIA. I WROTE IT ON GUITAR, SENT IT TO ERIC FRIEDLANDER FOR ARRANGEMENT AND THIS IS WHAT HE DID WITH IT. IS IT TOO SELF-SERVING TO SAY HOW MUCH I LOVE WHAT ERIC DOES HERE? I HOPE NOT. HE PLAYS EVERYTHING ON THIS TRACK, I JUST SING AND LISTEN, HOPEFULLY IN EQUAL MEASURES.

HERETIC PRIDE

TITLE UNCONSCIOUSLY CRIBBED FROM SOME PUNK NOIR LYRICS

I Am Always Happy To Learn That Black Metal Phrasings Have Burrowed Their Way Into My Subconscious.

YOU COULD CALL THIS SONG A PERSECUTION FANTASY, BUT REALLY, WHO CAN EVEN SAY THE WORD "FANTASY" WITHOUT FLINCHING?

NOT ME, AND I HAVE A STRONGER STOMACH THAN MOST.

SPOILER ALERT: THE MAIN CHARACTER HERE WILL NOT LIVE LONG AFTER HE GETS DONE LAUDING HIS IMMINENT DEMISE.

The New York Times

AUTOCLAVE

I WAS IN ALASKA WHEN I READ ABOUT THE DISCOVERY OF A LIFE-FORM THAT CAN NOT ONLY SURVIVE AN Autoclave (The Instrument Used For Sterilizing Surgical Instruments; It's supposed to Kill any and all bacteria on the tools), but which seems to really enjoy the whole autoclave scene: at temperatures fatal to all other life forms.

THIS BACTERIA Would Begin to Breed. NATURALLY, THIS GOT ME TO THINKING ABOUT PEOPLE WHOSE HEARTS INVOLUNTARILY PULVERIZE ANY GOOD FEELINGS THAT COME WITHIN A CITY BLOCK OF THEM.



NEW AND WHAT YOU IT MEANS FOR ZION

HOW COME
WE NEVER HEAR ABOUT
RELIGIOUS CULTS ANYMORE?
THE HIGH HOLLERING DAYS OF
CULTMANIA
MADE MY CHILDHOOD SUCH A
THRILL: WHAT WAS THE REAL
RISK THAT I'D TALK TO SOME
ROBED FELLOW ON THE
STREET ONE DAY
AND FIND MYSELF
INSTANTLY,
INVOLUNTARILY
CONVERTED
TO SOME
BIZARRE CREED?
REALLY, THE
CULTS WERE SECOND
ONLY TO SANTA
CLAUS IN THEIR
MYSTERIOUS POWERS.
"NEW ZION"
IS ONLY ABOUT
AN IMAGINARY
CULT BUT I HOPE
SOMEBODY STARTS
IT UP REAL SOON



So Desperate 10¢
FEB
No.6

A
LOVE
SONG
ABOUT PEOPLE
WHORE INVOLVED WITH
EACH OTHER WHEN
THEY PROBABLY
SHOULDN'T
BE

AND ABOUT
HOW THE HEAT
AND SHAME OF THE
WHOLE SITUATION IS
LIKE A SNAKE
EATING ITS OWN
TAIL, EXCEPT THE
TAIL GROWS
FASTER THAN
HE CAN EAT
IT.

ODDS THAT
SOMEBODY READING
THIS KNOWS EXACTLY
WHAT I MEAN AND
FEELS A LITTLE
UNCOMFORTABLE
READING ABOUT
IT: 2-1

LOVEGRAFT
IN
BROOKLYN

AMERICAN HORROR
ICON H.P. LOVECRAFT MOVED TO
RED HOOK, BROOKLYN TO BE WITH
THE WOMAN HE LOVED. HE HAD
NEVER REALLY SEEN ANY PEOPLE
WHO WERE NOT WHITE FOLKS FROM
MASSACHUSETTS. IMMIGRANTS WERE
SPILLING INTO BROOKLYN FROM THE
FOUR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE.
LOVECRAFT'S XENOPHOBIA DURING
HIS TIME IN BROOKLYN RESULTED
IN SOME OF THE WEIRDEST, DARKEST
IMAGES IN ALL AMERICAN LITERATURE;
ONE MUST CONDEMN LOVECRAFT'S
UGLY RACISM, OF COURSE, BUT
HIS NOT-UNRELATED INCLINATION
TOWARD A GENERAL SUSPICION
OF ANYTHING THAT'S ALIVE
IS PRETTY FERTILE GROUND.

LO
BR

IN THE CRATERS
ON THE MOON

IT IS THE NATURAL
CONDITION OF MY CHARACTERS,
WHEN A FEW OF THEM HAVE GATHERED
TOGETHER TO FIND THEMSELVES SECLUDED
IN A NEAR-LIGHTLESS ROOM WAITING FOR SOME
UNSPECIFIED DISASTER. FRANKLY I SUSPECT THAT
THIS IS THE NATURAL CONDITION OF A PRETTY
HEFTY PERCENTAGE OF THE GENERAL POPULACE.
THE PEOPLE IN THIS SONG HAVE REACHED A POINT
OF COMFORT WITH THEIR DREAD: READY FOR
PANIC TO SET IN, RELISHING
THE MOMENT.

TIANCHI LAKE

DEPENDING ON WHETHER YOU BELIEVE OR NOT, THIS IS A TRUE STORY, SORT OF: THERE'S A LAKE MONSTER IN CHINA. PEOPLE SEE IT ALL THE TIME. THE MOUNTAIN GOATS CONSIDER THEMSELVES FRIENDS TO ALL LAKE AND RIVER MONSTERS EVERYWHERE, WHETHER THEY EXIST OR NOT. PETER PLAYS AN UPRIGHT BASS HERE AND WE TRACKED THE GUITAR, BASS AND VOCALS LIVE IN THE SAME SMALL ROOM AT PRAIRIE SUN.

HOW TO EMBRACE A SWAMP CREATURE

THIS IS A SONG ABOUT SLEEPING WITH SOMEBODY WITH WHOM YOU'VE JUST PARTED WAYS AND WITH WHOM YOU LATER TELL YOURSELF YOU HAD NO INTENTION OF SLEEPING ON THAT DAY WHEN YOU "STOPPED BY" TO PICK UP YOUR STUFF, OR TO "JUST SAY HI," OR WHATEVER OTHER EXCUSE YOU FEEL LIKE USING. IT'S ALL GOOD, Y'ALL, YOU AINT GOTTA LIE TO ME.



SEPT 15 1983

THIS IS ABOUT THE DEATH OF PRINCE FAR I, ONE OF THE MOST UNUSUAL AND AWESOME FIGURES TO ARISE FROM THE REGGAE EXPLOSION OF THE SEVENTIES. HE WAS MURDERED IN HIS HOME BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS ON THE DATE WHICH GIVES THIS SONG ITS TITLE. FAR I WAS BY ALL ACCOUNTS A GOOD GUY, AND HIS SONGS ARE LOVING, ALMOST PATERNAL URGINGS TO THE LISTENER. EARLY IN HIS CAREER, HE WAS CALLED "KING CRY CRY," OWING TO HIS TENDENCY TO BURST INTO TEARS WHILE SINGING. I'M NOT THAT EMO YET BUT ONE ALMOST WISHES FOR THAT KIND OF SINCERITY, YOU KNOW?

PEOPLE TALK ABOUT SONGS THAT DEVELOP LIKE VISIONS AND USUALLY I AM PRETTY MISTRUSTFUL OF SUCH STORIES

But this is just one sort of jumped up part of nowhere one day.

I AM JOINED ON THIS SONG, AS ON "NEW ZION" AND "HOW TO EMBRACE A SWAMP CREATURE"

Rachel Jane Zoi Sarah Colmanian

They are members of the BRIGHT MOUNTAIN CHOIR, who used to sing with me back in the very earliest days of the Mountain Goats. We haven't worked together in a long time + it was so wonderful to hear them sing again -



MICHAEL MYERS RESPLENDENT



WHEN I WROTE THIS I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THEY WERE REMAKING HALLOWEEN. I HAVE A REAL LOVE FOR SLASHER FILMS, PROBABLY BECAUSE WHEN THEY WERE A NEW PHENOMENON I WAS SO TERRIFIED JUST BY THE NEWSPAPER ADS THAT I AVOIDED THE HELL OUT OF THEM. AS A CHILD I WAS PRETTY EASILY FRIGHTENED, THE WORLD SEEMED LIKE A PLACE WHERE ALL SORTS OF RANDOM DEVILMENT COULD JUST POP OUT FROM THE WOODWORK AT ANY SECOND. THIS SONG IS LIKE SAX ROHMER *1 IF THE NARRATOR HAD GIVEN UP ON EVER ACTUALLY GETTING HOME; OF THE PRESENT BUNCH, THIS WAS THE FIRST SONG WRITTEN. IT'S ALSO THE ONE THAT I PLAYED PIANO ON, WHICH I LIKE TO DO ONCE EACH ALBUM, SINCE PIANO WAS THE FIRST INSTRUMENT I EVER LEARNED TO PLAY.