

## 1. Overture

Hello. I'm telling you, there's going to be an orchestra. You are taking your first good look at the paintings on the album cover. Has the "album" started, or is this a prelude to it?

Yes, I hear the mother and child on the promenade in Paris, and the crane shot to a bustling, idyllic, cliché *belle époque* boulevard with lots of strolling. Yes I hear that. But I didn't have that in mind at all. Does the *belle époque* have a monopoly on quaint waltzes with accordion? The main overture theme is hidden throughout the album, *Highlights* magazine-style.

## PART ONE

## 2. Everybody Now

*I heard a lot about it from an old friend  
who missed the rain  
And I heard a lot about it from the old  
men who used to take the train  
I'll tell you all about it when we meet  
again, some windy day  
I don't know all about it so I won't  
pretend I know what to say,  
But if I'm wrong, it's just a song. Ok?*

*The funny thing about it is it isn't hard to  
miss the rain  
But the other thing about it is it's not that  
far, so just get a train  
A breath of air, and you're right there  
again*

*Sometimes it only has to be found  
Sometimes the thing just needs to be  
found  
And when it's impossible to be found*

*Well you can do better  
But what do I know?*

*You got some personal hell  
But you got to do well  
Cuz you got blood on the line, and  
No one wants to be left here  
No one wants to be lonely  
Go where everyone else goes  
You won't ever be lonely*

*So you got something to say?  
You gotta give it away  
So keep your foot in the door, cuz  
No one wants to be backward  
No one wants to be outcast  
Do what everyone else does  
You won't ever be outcast*

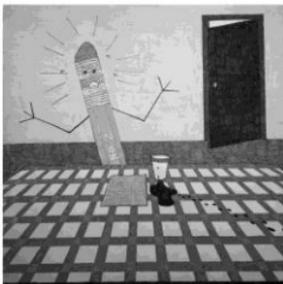
*You got to do what everybody got to do  
But everybody says you got to do your  
thing  
Enough to make a man go crazy  
Everybody goin' crazy  
Everybody now*

## 3. Laboratory Rat

In my teens I wrote and recorded songs and put them together into "albums", which were recorded on a crappy handheld cassette recorder, and for which exactly one copy existed of each. I made LP-sized covers with cardboard and felt pens. There are 7 of these. This song appeared on the album *Maple Bars on the Rampage*.

The song was actually a local indie radio hit back then, despite the no-fi recording quality. For this upgrade, I tried to channel the music I was into at that time. My friend

Bill and I made a YouTube video for this song, check it out.



*Maple Bars on the Rampage*

*Happy as a tree was I  
We'd run around and eat our lettuce  
Then a man who wore a tie  
Gave us both a shot to try and get us sick  
And now my wife has cancer  
Ask that man "But why?" he'll answer*

*Well, you're a laboratory rat  
You're stuck with being that  
You're born to die of cancer  
For the good of man  
Survival doesn't do us anything  
But cost us quite a lot of money  
Ain't that kind of funny?  
Oh, you think I'm mean?  
Well I'm a HUMAN BEAN!  
No, you can't have a magazine*

*I begged him on my tiny knees  
To spare me please, from his disease  
I ran his maze,*

*I solved it too,  
But I guess there's nothing I can do  
My wife already bit the dust  
I guess if she did, then I must*

*Yes, now you've got it right, my friend  
You'll stay there till the end  
There's nothing you can do  
It's cancer time for you  
Now you won't like it  
But tomorrow I get out my doctor toys  
And prick you full of poison  
Then your duty there  
Is just eat nuts and berries  
Till the moment that you die*

#### 4. Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

This is a cover. I put Madi in front of a mic at 2 ½, she sang all the songs she knew. This is her unaltered performance, accompaniment added later, of course.

Don't all parents want the world to play in tune and in time to their children so that they can sing their song in their own way?

## PART TWO

#### 5. Interlude 1

Where I come from, warm days usually only last until the sun goes down. On the other hand, see *Interlude 2*.

#### 6. One Beautiful Summer

I actually don't remember writing this song. It's a collage of random images and memories of our family's car trips as a child. It came into being while I wasn't looking. I do remember the lyric style was inspired by the libretto of the Philip Glass opera masterpiece *Einstein on the Beach*,

written by the autistic poet Christopher Knowles.

There are many more images just as important to this song, but whose syllables don't sound good.

*Grass, the car, and sand in everything  
Grass, the car, and sand  
And sand  
And in everything*

*What a day for a day  
One beautiful summer  
In the summertime  
And the sun, and the sun  
On the grass and the sand*

*Wait and wait  
And pretty soon warm  
And pretty soon the sun  
And the candy  
And see how far we got away  
For the day  
One beautiful summer day  
By that other light*

*Look, time to look  
The grass, and the car  
And the sand, and*

*The reds and the colors  
When we all saw that California sunset  
One beautiful summer  
Oh what the beautiful summer  
Can be the lovely summer  
Boats and trailer  
One beautiful day  
So beautiful*

*Ah lah day  
One beautiful summer day, lay  
One day to see the water on the other  
day, come on  
You didn't have so much time then  
Not much time then  
Could you, then?*

*I lie awake at midnight  
One beautiful summer*

The night that I lied awake at midnight, the song on the transistor radio was *Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey* by Paul McCartney. Deepest summer, I was 9. Three or four of us were on the roof of Albert's garage. Sleeping bags, but not yet cold. Everyone was asleep but me. I hoped for another glimpse of the Goodyear blimp.

#### 7. A Conversation

The conversation is not found in the music. The music accompanies a conversation. I know what the conversation this music accompanies is about, but it's not important right now.

#### 8. Black Lung

Cover of a song by the punk band Rancid.

#### 9. 10. 11. Cloud-Cuckoo Land

The idea was Do not overthink it. It was awful, made of mostly wrong notes. But I saved it, and then told myself Now I *must* overthink it. I removed what was wrong but kept my original barbaric yawp.

## 12. When She Landed

The rain is over, and you look up again.  
Here she comes. It's cold, and you're glad  
you brought a warm coat.

*And when she landed it was so soft  
At the end of the toe  
And when she landed it was so quiet  
That when it started to snow  
That was louder*

## 13. Interlude 2

This kind of thing happens. It's all how you  
choose to look at it.

### PART THREE

## 14. OK

Excerpts pulled from a much more  
interesting monologue.

## 15. Dear God

I am a teenager, and I attempt to write the  
worst song I can. It is not until the third  
attempt that I come up with something  
acceptably terrible. This is the first of those  
three attempts, re-imagined all these years  
later.

*Dear god, please destroy mankind  
Thank you  
You say tomay-to, I say tomah-to  
You say potay-to, I say potah-to  
She was very angry  
And she found moonlight*

Chinese language audio is from *The  
Quotations of Chairman Mao Set to Music*,  
a record I purchased from the yard sale of  
an old woman in Hong Kong a long time  
ago.

**16. The Martians Are Going to Eat Us**  
She is 7. It is a snow day. We are eating  
breakfast. The Martians are going to  
attack.

*The Martians are going to eat us  
Here they come  
The Martians are going to eat us  
Here they come*

*They are green and very hairy  
Here they come right now  
They look nothing like a fairy  
Here they come right now*

*The Martians are going to eat us  
Here they come  
The Martians will soon defeat us  
Here they come*

*They will welcome us to their house.  
"You look filthy" they will say.  
"But we don't have a bath for you, so  
you'll have to use this pot. Just climb  
into the pot and relax."  
"OK. We'll climb into the pot", we'll say.  
Suddenly, they will trap us inside of the  
pot, and put it over the fire.*

*The Martians are going to eat us  
Here they come  
The Martians are going to eat us  
Here they come*

*They are green and very hairy  
Here they come right now  
I wish they were imaginary  
Here they come right now*

*The Martians are going to eat us*

*Here they come  
The Martians will soon defeat us  
Here they come*

## 17. We Are All Famous

The saying goes that everyone will be  
famous for 15 minutes. This of course did  
not happen. Is what happened instead  
better or worse?

*And she sang:  
Someday we'll all be famous  
Someday everyone will be famous  
That's right, we'll all be famous  
Our whole lives everyone will be famous  
Our whole lives,  
But just a little bit*

*Then she sang:  
Oh look, we all are famous  
Like I said everyone would be famous  
That's right we all are famous  
Our whole lives everyone now is famous  
Good God, we all are famous  
Our whole lives  
But just a little bit*

## 18. Welcome to Windows

The sounds are from Windows XP, except  
one which is actually from Windows 95 but  
was in the right key.

## 19. ABCD Puppies

*ABCD puppies  
ABCD puppies  
ABCD puppies  
For old times' sake*

*OFMO layover  
OFMO layover*

*OFMO layover  
And I said as much*

*CZL5 interesting severance package  
CZL5 interesting severance package  
CZL5 very interesting severance package  
Tomorrow*

*ABCD puppies  
OFMO layover  
CZL8 interesting severance package  
And the puppies*

*CZL5 calamine lotion  
And the puppies*

Or, we can agree to disagree.

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