

# THE SANDUSKY REVIEW

°° LITTLE MASCARA °°



GORJUS

**THE BAND IS STILL ASLEEP BESIDE ME** but I am wide awake and thinking that all those redheaded sluts last night were not a real good idea. When I say redheaded sluts I am not talking about loose women or anything, but a shot drink that is part Jägermeister and part cranberry juice and some peach schnapps, so you get a lot of booze but also a lot of sugar, and now that I am getting older that kind of shit keeps me up once I wake up, no matter if it is six a.m. or what, like I am a little kid wired on Lucky Charms. It is called a red-headed slut on account of it being red and if you drink too many you will probably get slutty, regardless of whether you are a boy or a girl. They are basically delicious if you have a sugar tooth which I do.

We are in Tallahassee at this nice grad student's place who saw our show last night and offered to let us crash in her townhouse, which is about one hundred times better than us all sleeping in the van and pretending we don't smell each other. Plus it is a lot easier to write when you do not have a drummer laying on your legs.

We made just enough money for gas to Atlanta, which is a lot further than it looks on the damn map, and once we get back in Georgia we're on solid footing with places to play and sleep. We changed our name again a few months ago, I like it a lot better, we're the Jerusalem Crickets, on account of Hokey Glass, although I am still worried there is some secret joke that I do not know about that name and should watch out for, like if it is a code for something dirty or ridiculous. As long as I knew what it meant, that would be fine. We talked about South Central Rain but it turns out we don't really know any R.E.M. songs or really even like R.E.M. I suggested Zen Arcade but everybody shot it down because they said it sounded stupid. Either they are all way too young or I am way too old.

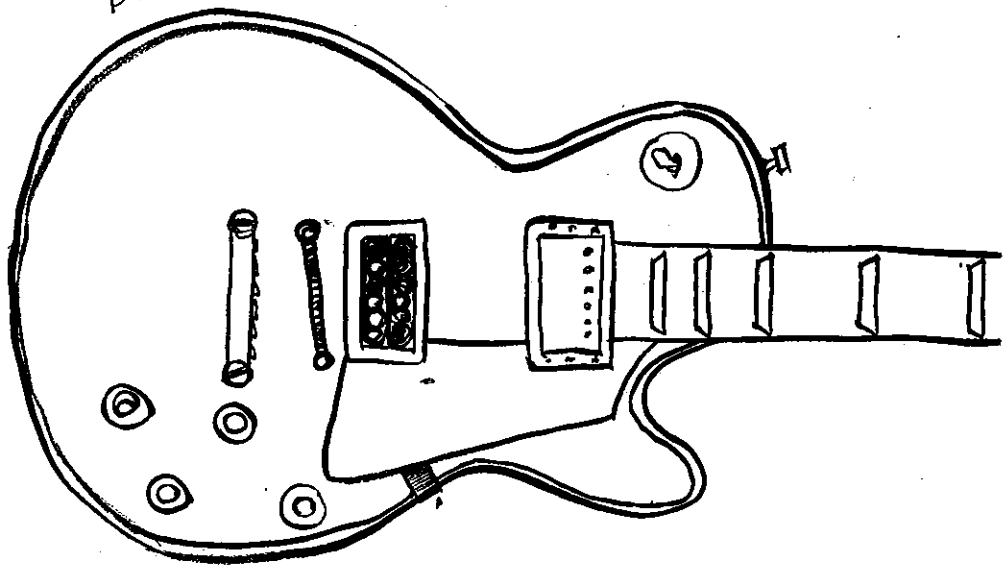
This has been a pretty good tour as far as these things go. Nobody is on real serious drugs or drinking too much before

the shows, and the scenery is real pretty and so we are just kind of concentrating on the drives. There is not a lot of people at the shows but folks don't have a lot of money right now and we are not real well known yet under this name. I think it is a good tour actually because we have already sold out of all the seven inches we just had done and I even sold about fifteen Black Diamond cds that I have still been lugging around for two years now.

We played at this real nice place tonight, it was set up like it was some kind of old timey joint, with wood paneling covering the walls and deer heads and six pound bass and shit hung everywhere. There wasn't more than a couple dozen people there but that is real good on a Tuesday and we got a \$100 guarantee and a \$50 bar tab, plus they ordered in pizza from this place called Decent Pizza, which we all thought was hilarious. A girl that was friends with the opening band offered to sell merch for us, which was a real gift because people want to buy your shit during the show if they are feeling it, and if you are all onstage there's no one to take money, and sometimes we lock it all up in the merch suitcase anyway if there's some young looking kids around, to keep them from just walking out with a couple of records that might mean dinner. She was real nice and danced to all our songs except to a beat which could have only existed in her head and I swear I barely noticed after a while that she was wearing a Wonder Woman costume.

The bartender had a Monopoly game that was centered on the Beatles, it was called Beatlopolity but that was dumb as shit and I refused to call it that. At first I thought it would be really clever, like *Sgt. Peppers* and *Rubber Soul* would be Park Place and Boardwalk, but the properties just followed the records in chronological order. I don't know how you feel about *Abbey Road* but it is not Boardwalk for most people. I think it is probably my Marvin Gardens.

The GIBSON LES PAUL is what rock & roll looks like to me & most everybody else born in the sixties and seventies. Blame JIMMY PAGE. If you want to know what it sounds like there is "Black Dog" and "Kashmir" and



every other good song you ever heard on Rock 99 or in the parking lot after a high school football game. I have never taken a violin bow to one but then I don't happen to know anybody that plays violin.

We played for thirty-five minutes and I was pretty wound up on redheaded sluts and Budweiser and kept going out of tune. My guitar ain't for shit in Florida during the summer on account of the humidity and on account of I have always had a heavy downward strumming motion, and our drummer cracked a hi-hat, but people clapped and bought some t-shirts from our merch girl while I stared at the stars on her panties.

There was nobody that was going to fall in love with me tonight. Nobody's life was getting changed by the power of rock and roll or anything. It was just a Tuesday night sweating it out in Tallahassee.

I

Tulip loved riding on the train. I am quite fond of this old beast, she would say as she patted the side when getting up the stairs, arching her neck like she was Scarlett O'Hara, or one of the Delta girls down for the weekend slumming in the Quarter. Once I was having a real rough time of it all and she told me to pack my bags, we were going on a trip, and it was a special surprise.

Tulip was the love of my life, and I guess she still is, even though we have broken up and I have not seen her now in many months or even heard from her. I guess I have what you call a broken heart, and even though I have had a few of those over the years, it sure never made me feel like the way this one has made me feel, like I can't remember who sang for the Rolling Stones or something, like somebody changed my name out from under me, or tore down my high school.

There is only one real way out of New Orleans and that is North, unless you are getting on a boat, and I do not know anybody that has ever done that ever, or where you would even really go to if you got on one. The City of New Orleans is the name of the train that runs up through Mississippi and

Tennessee all the way to Chicago, and I thought maybe we were going all the way up there, on account of Tulip always talking about this one museum in Chicago where she had seen a whole slew of Picassos and such, *there were so many Monets you would never want to see a calendar again.*

Even though everybody always thinks of the train as just running from New Orleans to Jackson, and to Jackson to Memphis, and so forth, it really stops all the God-damned time, especially when there is a freight train, which there always is, and they get on the loudspeaker and say they have to let them go on for the right away on account of regulations. I looked once on Wikipedia and they said that was a lie and that there was no such law, but they sure do like to defer to those freight trains.

## II

When I was seventeen I was a real big Metallica fan. I had all their records even if I really only had them on dubbed cassette from friends and I never did own the *Garage Days* compilation. They had come through Birmingham on the *And Justice for All* tour a few years before but my dad Henry wouldn't let me go because he said it was no place for a young woman to be, even though my mom had given me permission and said something about it being my time to grow and explore and some sort of empowerment shit that she was always going on about. I did not fight too much because Henry was right and I was a little scared of going anyway, less on account of the possible Satanists or skinheads than all that Pushead artwork, what with the details of bones and maggots and shit. Don't give me a hard time, I was only fourteen.

By the time I got old enough not to be scared anymore they had this album that had an all-black cover which everybody called the Black Album even though it did not have a proper name, and it was produced by this real Hollywood producer,

on account of them wanting to break mainstream. I didn't want Metallica to be like a band I watched on MTV, even though most of my favorite bands were on *Headbanger's Ball* anyway and they would show "One" over and over. You could still tell Riki Rachtman hated it.

So I had this friend who was a real big Metallica fan, and we had kind of dated a little bit while we were in high school, he was a senior when I was just a sophomore, and then he had gone to UAB a little while and then Jeff State and when that didn't work out he started painting houses with his old man. He called me up when he saw the video for "Enter Sandman," and said "Hot Rod, I tell you," and he always called me that which was a little embarrassing but sweet, he said "Hot Rod, I tell you, that song is so bad they will be playing it at football games and junk like that the rest of our lives," which he meant in the worst, most low-down way, and what do you know, turns out that he was right.

## III

My stepdaddy Henry was the man in our family growing up, for what that is worth, and he owned the house me and my momma lived in. He was a hard man when he was sober, but really a gem when he was drinking, and I suppose me and momma had the good fortune that Henry wasn't sober much, maybe on Christmas morning. When I was nine years old Henry gave me my first drink. It was Jim Beam and he told me *if you are old enough to go to school, you are old enough to fix your Henry a drink*, even though I was in third grade and so had been in school for a long time already.

He would get me to make him a Manhattan, which he taught me to do by color and shape: two shots from the square bottle, meaning Beam, one shot from the green bottle, meaning the dry vermouth he liked, and then a couple drop of Angostura bitters, *just like when your momma puts vanilla in the cookies she makes*, although I can only remember about

two times when momma ever made cookies and can't really remember her ever even letting us have store bought.

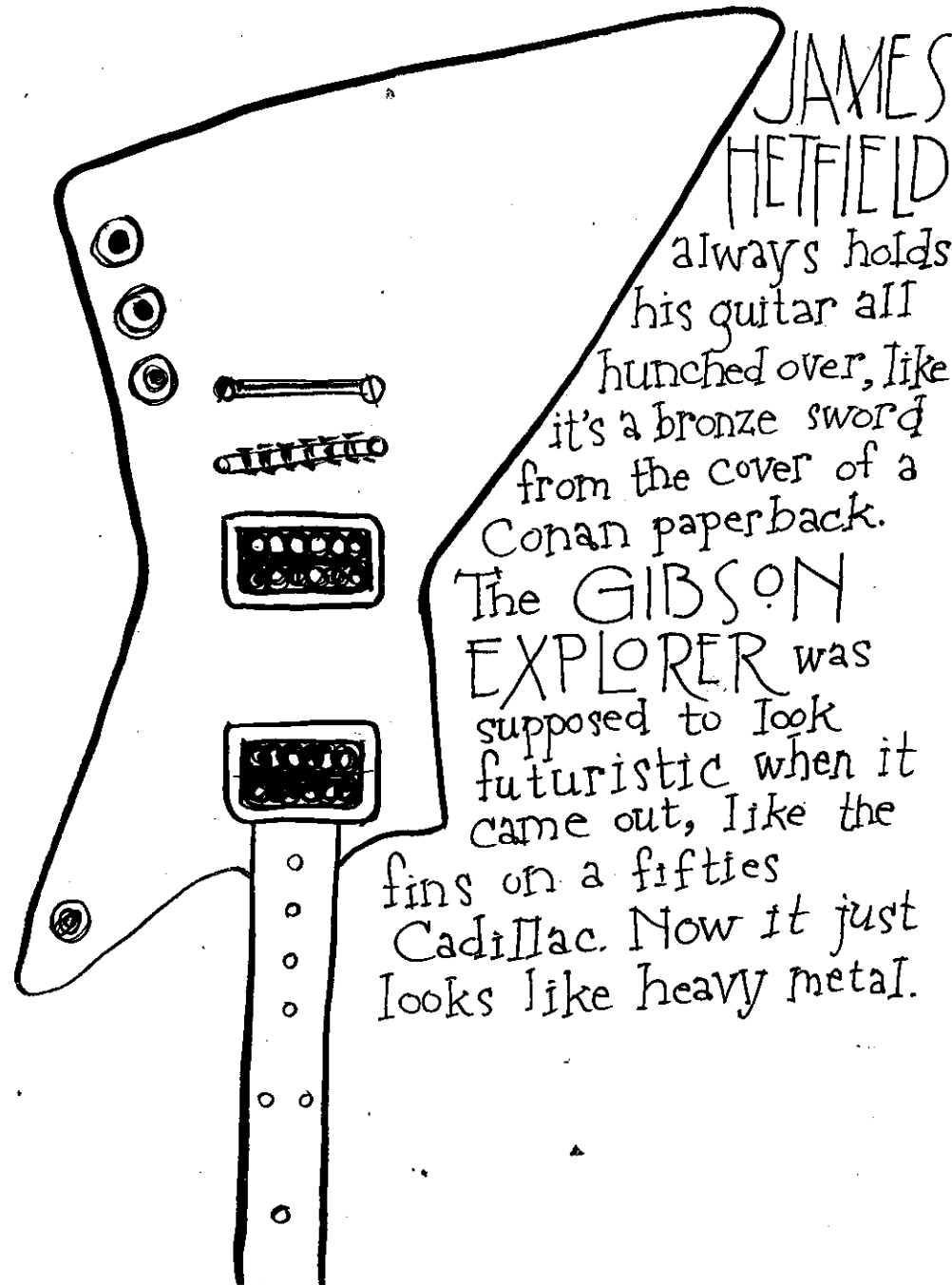
So I would make him his dry Manhattans, which I got to be real good at, and I would sit up in his lap and he would let me take a sip but just a little one and we would watch Dale Murphy and the Braves lose to whoever it was they were losing to that week, and even though it was not much I sure do remember it kindly.

## IV

On the way out of New Orleans on the train you stop at all these little bitty towns all over the middle of nowhere, so many you wonder how folks still live in them or what they do to make money or even have fun. I guess everywhere has a Wal-Mart now and you can buy an Xbox or get DVDs but shit. When Tulip and I were riding the train we were up somewhere in the Delta, I guess Yazoo City or Greenwood, and this whole little family had set up lawn chairs in their backyard, which was right up on the edge of the train track, and they were sitting there and just smiling and waving at the train. They say that over the loudspeakers that going through a populated area the train has to slow down a lot, which I also checked on Wikipedia too and which is actually true.

This family was a man and a woman and three kids, the train gets to going so slow you just sit there and look out the window like you are watching teevee. I remember the momma, who I guess was the momma even though she was really about my age or even younger, and she had on this real pretty yellow gingham type print sundress, and she was holding a Bud heavy beer, and the yellow sat up nice against her skin, which was this soft color like honey from the wintertime.

I sat there staring at that family, what with the kids running around just hollering and one pushing one down in the dirt,



and the daddy, who I don't remember what he looked like, getting up to smack the ones that were being bad and I remember staring at this good looking girl wishing I could talk to her, wishing I was like Jean Gray and could tap into her brain and say, *don't worry, I'm a telepath, I know all of your inner thoughts and feelings, and I want you not to worry, you just come with us, now, you will be safe*, and then using my telekinetic power to lift her up out of that shitty lawn chair and put her on the train with us.

And she is staring back at me and I swear to God I am thinking she hears me when I hear a pop and then a hiss, and Tulip is handing me a beer, because you can take a cooler with you on the train and we have one that is all loaded up with Miller Lite tallboys and ice and Southern Comfort, and then she toasts me, and says *there but for the grace of God go I*, and smiles her sad smile, and brushes the hair back out of my eyes.

**V**  
It is that kind of stuff I miss, the telepathy. When you know you are supposed to change the channel because they really hate George Foreman infomercials, even if you think they are funny, or that red onion is good in stir-fry but not too much red onion, or that when somebody you love gets kicked out of her own Goddamned band by the candy-ass lead singer, who wants to go in a new direction, namely move to Austin like every other candy-ass fucking band of all time, and they are not going to be needing a lead guitar because they want to focus more on synthesizer like some Goddamned cliché, and if there is true love there is telepathy and you say *honey, pack your bags, I got a special surprise for you*, and you take your best girl on a train trip because she got kicked out of her own Goddamned band by a candy-ass.

## VI

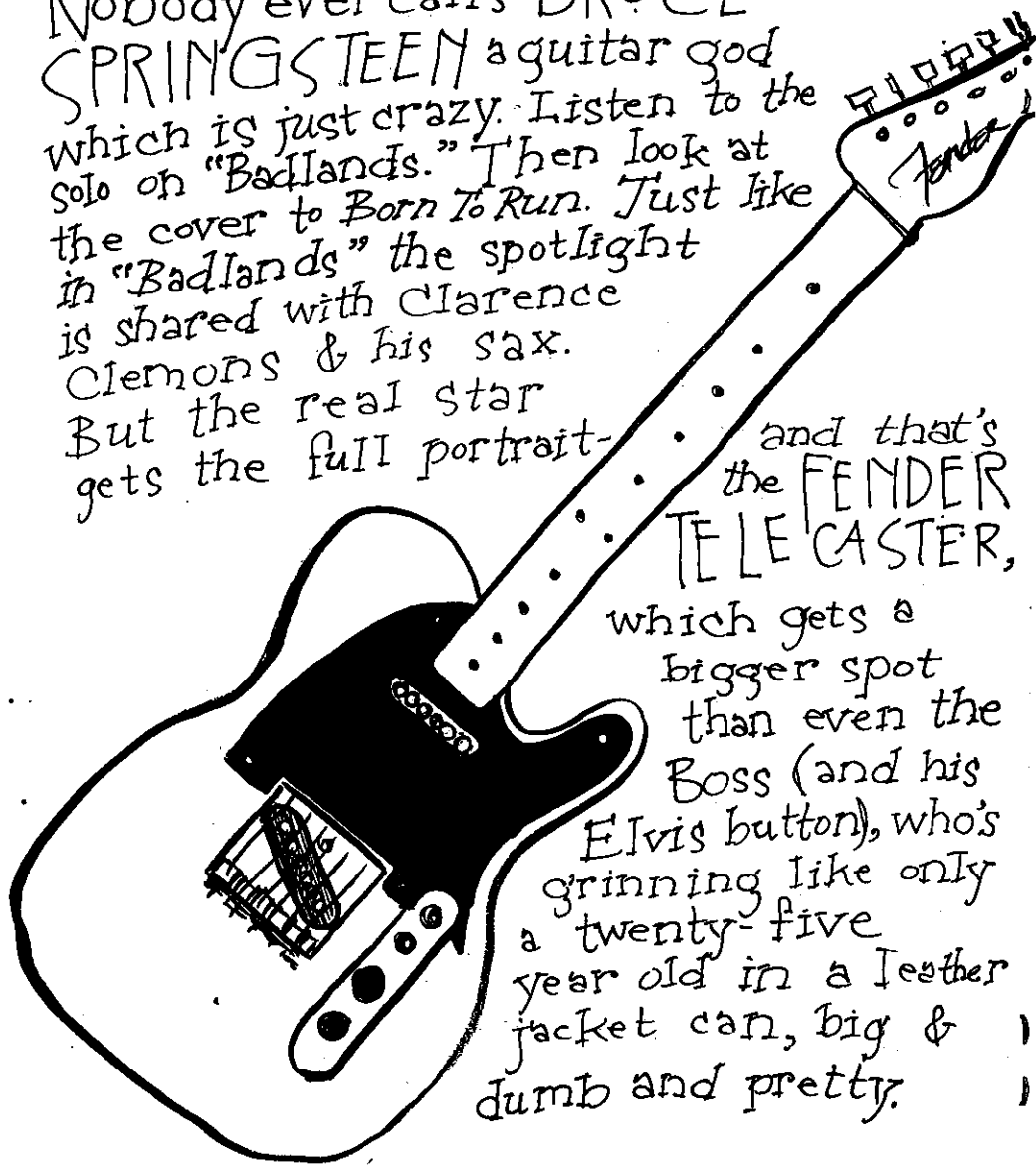
I have always greatly admired Eddie Van Halen, of the great rock group Van Halen, but I have always refused to get into fights over which one of his singers is the best, because truth be told I have never really given a shit about who the singer is, since I am of the mind that many if not all lead singers are real candy-asses. Everybody always acts like Van Halen was only good with David Lee Roth, who the typical snotty Van Halen fan will call "Diamond Dave," and they will always say "Van Hagar" was just no good. They call it Van Hagar on account of Sammy Hagar being the lead singer for several albums, all of which in my opinion are really well crafted and have good songwriting. But Sammy Hagar did not wear leopard-print leotards like Diamond Dave, which is a candy-ass lead singer thing to do, or flake out and quit the band because he wanted to have his own solo albums, which is the ultimate candy-ass lead singer thing you can do, which Diamond Dave also did.

Nobody ever will stand up for poor Gary Cherone, the guy who was in that band that did that song "More Than Words," which every girl in my high school thought was so romantic, even though it was just about this jackass telling his girlfriend she needed to prove her love for him, which really meant that she should put out, which is the least fucking romantic thing of all time. Nobody stands up for him mainly because most people either don't know about him singing in Van Halen or they are trying to pretend that it never happened, which is what I suspect that Eddie Van Halen does himself.

## VII

Henry was not what you would call white trash, but he was not high class or anything, and he was not much of a provider for me and my momma. For a while the only thing we had in the house was some cans of red beans and rice that was for sale at the Winn Dixie. Henry picked up the taste when he worked in Louisiana at a gas refinery, a good gig in Baton Rouge that

Nobody ever calls BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN a guitar god which is just crazy. Listen to the solo on "Badlands." Then look at the cover to Born To Run. Just like in "Badlands" the spotlight is shared with Clarence Clemons & his sax. But the real star gets the full portrait-



and that's the FENDER TELECASTER, which gets a bigger spot than even the Boss (and his Elvis button), who's grinning like only a twenty-five year old in a leather jacket can, big & dumb and pretty.

lasted for nearly a year, which was nice because when money was flowing momma was happy. The red beans really didn't taste like real red beans and rice but they were only a buck a can, and you could stretch a can over a whole family if you added some garlic toast for only about a dollar more, and it was almost good if you put in enough Tabasco. When you put it in the microwave for long enough it got hot as lava and you could jam the crust of your bread deep into the bowl of red bean slop and the heat and the salt and the vinegar bite of the hot sauce would turn it into food when it got in your mouth.

Henry liked the garlic-flavored kind of Tabasco, which they quit making at some point, or at least don't sell in Jasper, if they do still make it. When he was in town he would do all the food shopping. He would always get pissed at momma for spending too much on food, acting like we were living all high on the hog, and come back from the store with fucking generic Tony the Tiger in those shitty white boxes that got stale the moment you opened the fucking box.

Anyway, Henry went down the Winn Dixie and apparently went off the rails when the store didn't have anymore of this garlic Tabasco on the shelf and had just stuck more plain Tabasco over the slot where the garlic kind was. So he asked this stock boy if there might be some in the back or if they were going to get some more.

The boy told him that they were sending it all back, because it probably sold for shit, nobody likes spicy shit at all in Alabama, everything has to be bland or fried, and they needed more room for more popular condiments, purple mustard or what the fuck ever. Anyway, so the boy tells Henry they are sending back like half a case, and he ends up spending that week's food money on half a case of fucking garlic Tabasco.

When he came home he just had that half case of garlic Tabasco. I mean, no milk, no fucking bread, not even shitty

generic Tony the Tiger, nothing. Just fucking garlic Tabasco that nobody else even liked but him.

Even though I was pretty little I knew I should kind of hate him for that a little bit, and I remember momma standing in the kitchen and hollering at him, just cussing like crazy, but he walked in the living room just like nothing was wrong and sat down in his recliner, and he said, *Honey, go make me a drink*, and I did, even though I was real mad at him, and real scared, and he patted his lap and I got up on it, and momma was still hollering in the kitchen, and he sipped on that drink and he had tears coming out the corners of his eyes, and then I forgave him for all the white box Tony the Tiger in the world.

## VIII

After Tulip left me I got back on the train and figured I would move up to Jackson, on account of I couldn't stand to be around New Orleans any more. Tulip had lived for a while in Jackson and had taken me around there once to meet some of her friends. When the train pulled in the station, it was right next to this big old hotel with a giant sign on top that said KING. The windows were all busted out and there was a tree going right through the balcony over the entrance. It was just about the saddest damn thing I had ever seen.

The thought of walking around in the same places where she had walked and drinking at the same bars where she had drank made it like there was just this ghost of her weighing me down and I just could not get off that train. It wasn't that I didn't want to miss her, because in a way I liked the way that felt, all hot and sick like a shot of whisky in my stomach, but I did not want to ache for her every day and feel like I was living in her shadow in the city where she had slept.

So I kept going on to the end of the line, to a place that didn't have anything to do with her, all the way to Chicago. I had played there at the Empty Bottle with Diver Down and Black

Diamond and still knew just enough folks that I could burn a few weeks on couches until I finally got settled in this place way out west off the Green Line. It was just a one-bedroom place but it was clean and the living room got a lot of sun which I really prefer, as I have decided that I will raise a small range of medicinal and edible herbs, such as rosemary and sweet basil, which require a lot of direct sunlight. Not only are the edible herbs very useful in cooking, which I aim to practice a lot of, but they are supposedly very relaxing to have around the house.

The business downstairs from my apartment was a car paint shop called Karl's Kustom Kolor, the slogan being "We Specialize In Candy-Flake and Fade." I have met Karl not only because he is my landlord but also because I saw him hollering at some guys one time who were trying to bring in a few sheets of drywall, and one of the guys who was either drunk or just too sissy had dropped one of the boards and split it up the side. Those sheets are pretty damn heavy and not that expensive but you still don't want them broken. Anyway, I told him that I can hang sheetrock and mud real good, and maybe he would give me a break on the rent, and he said that he liked that kind of spirit and he said that maybe one white girl was worth three Guatemalans anyway, which is pretty racist but I guess okay if he says it, because Karl is really named Carlos Ramirez-Jones, and grew up in Oaxaca, which is one of the thirty-one states there are in Mexico, one down right on the bottom end.

Carlos has this daughter named Beth Jones, which is the plainest, most American name I have just about ever heard, and Beth told me that her daddy had named all his kids things like Tom, and Beth, and Ryan, so that they would never stick out more than any other kid, especially not over any damn thing like a name. She had this skin that was like hot chocolate, which I do not think is racist to say, since it is just an observation based on reality, and she had this really pretty black hair that was cut real short and had pink in it.



I am pretty terrible for saying this, and I am not the type of person to brag about this kind of thing, but she also had the best breasts I have just about ever seen on a girl in real life that was not in a movie, and she didn't even think it was that weird that I had assault rifles tattooed up on my arms, or that I would get up out of bed in the middle of night and go switch on the light over my kitchen table and write out lyrics or restring my guitar or just look out the window.

## IX

When Henry died I really didn't know what all to do. Momma was on tour with her singing group the B-Cups somewhere out West and I really didn't even have a way to tell her about it, and besides, I don't know if she cared much at that point anyway. I had not gotten a postcard from her in a real long time. There was not a whole lot left of his liver by the time he died, and his kidneys had mostly all shut down. I took a Greyhound bus all the way down from Chicago and I sat with him at the VA and held his hand when he told the doctors that he didn't want to mess no more with dialysis and for them to let him go on and be with the Lord. It surprised me when he said that because I had never heard him talk about church any ever and the only time he had it was because he said the whole thing was a racket for civilians.

The lady at the VA said they would take care of the funeral and I didn't have to worry about anything but signing papers, was I his next of kin, and I said yes I suppose I am. Then this lady, she had bright cartoon red hair like Jessica Rabbit, she was about as big as a house but with real kind eyes, she was so short it was almost funny, she leaned in and she hugged me big as the sky and said *girl, I am so sorry about your daddy*, and I had never called Henry my daddy before, but I knew when she said it that he was my real daddy after all, whether we was blood or not, and I started crying so hard that they ended up giving me a Valium and let me lay for a half

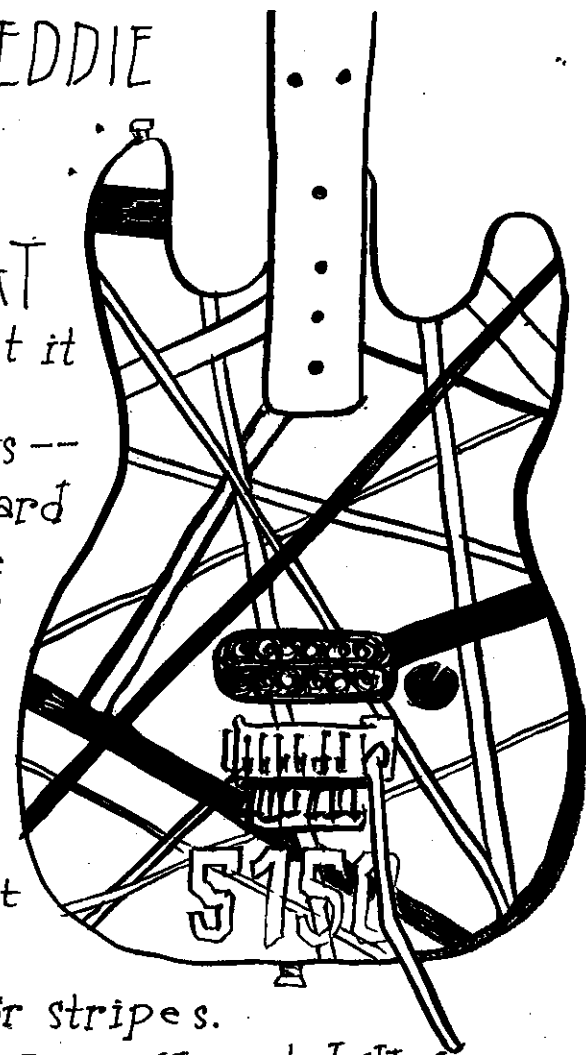
People called EDDIE  
VAN HALEN's  
guitar a

FRANKENSTRAT

because he built it  
himself out of  
scavenged parts --  
like the pickguard  
was a busted Blue  
Oyster Cult LP  
glued down.

When Eddie  
got loaded he  
had lots of fancy  
ones made that  
didn't have  
masking tape for stripes.

When Dimebag Darrell got killed,  
Eddie put that first homemade one  
in his coffin, a real fine salute if  
you ask me.



hour in a cot in the room the doctors all snuck off to sleep in. There was a bra under the pillow on my cot, it was bright pink and had a little bow in the middle, and it was so ridiculous it made me laugh.

Henry had never really had any friends, never even had any drinking buddies that I knew of, and so I didn't monkey with having a service and didn't really know how to. The lady at the VA just said they would take care of the service and told me where to come and when. I didn't have anything to wear that I thought proper, I traditionally only wear blue jeans and black t-shirts, and had gone by the JC Penney to try and find something to wear and I picked out a black dress, on account of a sign that said "Every Girl Needs That One Little Black Dress," even though I had never had particular call for one before.

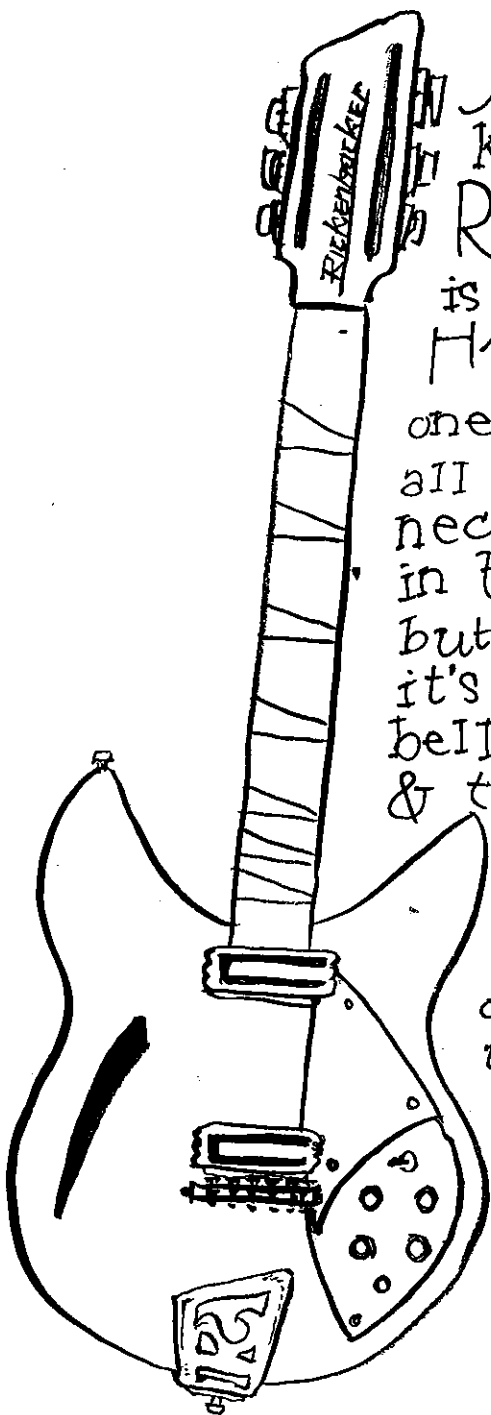
The funeral was at this little cemetery in West Birmingham and there was a minister and six old men wearing bits and pieces of old Army uniforms. By the time I got there the coffin that Henry was in, or what was left of Henry was laying in, was already lowered down in the ground, and it was a right sad affair. If you have never been to a funeral before you would be real surprised at how dinky it can be, putting a human being in the ground. There is no secret that there is a little John Deere backhoe that dug the hole, hell it was parked just around the hill from where we were, with fresh clay on its bucket. I had never thought before that a man maybe came to work and got on a John Deere backhoe and then dug holes for people to go lay in but I suppose it's a job like any other. In fact, it's probably a real good job, quiet and with no one to bother you, just dig the holes. There can't be that many to dig every day I don't think.

So there is already this ugly hole torn up and they just pile the mud next to the hole, but they try to cover it with what I guess they think is something to camouflage it, but it is just astroturf, the sad stupid kind you see on grandmothers' porches, those

welcome mats with a white plastic flower, just bright green like from Jupiter sitting over this pile of wet shit by a hole in the ground. They put up a tent that had a hole in it, it said Cedarwood Funeral Home on it, and a few rickety metal chairs. Even though I had just bought my first dress I was right offended by how shitty it all looked.

It was not my place to complain, and besides it was all free on account of Henry having served in the National Guard. The minister talked a little bit about the Lord and then one of the little old men set a ghetto blaster in the chair next to me and pressed down and they played a cassette of Taps. I mean this was not a real nice CD player, this was a real ghetto blaster like what you'd see in a movie from the 80's sitting here, playing this terrible sad trumpet with the tape reels squeaking and everything, and I'll be Goddamned if I didn't just start crying over how many times they have played this tape and Henry in that shiny wood box and that shitty Goddamned astroturf, and the minister walked over and started talking to me about the Lord, and then there was this BANG and I swear it knocked the tears right out of me. The six little men had rifles, I hadn't seen any damn rifles when I got there, but they were shooting them off and it scared me so bad that I put my hand to my chest and it turned those tears off like a faucet. They were looking up at the sun and then they were shooting their rifles, which for five of the men were just standard old twenty-twos, nothing special, but one of the men down towards the end had what looked to be a black powder musket style arrangement, but I know that the accoutrements were just for looks because he was ejecting the cartridge and firing just like the others, so it wasn't really black powder.

Then after they were finished discharging their weapons in salute the little old man who had started the tape walked back over next to me, with me sitting there with my hand on my chest just staring at him, and he pressed the button with the red square on it and the tape clicked and that terrible trumpet



All you need to  
know about the 12-string  
**RICKENBACKER**  
is that **GEORGE**  
**HARRISON** played  
one on *Help!*. With  
all that stress on the  
neck they don't stay  
in tune worth a damn,  
but when they work  
it's like a church  
bell ringing, all high  
& true, and you can  
pretend to be a  
country star back  
on the Hayride,  
or that you're backing  
up electric Dylan,  
and once you feel  
that good who  
cares if you're  
in tune.

song stopped playing. And I do not know why but I got up and I hugged that little old man, and I said thank you for doing that for him, and he kind of jerked back a little bit almost like I had bit him or hurt him a little bit and said *your daddy was a hero, ma'am, you should be proud of him*, and I said, by what do you mean a hero, and the little old man tells me that Henry had earned a medal in Viet Nam, and what do you know I did not know that at all.

When it was all said and done the Jessica Rabbit lady sent me all Henry's papers and I found out he had been in the infantry in the Army and had covered the body of a wounded first lieutenant at a place Khe Sahn. All this time living with the man and I never knew that he was a hero. I just thought he was a Weekend Warrior, is what everybody calls it.

So I tell the little old man again that it sure does mean a lot to me him being there, and he looks down and he mutters that my hair sure does look good like that, that is what he says to me, *your hair looks right nice pulled back in a ponytail*, and his cheeks get red and I almost start to laugh, both at how I hope he is telling the truth and that a man can go through his whole life and not really know how to talk to a woman without it being either about the weather or what she wants to eat for dinner or that her hair looks pretty pulled back like that. But I have ever been partial to hearing that my hair looks good, even though truth be told it always looks like shit and I have never really taken the care of it my momma always said I should, to avoid split-ends and other problem conditions, partially on account of having bleached and dyed it a lot in my younger days when I figured myself for a punk rocker. The truth is I am not a punk rocker, I am just a rock and roll type person. And all the hair dye and Germs burns in the world will not change that.

I stood there while the little old men packed up their rifles, and I did not even ask the one about the musket-type dress he had on his twenty-two although I wanted to. They were

careful to stoop and run their fingers through the grass and pick up their shells, likely not wanting the yard man to get a surprise and fling one of those shells out through the cemetery and ricochet off a headstone or oak. I went up to the little man who told me I had pretty hair and asked him for a shell, and he had this puzzled look on his face, but then he reached in his pocket and handed one to me and then turned and walked away.

## X

I saw Van Halen play once in the Boutwell Auditorium in Birmingham, Alabama, on the *For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge* tour. The acronym for that spelled FUCK which even in high school we thought was kind of cheesy but we let slide just because. I have a friend who works at this real high class bar in Austin, he is a guitar player and has this mean David Bowie vibe in a good way, and he says Sammy Hagar came in there once and he was a real goob, he was wearing bright white tennis shoes and had one of those shell necklaces and kept staring at his phone the whole time, even though he was having lunch with a pretty blond girl. My friend said Sammy Hagar ordered a shot of Cabo Wabo and he had to tell him that they did not carry it.

If you follow Van Halen or hard rock in general you probably know that Sammy Hagar owns a bar in Cabo Wabo, which is down in Mexico, and then he made a type of tequila called Cabo Wabo, and it is also the name of a Van Halen song on *OUB12*, one that is not up to their usual high level of quality. In other words, Sammy Hagar basically said to my friend *Hey I'm Sammy Hagar pay attention to me* which is pretty sad and desperate, because once you are Sammy Hagar at whatever age he is the people who even know you either really like you or all talk about how your version of Van Halen was shit, and how much they like Diamond Dave. Plus he was wearing those white tennis shoes and had a shell necklace. Plus my friend only really likes the Kinks and the Move and that one

Hollies record that art kids all like, he is a connoisseur, not some dumbass who talks about high kicks and Diamond Dave. Even though a really good high kick is actually pretty fucking great when you see it live or if you do it yourself when the spirit is on you.

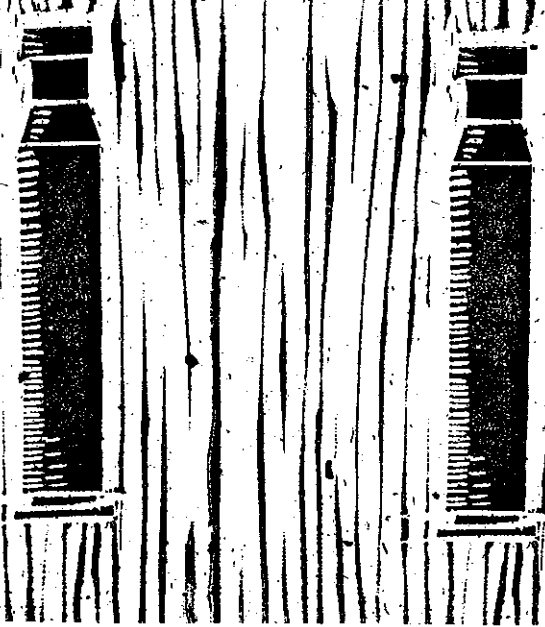
The point being that Eddie Van Halen is a real American badass who still makes real bad personnel decisions, which I like to think of sometimes when I am a little down in the dumps. Also, Cabo Wabo is a real shitty tasting tequila and Sammy Hagar is probably as much of a candy-ass as David Lee Roth, even without leopard print leotards.

## XI


It is starting to snow in Chicago and I am riding the El back down to the Loop. I swear I have spent so much of my life riding on a train going back over and over the same damn track.

The truth is I am a person with a broken heart and I miss my family and I miss Tulip and I miss New Orleans and I miss the way she would rub my neck when I was tired and I miss Juan's Flying Burrito on Magazine and I miss the way the Quarter smells in the summer, even though it smells like somebody threw up a lot of times because folks tend to throw up there, and I am just about full of hurting and missing.

I look out the window of the train and I rub the twenty-two shell on my necklace, for good luck, and I make a wish. I am going to get another band together and we are going to tour and I am going to make records and play guitar. I am a rock and roll type person and that is just what we do. And my wish today is not for true love but that my next lead singer will not be a candy-ass.



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xoxoxo