

## Ded City Jetz: Black Box Diary

Perri Pagonis

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This document is a retro-diary of the Greek rock band Ded City Jetz. It was started when we were still together as a band and finished a couple of years after the group self-destructed from its own hubris, rage, weirdness, apathy, titanic abuse of practically every intoxicant known to science and, of course, personal vanity. Absolutely everything written in this book is true, really happened, and in many instances, can be supported by on-location witnesses. You have my word on it; the Jetz wouldn't want it any other way.

Perri Pagonis

August 4, 2010

Ded City Jetz:

Billy Z- lead guitar, vocals

Dimosthenis- drums, screaming

Perri- vocals, guitar

Quick Nick- bass, dancing

Supporting cast:

Mr. Vlasis- owner and operator of Studio 2

DJ Pete-DCJ's DJ at many gigs and the unofficial fifth jet

Major Tom- Rock DJ at AIR radio

Katarina- Music programmer at En Lefko radio

September 27, 2007, 13:00

The Ded City Jetz are together for a little over a year now. When I started this band, after my old group Serfin' Ded exploded from clean insanity, I was sick from a thirty-year bender of alcohol. I've been straight for five months now: no booze, drugs, cigarettes, reefer, nothing. I eat candy, sweets, ice cream and soft drinks like a wild dog.

Why am I keeping a journal now? I've never kept one before. I think it's because, if I remember correctly, writing my novel *Blood and Popcorn* and my other books helped me not to want to blow my head off all the time. DCJ is the best band I've ever been in, and maybe the best band I'll ever be in. It's an amazing group. All the guys are personalities: no slags, scumbags or poseurs. Real rockers, all heart.

September 28, 2007, 8:35

I was with Quick Nick the bassist the other day and we tried to figure out how long I'd been an alcoholic mess. It took quite a while to tabulate an approximate duration. After some terrifying calculations, we figured I'd been dead drunk for about thirty years. There's got to be a song in there somewhere.

October 8, 2007, 12:00

The thing about alcohol, as my friend Bill the bartender used to say, is "its got the longest fuse of any drug out there." Which I imagine means you can fuck with it for a really long time before your whole body, brain and spirit simply melt into cat food.

October 9, 2007, 12:00

The real drag of getting old is finally coming to the understanding that the guys who are the biggest societal vampires out there are the guys who are in charge of everything. They're the guys having all the fun and they have the cash to start families/colonies of little vampires that will continue to fuck up everything on earth for the rest of eternity.

I have to call Dimosthenis (drummer) tonight about the Underworld club gig on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Club owners are simply more fabulous vampires to deal with.

October 9, 2007, 19:30

DCJ is a micro-phenomenon I still can't understand. We've had, up until this day, nine gigs. Nine. In December, 2006, we played to 46 people at the Mikro Mousiko Theatro in Koukaki, Athens. In June, 2007, we played to thousands at the massive Lycabettus Theatre when we played support for Alice Cooper, which was, without question, the jewel in the crown of this band's achievements. We have no records, no money. All we have is a free MySpace page and a three-song demo. That's it. But we have an army of believers: phantasmal and wiggled and toothless and stranger than people who linger near public toilets, but they're ours. It's still hard for me to swallow this fact. Perhaps we speak to the dispossessed. Perhaps we just don't know shit about anything but look good trying to slug our way through the simplest of three-chord grunk songs.

Serfin' Ded, my old band, was good training for DCJ. If DCJ were the New York Dolls, then Serfin' Ded was the bastard son of the Cramps. The Serfin' Ded band was simply an amalgam of drugs, junk, booze, self-hatred, poverty, mental illness and the complete absence of brainpower in one damp cherry bomb of atonal musical sickness. But we rocked when we were sober, which was rare.

Cleaning-up from long-term alcohol abuse is a wild ride. Your body, after so many years of getting smashed night after night is pretty much made of booze. Every tissue, organ, and system is literally pickled with the stuff- like those strange mutant aborted babies floating around in Formaldehyde in the big glass jars in college science labs. You don't realize how really, really, wacked-out you were until you have some sort of hindsight of sobriety. The first few days I was straight was a carnival ride of psychosis.

I walked, with great difficulty, from my house to the sandwich shop with no shoes on and didn't realize it. I don't remember what sandwich I had, but I sat on the curb and noshed it like a bewildered, starving caveman. I looked so fucked-up that the girl working the counter gave me another sandwich for free. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, so I just ate it, because I was ravenous as a horde of locusts. I could have eaten a bag of aquarium gravel at that moment.

I slept about 16-20 hours a day for the first couple of weeks and ate chocolate when I was awake- any kind of chocolate, as I said before, like a wild dog.

Booze is sugar. When you cut it out of your diet you need real sugar to replace it. Mucho. Quick Nick the bassist says I should have grown tits because I ate so much candy. In actuality, they did get slightly bigger, but they weren't what you'd really call tits.

October 14, 2007, 7:35

I saw my old girlfriend Daria last night on the way to the Texas club. Nice flirt, nice girl. Maybe more? We'll see.

Doing business with club owners is the foulest thing I've ever had to do and I've worked with retarded children in public schools before. We finally closed a deal for the October 27 gig for twelve Euros a ticket for which we'll get a paltry three and can use the club's backline equipment.

I really fucked-up the works this time with the upcoming Underworld gig. I invited everyone I knew, closed a radio spot on AIR radio and got our songs to be played twice that week on the arty En Lefko radio station before we talked about money. Big mistake. It won't happen again. As Quick Nick says, we'll do the business before we advertise. He's smart, much smarter than me.

I had a near complete mental meltdown yesterday. Billy Z, our great guitarist, helped me calm down. Nice, nice guy.

October 14, 2007, 21:30

I'm in a hospital room with my aunt who freaks out constantly.

Some history about us-

In September, 2006, I met Quick Nick the bassist and Dimosthenis the drummer. Our first jams were at the famous rock studio, Studio 2, in the Exarchia area of the city. We learned two songs the first night, "Love in the Reptile House," and the theme from the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Billy Z joined us after two practices and we learned songs super fast. I was at the height of my alcohol dementia at that time, drinking about two bottles of Stolichnaya vodka per day. How I survived that period, I don't know. I lost jobs, girlfriends, hope, self-respect, the works. I threw-up constantly. The most embarrassing thing was throwing-up at band practice- especially during our song "Drugstore Massacre." I almost always blew my grits during the second chorus of that tune.

On December 12, 2006, we played our first gig at the Mikro Mousiko Theatro. I was casually dating three girls at that time and lost two of them that night. The gig was great however. The club videotaped the show and we put three songs on Youtube.com and got piles of hits. It was Nick's name day and we were all smashed on Ballantine's scotch before the show. My guitar simply stopped working and became an un-tunable monster at the sound check. I used Billy Z's backup Jackson for the gig. Nick fell into the drum kit during the encore. I only threw-up a little. We played our songs "Pimp," "Drugstore Massacre," and "Tiger Shark Murder Girl," two times each. We earned 230 Euros, 46 people attended.

October 20, 2007, 9:30

My liver used to hurt me a lot before I quit drinking. If I bumped against something it was a torture for my right side. I had this continuing nightmare for many months that my liver would simply burst into flames at any moment. I saw it clearly in my mind. There was a field of alcohol vapors constantly emanating from my side. Somehow it got exposed to an open flame and fooosh, the whole right side of my body would become an inferno.

Dimosthenis is leaving on business Monday and will be back for one more practice before the Underworld gig next Saturday. I have to call AIR radio DJ Major Tom about our on-air interview on Friday. They do live webcasts now so I can tell people about it on our MySpace web page.

Katarina the programmer at En Lefko radio is a real sweet heart. She still cares about music and is really trying to help us out. I can't figure out why. Maybe we're just so clueless we look like we need any kind of assistance possible.

Jenny the singer from the band Expert Medicine and some of her wacky looking pals came by Studio 2 to take pictures and listen to our practice. Everyone likes the new stuff. If the weird people like your songs, you are probably doing something right.

Billy Z got a new job painting houses. I really hope his back pain doesn't start again. He is the coolest, hardest working kid and has such a hard time trying to find decent employment. Something is very wrong with the job system here in Greece.

October 22, 2007, 13:15

Daria is still playing perfect mega-bitch with my heart. Why is she doing this thing? Because she can, that's why; for no other reason. She'll call me when the chips are down' with lots of lovey-dovey blah-blah and emotional blackmail craziness. I'm waiting for the day.

I did mucho email propaganda this morning for the Underworld gig. It should be a good show. We've been ready to play for weeks. This concert could get really explosive. Dimosthenis is hot for the Hermano gig we might get at Gagarin club. He can taste it.

October 23, 2007, 7:30

Our second gig was something of a blowout. We played on December 26, 2006 at the Rodeo club. We opened for two other guitar-hero bands, Low Gravity and On the Road. The crowd was waiting for Joe Satriani style stuff and we played like the Ramones on steroids. A few people got it and really liked us. Most of the crowd just looked confused. Again that night I was sick in the liver. I was so smashed that my real guitar was in the repair shop getting the action adjusted and I couldn't find the strength to go retrieve it. I borrowed a local kid's guitar for the gig. We didn't get paid and the barwoman was a twisted she-cunt who wouldn't give us free drinks if her life depended on it. She'll burn. I'm sure of it. We haven't played there again. I have a feeling we won't.

October 24, 2007, 20:00

Billy Z finally got on-line today and his new email address is something funky with some Z's in it. He's stoked about doing a video of our song "Funky Iceberg." For love or money, we can't seem to get our shit together about what to do with videos. We were red hot for the video shoot of our song, "I was a Teenage Werewolf," but that, too, went to pieces. Sometimes we are so together it's scary, but it seems, in the video department, we just sit around with our thumbs up our asses.

This week seems like the longest week in history. Paul Weller once talked about the two weeks before The Jam was signed as "the longest hell imaginable. I think I know how he felt.

If the record people would come to this next show, and if the magazine people come, and if the cool people come to support us it will be something of a miracle. I mean it's a really long way to the top if you want to rock n' roll and I'm getting old and tired of selling myself to brainless pimps.

October 25, 2007, 21:45

It's been close to six months since I quit booze but there are so many continuing side effects. I swear sometimes my body, through sheer confusion and desperation for pleasure, creates its own booze for itself. My brain feels like it is sweating vodka for its simultaneous protection and short-term happiness.

Everybody seems to think I'm insane, or stupid, or both. Mostly both.

The ultimate insult came the other day when I was turned down for a retail sales position in a small, sci-fi comic book store that mostly sells plastic action figures to ten-year-old space boys.

My songs are getting weird again. I write most of the stuff for the band, and Billy Z writes some tunes as well. I wrote one the other day called "The Headache That Never Goes Away," and one today called "Trust the Insane." They're both quite punky and disconnected. Maybe it's just a phase.

I want to do our song "Porn Star City" sometime soon because I like the words. The guys can fix the music later.

October 26, 2007, 8:10

The subject of vampires is a tricky one. By vampires I mean moneyed, solipsistic, douche bags with enough money and power to run the show around themselves. The problem for me is the fact that most women have deluded themselves into believing that marriage to a vampire will solve all their problems. There appears to be a blind, self-imposed fantasy that connection to one of these social and financial bloodsuckers will result in security, comfort and fat, happy kids. Every need will be provided for if they hook up with a monomaniacally greedy nosferatu.

However, it has been my experience and observation that vampires have a very short attention span, are very self-centered and believe in their heart of hearts that their individual happiness is all that matters. Ergo, you may be queen for a day, or a year, but probably not much longer. And because vampires basically run the show on this earth, the question for me, a guy who pretty much has no power in this world, is how to deal with them?

They're not going away. I know I must recognize their existence even though I really don't like most of them. I'll probably even have to join their ranks one day for business and economic survival purposes. Perhaps I can become something like the Wesley Snipes character Blade; a vampire who can function in the daytime, help those who don't have so much, not be a complete asshole, and kill all the shit-bag vampires all around me. That's my dilemma with the vampires.

October 27, 2007, 9:30

I've got to make set lists for tonight's gig. We've got an hour to play, so that's about 15-16 songs. We're going to try our new-new song, "LSD" tonight.

We had a cool time with Major Tom on AIR radio yesterday. He's much more relaxed around us now and seems to really want to help us with gigs. He wants to send our new demo to BBC in London. When we will have this new demo, no one knows.

Practice was great last night. The show should be ok. I was at Xartes bar last night and talked to DJ Stelios. He wants to do a soundtrack for some bizarre project he's got going in December. Because I'll do anything to get our name out there, I agreed to this idea. We'll see what happens.

October 28, 2007, 11:30

Last night was a depressing experience for everyone. Only a few people came to the show. No record people, no magazine people, no nothing. We got there at 17:00, as ordered by the club boss, but nothing was ready to use for the sound check. We came back to my place and had tea and sodas while waiting to return to what would be an empty club. We played with another band from Germany called Tristate Corner and they were pretty cool. Lucky, their singer, told us horror stories about rock clubs

outside of Athens and the evil mafia goons who run them. They were ripped off everywhere and got fucked up the wazoo at every opportunity.

We played for about ten people last night, and, oddly enough, we played really well. There was no stress about the gig because there was almost no one there to try and look cool for. Underworld club looks like bad pizza. The manager wasn't there and no one else was around to talk to about our payment. We just left the place, without saying a word to anyone. It's too bad because I'd spent weeks trying to get people to come to this show. I'm kind of bummed out the whole thing these days. I'm a middle aged man playing a loser's game in a loser town for rock music and it is not something that makes you feel good about yourself. I think I'll try and see the *Hairspray* movie today as I've heard it's pretty funny. I need a girlfriend and some small success in my life soon or I really don't know what's going to happen to me.

October 28, 2007, 18:20

I went outside for a walk to clear my head this afternoon. On Sundays there's a bazaar in Monastiraki. It did not help my depressed state one bit. So many refugees from so many countries trying to eke out a living selling third world manufactured, knockoff designer junk to hoe-headed greedy tourists is no fun to watch. To be powerless to try and change the situation only worsens my already frail mindset. The absolute worst thing is that I found myself wanting to buy a bootleg Armani wallet because the one I have now is falling apart.

Quiet desperation is a terrible thing. I'm sure Dr. Freud would agree with me on this point.

When I was out today I found Pandelis, the old guitarist from my band Serfin' Ded on the street. He seemed cleaned up from his former difficulties with pharmaceuticals and I was very happy to see it. We had a coffee together and we talked about old gigs, girlfriends, people we both don't like, etc.

I don't think he's a bad guy, although we locked horns several times when our band was together. He seemed all right and glad to see me. I really wish him well as he's a really gentle, and I believe, creative kid.

October 29, 2007, 8:15

My home sitch is getting weirder by the day. Not only that but looking for day jobs is some of the most ego-crushing, personality castigating things one can do to one's self in modern society. I think I'm going to be a politician here one day, for several reasons. One, I don't give a damn about anything anymore, so my survival skills will be able to tack with the wind. Two, I'm going to fight ageism here fang and nail, because, although I don't give a shit about anything, everyone, regardless of age, should have the right to be equally miserable at their employment.

I didn't see the *Hairspray* movie yesterday.

Some people waved at me and called me by name on the street. I didn't know any of them. I waved back anyway as a courtesy. Fans? Probably not. Perhaps they were some former students of

mine from any of the English language frontistirios I used to work for, cackling with glee at a broken, middle-aged, insect of a man shambling up the sidewalk. That sounds more like it.

October 29, 2007, 21:30

I've been an alcoholic longer than most people have been alive, as I believe the average age of the population of Earth is about 25. The Long-term addiction thing is the scariest time bomb I can think of for a person, because one day, your body just says, "no more." It's not a decision that you make. It's made for you by your spine and reptile brain and glands and chemo-electric systems. Your body just can't take it anymore. The problem with this momentous day is that you've been completely smashed for thirty years and your wacked-out parasympathetic system still demands the shit, even though it can't handle it. It's like being a deep sea diver at the bottom of the ocean with one minute of oxygen left in the tank. You've got to make some big decisions about survival real fast.

It is so hard to make sense of things when your entire adult life has been one continuous, medicated brownout. I've thought about suicide so many times it's ridiculous. I've never had a successful relationship with a woman, been able to keep a job, or maintain acquaintances with people. The depression becomes unbearable on what seems a daily basis and there are days when I burst into tears for no reason, have bone-shattering headaches, see blood in my eliminations and, of course, vomit a hell of a lot.

You can sit for hours in a fetal position, drooling like a cretin, and feel sorry for other people. I have hit more rock bottoms than I can remember, but the thing I want to impress on you is the fact that you've got to stay alive, no matter what. During the most crushing depressions, sicknesses, and personal humiliations, just don't pull the trigger. Do not, don't, unh-uh, try to off yourself for any damn reason, because the day will come, without warning, where things start to improve, by the tiniest of degrees. I am not lying to you, because if I were, you wouldn't be reading this book. I would have been a soil additive many years ago. Too many unexpected things happen in this life, it's all gray areas, and the black and the white are just hypothetical extremes.

I met Daria in the summer of 2006. We had a few dates and were verbally engaged to be married in December of that year. She's an extremely beautiful, intelligent and deadly pragmatic girl and why she liked me I don't know. It was Daria who reduced me to ash and indirectly helped resurrect me. She came to our first gig. When everyone else was telling us how great we were, she told me we stank and walked out. For some strange reason, she also told me I shouldn't wear shoes while playing on stage. A few days later she asked me to marry her. Electric guitars are extremely powerful, psychological instruments, in my humble opinion.

When you quit booze, your body and brain just need other stuff to survive. It's as simple as that. Besides massive amounts of sugar, you find yourself wanting macaroni a lot of the time. When you're wasted on vodka your body craves protein. My standard diet for the last few years was vodka and pork chops for breakfast and vodka for the rest of the day.



Your other senses need things too. I found myself, without premeditation, buying face creams, body creams, scented soaps, incense, bubble bath, flavored teas, compact discs and dare I say it, nice clothes- like magazine-boy style clothes. I went from Johnny Thunders to Simon LeBon style in the course of a few months. Of course, I was s Simon LeBon with pure blackness of heart, but more Duran Duran looking than Heartbreakers looking I became.

Greek is a fucking bitch-ass language and trying to learn it with a bottle of Stolichnaya bubbling in your guts is next to impossible. I took lessons, twice, a few years ago. I can't remember exactly when it was. But the whole thing was a crash and burn affair. I've been in Greece for several years and am finally getting the hang of the language. Up until about a year ago, I spoke like a severely retarded child.

Sometimes I can actually feel the holes in my brain where information used to rest, before I incinerated my temporal lobes with Pierre Smirnoff's bonded package goods. If I ever start another band, I might call it Brain hole.

There is pretty much no other way to describe coming out of a thirty-year vodka haze except to say that everything is new again. A thirty-year coda for a fifty-year old man is quite a pause indeed. There are definitely assets and liabilities to this situation. The nice thing about it is sometimes it's like being a child again: food tastes really good, orgasms are spectacular, mind-blowing events and you're actually able to remember a few things, especially peoples' names, which I always had a problem with. The drag of it, and it is a serious drag, is that you're a middle-aged man who has effectively learned nothing in the last thirty years of his life. The self-awareness of your immaturity, ignorance and naiveté is absolutely spirit-depleting. I'm so far behind everything and everyone my age that it's easy to get melancholia about yourself, your sitch, and your frail, moth-eaten mind.

I believe these are the days that will really test me and the band. We're all feeling antsy about gigs and playing outside of Athens which appears to be our only hope for the future. Athens is a dead-end town for rock. We have to get to London or New York next year or we'll end up just being local nobodies for fucking ever.

October 30, 2007, 9:20

Waiting, waiting, waiting. Everything is fucking waiting in this game: waiting to get a gig, waiting for the gig, waiting for other people to do something, waiting for management, waiting for calls, etc. When we make calls we wait for action on them. Billy Z is so right when about us being in a position where we have to do things for ourselves or nothing is ever going to happen. He wants to organize an outdoor show with the famous Greek garage/rock band Last Drive soon. He used to organize warehouse parties when he was a kid, so he knows what to do. Again, the problem is waiting: where to find a big, free place, and, of course, if any other bands will play with us as we have a reputation to intimidate others at our shows, etc.

Billy Z and George (our artist friend who does posters and artwork) have finished the posters and handouts for the After Dark club show on November, 14. We'll use the same logo that George did for our first T-shirt which depicted a Tyrannosaurus Rex stomping through Manhattan with a jet plane

crushed in the jaws of his mouth and another doomed airplane in his hand. It is a great logo. I hope he'll be able to sell a few shirts at the show.

October 30, 2007, 19:35

I had coffee with Billy Z this afternoon and he's adamant about getting/making a happening of our own. It would be something on the order of a microcosmic Woodstock with artists, bands, bazaars, etc. We're all completely fed up with the scene here and for sheer survival purposes we have to generate our own culture here.

It's very schizy here in Athens because occasionally we sell-out clubs and people are wild to see us. Other times nobody, I mean nobody, comes even close to where we're playing. I know we have a weird, amorphous army out there, but the troops appear to be quite scattered at times.

My guess is we'll have a few good shows this winter and then we really have to bombard London with demos, emails, propaganda, the works. With any luck gorgeous Anna from the Sigma tropic band can give us a good word at Hitch-hyke records here. Because, without a disc, it doesn't matter how great your band is- there's no product to sell. It's all sizzle and no steak, or any other completely spent metaphor that means you're shit out of luck.

The subject of mobile phones is also starting to bother me lately. Mine does not ring. Ever. Sometimes my phone actually turns itself off. It's embarrassing. It's like everything else in my life right now. Clean embarrassment, nothing more.

Tomorrow Billy Z and I have a rendezvous at Copy Express to give the artwork software for the posters for the upcoming After Dark club gig. This gig has got to be good or we're pretty much dead ducks.

Words are inadequate to describe the pure schizophrenia surrounding this band. Almost everybody loves the shows, but few other bands will play with us for fear of being upstaged. The few rock clubs here have become cliques of paranoid pals who only play their classic rock, dinosaur band buddies. It's weird to say the least. How anyone can survive as a musician here I cannot fathom. Perhaps most of them sell drugs on the side. It's the only thing I can think of.

Success cannot come fast enough for me, as I have become a complete, one-dimensional, superficial creep who only cares about personal gratification on a continuous level. Fame and success will bring women and good food, of which I can use both. Fame is good. Women are good. Food is good.

My old computer blew-up the other day as started to enter the text of the diary onto the hard drive. I think it's a good omen because I've only written crap on it in the past. Good crap to be sure, but crap it is, definitely.

I wrote a song called "The Last Picture Show" today and it's not a completely blank as the other stuff I've been writing lately, so that's probably a good sign in the mental health department.

October 31, 2007, 19:35

A good day and a bad day

The good stuff: I got the posters and flyers for the next gig and they look great. I'm sure this week we'll put them up all over the place and then we'll see the results of all our bizarre creative energies.

I tried like hell to be nice to Daria today, but she simply is not receiving niceness. I tried to ask her to the ballet, give her help with grocery shopping, invitations to do coffee and other stuff. She gave me a real icy rack of shit about her having two jobs and me not understanding her needs. Fine. She reminds me of a lot of girls I've met before- especially here in Athens. She is smart enough to go after what she thinks she wants, but not smart enough to see the superficiality of the situation. Which I suppose is ok for her, but it's a drag to deal with for me. She appears to equate expensive label products with self-worth and happiness, which is a deadly combination. For girls with this mindset, it's not enough to die with the most toys, it's paramount to die with the most expensive ones, as cost equals a better reality. Ok, that's enough on that subject.

The nice thing is my new, ultra-young flirt says she'll come and check out our practice on Friday. The die is cast. Mr. Vlasis, the owner of Studio 2, told me about a new club called Bat City that has started doing live shows. He's one of the few trustworthy people in this business so I'll probably check the club out tomorrow.

November 1, 2007, 18:35

Our third gig at Soul club really made us feel good about ourselves. A few weeks after the Rodeo club gig we had a show at Soul club in Psiri on January 24. It was our first gig with DJ Pete, who is a fine rock n' roll DJ, although he tends to be occasionally verbose, on any variety of subjects. He has a good ear for music. The thing about Soul club is that it has its own, built-in, trendy crowd of local hipsters that show up no matter who the hell is playing there. ABBA or Rob Zombie, it doesn't matter. If you play there, you're cool for a day. That's the game- so we were cool for a day.

The owner, Chris, is actually not a jerk and paid for the back line equipment and gave use 250 Euros for the show. We played groovy hard rock and all the girls danced around and said "ooh-ah" to us but to my knowledge, no one got laid that night except Dimosthenis, because his girlfriend was with him. I certainly didn't get laid or I'd be writing about it now. This gig was great because we'd practiced a lot and were lean and mean and all the songs sounded fast and scary. I was still drinking my brains out at this period and feeling like dust most of the time, so this show really made me feel much better about my general condition.

I think I bought some beers at a kiosk and went home afterwards to listen to Motley Crue CDs and pass out, but I really don't remember much after the show.

Quick Nick, our bassist, makes his living as a professional photographer. I've seen none of his work and he has no pictures of his stuff in his house, so I'm sure he's very humble and very good at what

he does. He's the pop music element of the band and by far the best musician of all of us. Without him we'd just be directionless slammers with our amps cluelessly turned up to maximum volume, signifying nothing. He's also the only one of us who's ever been in something like a successful band before.

Oneiopagida (dream catcher) was a Greek power-pop band with some radio and CD success a few years ago. They were signed to Warner Brothers records here in Greece, but didn't sell mega-amounts of product, probably because they didn't tour enough. I've heard a few songs and they're good, solid, hook-filled FM pop. The Jetz are much better though. All our songs are just loaded with noise, profanity, sex and sickness which automatically makes cooler than any nice-guy pop band.

I suppose a fair question for anyone to ask me is why did I stay so smashed for so long. I guess, the answer is, for a while, it felt pretty damn good.

November 2, 2007, 11:05

There are limitless excuses for moronic, selfish behavior. I suppose I've used them all at one point or another. My dad was a sadistic freak and my mom was a terrified waif who did everything to protect me and keep me cool from my pops and the evil world around us. My family now is really small and nervous and I drank to keep myself basically medicated and away from endless ugliness, both in the house and outside of it. Like I said before, titanic amounts of drink make you feel good for a while, then it just filled an empty hole in my head.

Somewhere along the line you make a choice to either go further into the downward spiral or try and pull yourself out of it. I happily, merrily and cluelessly threw myself down the shitter and only when my body started violently rejecting its drug of choice did I have anything like the balls, disposition or ability to cut the shit out of my life. There's other stuff that happened at this time that drove me right, and I mean right to the edge of clean insanity, but I'll get to that later.

November 3, 2007, 13:00

Last night I ate so much candy, cookies and chocolate that my eyelids stuck to my corneas while I was sleeping. I had to manually open my eyes with my fingers and could almost hear the tacky residue snapping and popping under the lid as I pulled on the skin. Too much sugar for one little man, too much sugar indeed.

November 4, 2007, 9:00

One of the reasons I believe this band has some marginal chance for success is our great drummer, Dimosthenis. He's a complete enigma to the society around him. He's a successful businessman but couldn't give a shit about position, social status, high visibility luxury and all that type of holographic gaga. The band and his creativity are important to him, almost nothing else matters to this guy.

We have all sacrificed years of our lives, lost girlfriends, lost jobs, taken shit from family and friends about being jackass dreamers without hope of success in anything remotely related to music. I

hear this kind of shit everyday and it hurts everyday. But with guys like Dimosthenis in the world, I can continue to take the flak because there are guys out there who live to create. He's one of them, and that gives me the strength to continue the game. I know it sounds corny, but it's true. All decent feelings are pretty corny anyway.

Speaking of decent feelings, I have to tell you about the time Vaso, my tattoo artist friend, really made me start to think something was wrong in my life.

Vaso came to one of the last Serfin' Ded shows at An club and a few days later I was getting my arm tattooed at her place.

I'd talked to Vaso at the show, so I'm told, because I don't remember anything about what we'd said. She told me I'd consumed something like ten drinks in almost no time and she was worried. That's nice of her, but as I said before, I remember nothing about it.

As I was sitting in the chair getting tattooed, I do remember feeling absolutely nothing as the needle gun cut into my flesh. Of course I'd had a lot to drink before I'd arrived at her place, and, unfortunately, I passed-out in the chair where I was getting inked. When I woke up, Vaso was crying just a bit. I was groggy and confused and asked her what had happened, was she ok, etc. She told me, to my shock, that she was terribly worried about me, and was afraid that I was actually trying to kill myself with booze.

Of course I was touched by her concern for me and told her I was just drunk and not really trying to hurt myself, blah-blah-blah. But what really made an impression on me is that this was Vaso who was crying for me. This is a woman who has witnessed every conceivable condition a human being can be in. She has worked in rock n' roll tattoo parlors for years and has seen, for the most part, the most grizzled, hardened, grimy motor-psychos in Athens, if not all of Europe pass through her doors. They come in every mental condition possible: drunk, wasted, burned out, road damaged, career zombies, who are, by and large, simply incinerated by life. And she was crying for me- a goofed-out, basically benign, middle-class, marginally talented nobody.

As I said, I was touched. But I didn't stop the vodka. Not for a minute. That would come later, after my Easter Sunday visit to the public hospital.

November 4, 2007, 20:15

I went out with Billy Z this afternoon and put more posters up in Exarchia for the After Dark club show on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Everybody loves the dinosaur logo and it really stands out against all the other posted dreck on the walls of the city.

I went to the Bat City club a few nights ago to see some surf band called Dirty Fuse that does rehearsals at Studio 2. One of the guys in the band I'd actually met a couple of years ago. His name is Eduardo and he's from Brazil. He's a surf music wack-job and actually saw Serfin' Ded play at Attikos Alsos theater in Galatzi in the summer of 2005 after he'd only been in Greece a few days. He answered an ad I had in the paper but only spoke Portuguese, so our conversation was quite short. He found me

at the show and gave me a CD of his old surf band from Brazil called the Water Buffaloes. He's very enthusiastic but for some reason smells like salami. Now I've talked to him twice and both times the aroma of salami is quite evident around him. However, he seems like a quite amiable, cool guy, and do the other fellows in the band.

The management at Bat City seem ok, but the back line equipment is lousy and that have cheesy, electronic 80s Synsonic drums for the visiting bands. It looks like a place for teenager bands and first timers. Cute waitresses though, so I'll probably go back soon.

November 5, 2007, 19:20

I lived with my dad for the last several years here in Athens. He was really sick from diabetes, booze, indulgence and depression for a long time and he finally died in April of 2006. Our relationship was always caustic, but the last couple of years were really kind of ugly. I took care of family business shit and he sat there and told me I was a punk. That's about it.

I suppose, on some level, I should thank him for giving me so much shit because now I have piles of material to write songs about. Almost all of my songs are about mental illness, self-destruction, depression, monsters, freaks, loneliness, hopelessness and women with large breasts. It's important to have variety in your product.

I can't remember the dates exactly, but I've had several jobs since I came to Greece in February, 2000. I worked in an art gallery for a while. The place was really tiny and I believe my job there was pretty much to make sure the frail little female owner didn't get raped by snarly passers-by on the street. We did coffee and sometimes sold a painting and she talked about her boyfriends. It was a stupid job but we stopped working at 15:00 each afternoon and she almost always bought me drinks after the gallery closed. I split when I thought I'd found a real job at a frontistirio (foreign language school) which would become a complete bag of rats in a short period of time.

November 6, 2007, 18:15

It was a bit of a wacky day today. I scored a job at a book store doing orders for titles in English and writing on-line blurbs about the titles. The boss seems ok, as they all seem ok at first, before they become psychotic beasts of perdition. I could use the bucks so it's probably a good thing.

I went to see my friend Teta who works at the beauty shop and we talked dumb shit for while and I bought some cologne because I'm going to start scoring women again or die trying. Just as I'm going to become a successful writer, musician and film jock like Rob Zombie one day, or I'll die trying. So I'll probably die with a lot of work still to do.

My aunt is getting snaky again and giving shit to everyone in her own stinky, childish, underhanded way. She loses everything, trusts no one, accuses everyone of stealing, playing tricks, conspiracies, etc. She can remember absolutely nothing and then the whole ugly cycle of accusations begins again. She's only happy when she's angry, so let her stay angry as long as she can.

I talked to Billy Z for a short time today. He was heading off to Monastiraki for some business and couldn't talk much. I learned however, from Billy, that his tooth was absolutely killing him at the Underworld gig. It was a loud show and the sheer volume and vibrations from the drums was making his tooth pain unbearable. He had the tooth removed the next day.

I don't know why but wherever I go these days, people ask me about my old band Serfin' Ded. They seem really bummed-out when I tell them the band is ka-put. Quick Nick tells me that's the mentality here in Greece. You have to be dead to be famous. Living bands have no chance. He's probably right- he's almost always right.

I think I'm going to buy an acoustic guitar to keep at home because I'm sick of schlepping my Stratocaster everywhere with me. I love my Strat, as I've had it nearly twenty years, but it's a bitch to carry around and that's the end of the story.

The bus and the subway are depressing in the Fall months. So many people running to spirit-crushing jobs in polyester blend clothing, carrying nylon bags with lunches and changes of shoes in them. It reminds me so much of my mom. She wanted to be a shoe designer when she was young but never had the chance to go to college.

I listen to the secretaries and office assistants and waiters and sales clerks talking to each other on the train. They have little or nothing except their children to give them hope. I'm sure, many years ago, my mom was one of these ladies on the metro- tired from depressing work and a sad home life, throwing herself into the grinder every day, denying herself even a few nice things, so I could have some kind of future, some kind of life outside of wage slavery. Only lately have I been better able to understand a few things about life. Only now I understand what a saint she really was.

The two guitarists in the band, me and Billy Z, have had trouble with our sound since the beginning of our practices last September. I was always playing too loud to get decent distortion. We finally both got Beringer distortion pedals and use them as tone pedals. Like a wah-wah pedal, without the wah-wah effect. We can now play with ultra-clean distortion at low volume and not fry our ear drums quite as bad as before. It only took a year for us to learn this- a whole year of enduring bone-shaking volume to achieve some sound that we suppose is the right sound for us. Wow.

November 7, 2007, 18:40

I've been writing Black Box Diary for about a month now. The guys like it, so it seems I need to read it to some literary-school types because it's been since forever since I've written anything and I'm rusty as hell. Maybe I'll trawl up some frontistirio kids to take a look at it for laughs. They take everything seriously. The vocabulary alone will fry their lobes.

I had my first day at work at the book store today and it was pretty much like every other first day at work in recorded human history- lots of mistakes and weirdness but all worked out ok in the end, per usual.

A kooky thing happened on the way to the coffee shop after the store closed. I stopped to have an ice cream before I got on the train to come home to my neighborhood. The train was absolutely packed and I was pasted against the back of a pretty young girl with long hair. My lips were still really sticky from the ice cream and a big clump of her hair stuck to my mouth. My arms were pinned to my side and it was impossible to remove her tresses from my gob. The people around me smirked like reptiles as I twisted my head back and forth to remove the manifest. I eventually came free, with a little work. Her hair smelled really good. She uses an expensive conditioner, I'm sure.

I gave some flyers for the next show to the people at work and one of the guys there, Kostas, actually knew who we were. He'd seen us on the Art Uber Alles TV program and remembered when we were talking about Sponge Bob Squarepants being one of our heroes.

I didn't hear from any of the guys today, probably because they're being cautious about my new work sitch. I've lost so many jobs in the past that I'm sure they're just playing it safe and doing the incommunicado thing out of respect and care.

I can really feel the electricity building up inside me for the show next week. I almost exploded in anticipation from the Underworld gig that flopped big time. This next one already feels good. Sometimes you get some ESP about gigs. The Ejekt festival gig felt lousy from the beginning, while Alice Cooper and Last Drive felt like fuel-injected euphoria straight into the reptile brain.

November 8, 2007, 6:30

I have a love-hate relationship with the Spice Girls. The Spice Girls could have saved the world from itself, but they didn't. I learned from watching too much MTV that the perfect tea break is Earl Gray with three of the little packages of sugar and cream. It should last about the time span of three Spice Girls videos from the 90s.

90s Spice Girls were great with all their incoherent giddiness and quasi-burlesque nonsense stuff. I saw a new video today of the new/reunion Spice Girls and it was just depressing. They're mature now. They take themselves seriously and don't giggle at all. No wonder people in the know worship guys like George Clinton, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Little Richard, etc. They are mature guys who know that maturity isn't just a drag, it's a trap that will kill you if you let it.

Brooke Shields (one of my real heroes) said once 'stay young and goofy as long as you can, because when you're mature, there's no surprises anymore.' I'm with Brooke 100% on this subject. It's a tough balance when you're older because you've got to protect yourself and be aware of all the vampires out there, because they're everywhere. But if you try to maintain a continuous senses of wonder and newness, and still keep your guard up against the monsters of the world, you'll probably be a reasonably happy person.

November 9, 2007, 6:45

Billy called me last night after work to tell me he had no news about anything. Tonight we've got practice at 20:00 at Studio 2. Anna from the Sigma tropic band might come, might not.



November 10, 2007, 6:45

She didn't come. I've been at work lately so I don't check our email so much to see if she answered my letter, but she definitely wasn't there. Practice was good and the *LSD* song sound fine. It should be a good gig barring any freak storms in the immediate future.

With the gig coming up, the issue of clothing again presents itself to us. We're all college-educated guys and don't have a clue as to what to wear when we're on stage. Our web page presents us as a punk-rock-glam band.

Billy Z wears endless layers of T-shirts, like a gypsy onion, and is the quintessence of the snarly-stylish punky street kid. Dimosthenis always looks very butch with no shirt whatsoever, or some sleeveless thing to understatedly display his many tattoos to the female population of the crowd. He's the non-glam guy in the band. He's rock, pure and simple- no flashy stuff. Quick Nick does either a beach bum or Sergeant Pepper-looking thing most of the time. I live in some sort bizarre fugue state between the mentalities and styles of Duran Duran and Motley Crue. I'd love to look like Mick Ronson or some L.A. glam rock entity, but I'm nearly fifty and bald so that look is simply not an option for me.

I'm at that terrible age where respectability starts to become an issue. Unfortunately I happen to look good in a business suit. Ergo, I wear suits more often than I did when I was young. My heart is with the '73 Bowie style but the reality of the sitch is I look really pathetic trying to wear young and sporty stuff. I'm middle aged, that's it. So I wear suit jackets and trendy-ish tops and boots a lot of the time as a compromise between Simon LeBon and Nikki Sixx. But make no mistake, I'd much rather keep company with Nikki than Simon.

November 11, 2007, 11:00

Undoubtedly the most depressing part the the day for me is the first few minutes of the morning. This is the time when I turn on my mobile phone which never rings no matter how many business cards and DCJ stickers I hand out.

The other day I had a nice flirt with a girl who works at an insurance company. We did sexy chit-chat and exchanged telephone numbers and everything looked ducky for a date/rendezvous. The other day when I turned on my phone, miraculously, there was a message waiting for me. It was from the insurance company girl. In the message she asked me please to never call or text her for any reason.

What we're going to do with ourselves after this gig I don't know. My new job keeps me quite busy in the days and I'm pooped in the evening. I was the PR-front guy when I wasn't working and now that Billy Z is between jobs, he does a lot of the footwork that I used to do. He puts up posters and makes contacts with club people, web people, graphic artists, etc. He's wild about the Internet now and hits the cybercafés often. I hope he has better luck than I do with trying to get our name out there.

November 12, 2007, 6:40

Sometimes the self-doubt and emptiness in my life becomes overpowering. I am one of the nicest guys I know. I'm not trying to be cute or clever here. I know bad people; I know how they behave and pretty much how they think and act in many situations. Why I am such a social outcast I cannot figure out.

I really have no friends except the band guys. Women pay little or no attention to me. It is always difficult to find and keep a job. Sometimes I really don't know how much more social rejection I can take before I really start to crack-up. Sexy, intelligent vampires run the show in this life, there is little to no chance in society for a middle-aged punk-shaman like myself.

I was thinking about trying to write some sort of quasi-academic screed about the joys of idiocy, or if not idiocy, complete, 100%, self-delusion about life. As I see it, the real enemy here is meta-cognition, or thinking about thinking.

A former girlfriend from some time ago is an example of what I'm talking about. She walks around. She sees something she wants. She buys it. She's happy, without thinking about what's behind the happiness. Why does an expensive wristwatch or turbo-charged mobile phone complete her programming for self-contentment.?

Maybe it's a good idea to want to live in a magazine. You have stuff and stuff equals pure, crystallized happiness- nothing more. You win, the stuff wins, everybody wins. Casino people are like this personality type, as are people in the bouzoukia nightclubs. The best suits and hairspray win every time. Joining them is something to think about because I'm depressed and feel like a character in a Viktor Hugo novel most of the time. Maybe it's best to pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.

I was talking to Billy Z the other day about maybe trying to start a small business that I can do at home. I was thinking of an advertising business. I can write business propaganda with the best of them, I'm sure. All I need to do is match the text with some ludicrous photo-glop and sell out completely to the industrial machine and all my dreams will come true. I think I'll call it Persistence of Memory advertisements. I can see the money now.

November 13, 2007, 6:45

Yesterday was a complete David Lynch movie. I was so sick at work that my ears were ringing constantly. Construction guys were all around us with saws and drills and stuff, sawing and drilling everywhere for the store renovations.

My two female bosses simultaneously have maternal instincts for me and then turn into icy business machine people. I ate about ten little chocolate bars at my desk because I was starving all day. I'd get chased away from my desk by one of them to do some horrid slave-work like carry shit, cleaning shit, moving shit, etc. I came home and passed-out cold. End of story.

Billy Z thinks we'll have a lot of people at the upcoming show, as does Quick Nick. As I've said before, we need some success soon because we're all putting so much into this product and not seeing a lot of return. I'm so tired. I have to go get washed work. I'll try to write more later today.

November 14, 2007, 6:45

I didn't write any more yesterday because I was exhausted from sickness and work. I'm feeling better today after a few days of nothing but sleep after the job. I've done absolutely everything I can think of to help make this show a success and if it blows-up, at least I can say I gave it my all.

Again, I don't know what to wear tonight. I have no sense of gig-style and it's something I should try to cultivate soon. I had a dream about scuba diving last night. I've never tried it, but in the dream it seemed nice. Anna from Sigma Tropic is a scuba diver, maybe she'll be there as she's made no other appearance in recent history.

A couple of years ago, when I was drinking my brains out, I had my appendix removed by a local doctor. For a few days before its removal, my side was killing me and I finally went to the public hospital, on Easter Sunday, to have someone look at me.

It was like the burning hospital scene in *Gone with the Wind*. Sick, dying, freaked-out, syphilitic, brain-scorched weirdoes were everywhere, like in a John Carpenter movie. The place was a wreck. I sat in the waiting room for almost a day with an IV in my arm. Finally, I crawled out of the place, as I could not walk worth shit and simply yanked the IV out of the crook of my arm, which was a huge mistake. It hurt like hell and left a hole the size of a bullet wound. I was bleeding all over the place, walking like a Frankenstein on the street and trying to get a taxi on an empty road, on Easter, in the deserted city of Athens.

Miraculously, a taxi appeared on the horizon and stopped. He took me near a private hospital, as he couldn't go all the way there because he was late for his Easter dinner. He kicked me out on the corner and I slunk into the Blue Cross hospital at Mavili Square and passed out in the waiting room.

I stayed there for the night and had my appendix removed the next day. When I woke up from the anesthetic there were incision holes all over my stomach. Later, I asked the doctor when the hell were all these craters for? He told me my appendix had been fried for a long time, but not only that. My stomach had tons of infections in it from all the endless amounts of Stolichnaya I'd been pouring into it over the years. Each hole was a place where he'd put this little micro-sized vacuum cleaner-thing into my gut to scoop out all the disgusting, rotted crap in my intestines.

I still didn't stop drinking. I couldn't have cared less. I actually started thinking about getting more tattoos at this point in my life- stuff with devils and monsters. That's what I was thinking about; that's what was important to me.

November 16, 2007, 6:45

The gig was really good- just what we needed. After Dark club was about ¾ full they really liked our set which was about 90 minutes. I had work early the next day and missed most of DJ Pete's set, but I'm sure he was great. The cute bartender bought us rounds of tequila ( I drank Sprite in little shot glasses) and things, at least for a few hours, seemed really together. The new songs "LSD" and "TV-1"

sounded boffo. On our final song, Billy's guitar blew-up so I gave him mine and I played air guitar with the mike stand. All our friends were there and took gobs of photos for theirs and our web pages.

It's nights like that which give you the strength to keep pushing the rock up the hill, even when you know it's useless to continue. The next morning I was a zombie at the bookstore, but it wasn't too busy. I came home yesterday and went directly to bed. My head cold is pretty much gone and I'm not a living dead, walking corpse from fatigue any more. I actually feel pretty good this morning.

What we're going to do with ourselves now remains a mystery. Many people asked me, after the show, when is our next live performance as they'd like to see us again. I had no proper answers because absolutely nothing has been planned.

We really need management and organization because lots of people are interested in us now and if we don't act soon, we'll lose them. I'll try to contact the local label Spinalonga records today or soon. Mr. Vlasis from Studio 2 and Major Tom the DJ both say they're decent guys and not complete jerk-offs. Maybe they can help us, as we can't seem to decide on much of anything these days.

I need a new mobile phone. Mine seems to have lost its mind. It doesn't ever ring, or I get messages that say people tried to call me. Schizy stuff. The man with no phone, that's me.

November 16, 2007, 18:45

I'll be 49 years old next month and I feel every minute of it. There is something about a man in his middle years that makes him think about the opportunities he squandered in his youth and even later in life. I have terrible regrets about never having started a family, or even seriously considered marrying a girl until my mid-forties.

The duality of the problem is that I know, in my heart of hearts, that I was not ready to start one when I was younger. I know I would have regretted it later and used that resentment in ugly ways. It's kind of like my position with alcohol now. I should have quit a long time ago, but I simply wasn't capable of doing it then.

There were several young couples at the show on Wednesday. Seeing them together, really digging your songs, being young and sexy and alive is a joy for me. To think that our bizarre little band is the reason that they can share memories of good times together- it just makes my chemo-electrical system buzz with glandular glee.

Olga, Quick Nick's incredibly cool girlfriend, made me realize how much I need a decent woman in my life. After the show, as I said before, I had to get home fast because I had work in the morning. I had difficulty putting on my backpack with guitar effects and my guitar bag and other stuff. She helped me pile on my gear just like I was a dumb kid putting on his winter coat and idiot mittens. I felt so helpless and goofed that I nearly spit in a fit of self-loathing.

Billy Z said something to me the other day when we were talking about girlfriends, band stuff, etc. He said he was concerned about me because I always date girls who are difficult personalities,

bitches, freaks, users, manipulators, or praying mantises. He sincerely told me that I should be looking for the best girls out there. The ones with real character. Ones you can trust and respect. He told me I deserved nothing less because I'm the nicest guy he's ever met.

Why do I hate myself so much? Why can't I change? Life is simply too short to consider yourself to be shit. I will change my attitude about myself for the better or I will die trying.

November 17, 2007, 11:40

I'm sitting in an empty bar drinking tea and listening to weird French torch songs on the stereo. The crowd on Ermou Street is gathering and I'm trying to manage to make myself buy something nice for myself. I believe this is a part of feeling better because you finally start to believe that you deserve something good for yourself. I know it sounds heinously superficial, but I feel like shit and I want to feel better. I'll try anything.

When you buy shit you feel like shit, when you buy something with a bit of quality you feel pretty good about it. I hate to say it, but it's true.

November 17, 2007, 17:10

I bought two nice sweaters and a cheese cake for myself today and I feel pretty good about it. It's a tough line to walk because my mental meta-cognition is telling me it's just a psychological crutch I'm using because so much is missing from my life. The other side of my brain is telling me I look pretty damn slick in the new sweaters and that the cheese cake is really delicious.

November 18, 2007, 19:30

We played a second time at the Soul club on February 18, 2007. It was a costume party because that is the carnival day here in Greece. It's like Halloween with a healthy amount of Jesus stuff and blah-blah thrown in for good mix. The owner, Chris, really liked our first show and upped our money to 300 Euros and backline equipment. The place was packed with college-aged, hard drinkers who danced and partied like displaced savages while we played three-chord stomp rock. We felt really great about ourselves and partied until late with some groupies and hangers-on.

Billy Z flew into the audience many times and Quick Nick pogo-danced like a young punk most of the night. I was just starting to cultivate my Zen-cool style of old-guy chic on stage. I wore my Johnny Cash black suit over a black, sleeveless T-shirt and badass ankle boots. All our songs that night sounded like Velvet Underground played at 45 RPM: fast, arty, sexy noise played with blind enthusiasm and it sounded like heaven. The sound man was Ringo, real name Dimitris, who plays drums with a local band called 700 Machines. He has good ears and made us sound like we actually know what we're doing.

I was still smashed into deep space at this time. However, I think there are several other reasons, or at least cheap hypotheses, why my songs are so short, loud and devoid of hope. I could never keep a job for very long. Not because I wasn't at least relatively capable of doing the job, but because I could subconsciously present to my employers how stupid everything was in their work

environment, and how meaningless their work is in the cosmological sense of things. Employers want blind machines that unquestioningly do mechanical labor on command. To look behind the curtain of their work, and show them that the curtain is the only reality is the highest crime imaginable, because you show them, in their faces, what a house of cards everything really is in this life. I was really good at doing this thing.

So, for a long time, when I lived in America, I worked for a temporary employment organization called Manpower. I worked there for about six years and never in the same place for more than a few weeks. I was permanently temporary, which seemed fine for a while. I forget what job I got after that one, but what I can tell you, for an absolute certainty, is that I didn't stay there very long.

It's the same everywhere in the offices of the world. One dimensionality is bliss, curiosity is death. Yin and bloody Yang.

November 19, 2007, 18:00

I really like the Morocco Tea Room in Ambelokipi so I go there when I can. It's like an airport bar and nobody sits there for very long except me so the scenery changes fairly often. I've watched many cheesy rock videos on the big screen there. What scares me a lot is that now that I'm clean from booze will my marginal song writing talent go completely to shit. I think of the heroes of my youth like Aerosmith, Ozzy and Alice Cooper. Unfortunately, when all of them quit the drugs, their material went straight to crap. Even the Coop hasn't written stuff like *Killer* or *Love it to Death* since he cleaned up. I'm sorry but the truth hurts sometimes and it's got to be said.

Eric Clapton is the jewel in the crown example of guys who should keep doing drugs. How anyone can go from "Tales of Brave Ulysses" to "Lay Down Sally" is a disgrace- a complete freaking disgrace.

We had dinner at Quick Nick's house on Sunday and he made roast chicken, potatoes, green salad and apple pie for us. Everything was incredibly good. Olga was the perfect hostess and then we watched Amy Winehouse videos. I think Amy's weird. She's got a bad attitude and she's guilt-free about it. But she'll get hers one day, as they all do. Lots of women I know are incapable of feeling guilty about anything and they're the ones who completely fall apart without warning one day.

DJ Pete says the biscuit is in the oven for a show in Thessaloniki soon. We'll see what happens there. I wouldn't mind playing After Dark club again as Nikos, the owner, turned out to be an honest guy when it was time to get paid. His backline equipment isn't bad and the place is just big enough to hold our crowd which is small but dedicated when they feel like it. Around Christmas time the DCJ army will be back from universities and schools will be closed and we'll have some bigger shows, with any luck.

November 21, 2007, 6:30

I like the bands KISS and Nirvana quite a bit. I really like both their approaches to music, marketing, etc. Gene Simmons is one of my favorite people because he's so straight that he's become a

real twisted monster and doesn't realize it. I read an interview with him in the 90s, right after Kurt Cobain checked himself out of the game. It seems Gene was not surprised by Kurt's actions, and didn't seem to upset about it in the interview. He said, and I'm paraphrasing, that Kurt didn't know how to be a rock star, or how to enjoy himself and was so into the misery-thing that all that was left to do was blow his head off and be done with it. It sounds a bit course, but to a certain extent, Gene is correct about the situation. You have to like yourself or all the money and fame and attention mean very little. On the other hand, Kurt's songs touched millions in ways no KISS song could ever hope to do. Nirvana really found the center of all our self-doubts and let us know we're not alone with our fears, dreads, anxieties, etc. I like Gene because he shows me how to enjoy myself- because life is short and it's important to be good to yourself. But I love Kurt Cobain because he was a light in the darkness, and there's always more darkness than light in this life. For you, for me, for Tori Spelling, for everybody. The bible says light came out from the darkness. Darkness was there first, it will be there last.

November 22, 2007, 6:40

I liked Avril Lavigne about five years ago when she was 12 or so and played songs like "Sk8r Boi" because, well, she was 12 and played a Telecaster. Now she's about 17 and has reached the apex of her career. In her new video, "Hot" she is the perfect hybrid person-thing between Steve Tyler and Liv Tyler. Which, as we all know, is the current popular idea perfection. The song sucks, but who cares about the song? Eye candy rules everything. I hope she never changes.

I suppose it's fair for the reader to ask, if one has actually read this far in the work, how did you live, like financially, while you were so ultra-smashed and having such schizy, mindfucked adventures? It's a fair question. I'll try to answer it. The answer, I imagine, is that I lived with people and didn't need piles of money. I lived like a worm for many years. I never had health insurance, and I got my hair cut once a year. I could get stupid part-time jobs at book stores and record stores or do just dumb retail shit in any kind of place: mattress stores, kitchen stores, catalogue department stores, etc. I lived with my mom for a long time, had endless roommates in group houses, etc.

I was good friends with my mom and it wasn't like living with a parental overseer. She was the coolest person I've ever known and when she died I was devastated for years. Every night for the first year I would wake up in bed with my heart absolutely hammering in my chest. I was sure I was having a heart attack every night and I didn't care. Not one bit. I'd take a long drag of vodka and just sit there and wait to die or fall asleep again. As I said, I really didn't care which one came first. When my father died I was pissed-off for about a day and then got over it. His final words to me were, "I want money."

November 24, 2007, 6:40

There was this mega-sized lag time between the last Soul club gig and our first big gig at the Gagarin club. Between late February to mid May 2007 we didn't play anywhere. We couldn't find a gig for love or money and we were all getting snaky and frustrated about the situation. The few decent bands I've been in, as I've been in many shit-bag bands, absolutely live for the chance to play somewhere. I suppose some analog to a caged, wild animal could be used to illustrate this situation.

The beast was born to run, kill, fuck and die. That's about it. When you put it in a steel cage it can't run, kill or fuck. It can only die. Concert bands are kind of like that also. The only time you really feel alive is when the band is flying in a jam. Sex is nice, good food is nice, drugs are wonderful, but I really overdid it there. The gig is the thing. The gig is life itself and when you take that away from a rock star, he's just a guy with no show, a guy with a big dick and who can't use it. It blows, big time.

However, a lot of positive stuff did happen during this black hole period and it's probably what kept us together in the mental health department.

November 25, 2007, 9:00

I was watching TV one night this March and this bizarre program came on channel 9. It was full of mutation bands, interviews with tattoo artists, club weirdoes, sex people, the works. It was called *Art Uber Alles* and its theme, naturally, was the Athens underground scene. I became terribly excited and watched for contact information at the end of the show. Of course, there was none; don't forget it's an underground show.

The next day I mailed channel 9 a demo CD, bio and photos of the band. I heard nothing back from them for a long time- I mean months. Follow-up calls were fruitless. One day when I was in my usual fucked-up, semiconscious condition, which I believed to be completely normal, I got a call from Quick Nick. He told me to go pronto to the Internet café and check our MySpace page because things were afoot. There were two notes there from the *Art Uber Alles* guys and someone named Major Tom, who turned out to be a rock n' roll DJ.

In these notes were many apologies from Theo, the creative director of the show. Our letter had been ping-ponged around and he'd finally received it a few days ago. He listened to the demo and contacted Major Tom about us. Both of them were hot for a video-shoot for the TV show and live interview on Athens International Radio (AIR radio), which is BBC in Athens. We all got excited like baby animals.

November 25, 2007, 17:00

After lots of blah-blah with Theo we made arrangements to be videoed at Studio 2 in Exarchia, which is our standard practice place. I asked him what kind of payment he'd like for his services. He told me he was fond of Captain Morgan rum and a bottle of his favorite beverage would be a suitable exchange.

We had been practicing for about an hour when Theo arrived with a very short, thin assistant, whose name I can't remember. Theo looked like James Dean's little brother with lip piercings. The assistant looked kind of Islamic, but I can't be sure. They set up their lights and stuff and had an argument with Quick Nick, who is a professional photographer, about light-angle stuff. In the end they did what he suggested.

The short guy then put on something that looked like a parachute, but it was some sort of camera you can run around with. We played our songs "Tiger Shark Murder Girl," and "More Dead



People" a few times. The little guy with the parachute camera scampered all around us like Roger Rabbit taking video footage at a remarkably fast rate.

Then we did the interview which was a real hoot. We did cosmic blah-blah for half an hour and talked about Rob Zombie, horror movies, Sponge Bob Squarepants, Kalomoiria and others. Then we begged for gigs on camera, as none were forthcoming. We would see Theo and his guys later on in the month when the broadcast came on channel 9. The same week as the video-shoot with *Art Uber Alles*, I met Major Tom, the DJ.

November 29, 2007, 6:25

My mom died eight years ago today. I still think about her often as she was one of the finest, strongest persons I've ever known. She let me make my own mistakes and then helped me try and solve them with love and compassion and always some little bit of kooky humor. I hope I am making her proud with the way I approach life, the way I treat other people and the way I try and be a part of the world around me. But I'm not sure sometimes if I'm doing it correctly at all.

It has been so long since I actually put my arms around a woman that I'm actually going to go to a dance class tonight to try and learn the tango. I've never felt lower in my life. I do not feel like Antonio Banderas, not even a little. However, if I could learn to sing, if what I do can be called singing, then I can probably at least fake-it a little at the dance place, because, as we know everything is an illusion anyway.

November 29, 2007, 21:15

I didn't make it to the tango place- maybe next Thursday. I came home and my almost brain-dead older aunt was having a fit and needed to be calmed-down. She should be in a nut house, in a nut coat, by herself. It will probably happen one day. The other aunt goes between catatonia and rage. What a family we are.

So I met Major Tom the DJ in April or May of 2007. He is a real city boy who talks fast and in your face. He zapped me several times with one-liners and speedy repartee. I told him to chill and then he was normal. He's actually a pretty cool guy when you get to know him. We've done four interviews to date on his show. Most times we did an unplugged set in the studio while on the air, which was always a bit goofy in my opinion. My favorite one was the first time when we played "Pain Freak" and "Tiger Shark Murder Girl." Quick Nick put maracas in his socks, stomped his feet and played slide guitar. This was one of the last times I was really fucked-up and I groaned my way through the songs like close-to-the-final-act Kurt Cobain on Nirvana's MTV unplugged. Billy Z borrowed a steel string and I borrowed a kid's gut string guitar and we sounded like a punky, wasted, Robert Rodriguez movie band. I think we went out for drinks later, but I can't remember. Tom tried to hook us up with some other local bands for gigs after that day, but when I listened to their songs from their MySpace pages I didn't like any of them. Not one.

November 30, 2007, 7:00

Speaking of checking out web pages, I can't tell you how invaluable a tool the Internet has been for us. Our MySpace page, which we've had since December, 2006, now has recorded more than 5,000 hits. We've been contacted and praised to the skies by Molly Hatchet, Heavy Metal Kids, and the former Runaway's lead singer, the inimitable Cherie Currie. Sometimes it's a pain in the butt to update things, send birthday greetings, etc, but it's well worth it in the end.

All we need now is something like a CD and some kind of opportunities to play for people who can actually say "yes" to promoting a tour, say "yes" to recording a decent CD, say "yes" to distribution outside of Greece, blah-blah-blah,

Here's something else you should know: demos have always been a problem for us.

November 30, 2007, 18:20

My head hurts from computer work at the bookstore and I'm feeling a bit shitty but it will pass. As previously mentioned, demos have plagued us from the beginning of our existence. Our first demo was remarkably bad, but it got us our first show. It was recorded by a guy who was eating a souvlaki and making phone calls while we were playing. It sounded like shit, but the playing was all heart and that element came across on the recording. It really sounded like cats being tortured, but I guess that's what we sounded like at the time.

Shortly after that we recorded a three-song demo with the producer Nikos worked with when he played with Oneiropagida. His name is Chris and he made us sound like a cross between Metallica and the Cars. We had no money so we had to stop recording after three songs. We couldn't afford to record a full CD, although we had plenty of original material. As of this writing, it is still the demo we use when people ask to hear our music, although our style has changed continuously since we've been together.

Believe me when I say we spent all day at Best Of studios recording the three freaking, blow-out, two-minute time bomb pieces. The drums took forever to get together. I took a long nap in the studio, had a hot dog at the corner and played with some guy's little daughter who was there and the drums still weren't nearly ready to be played. Three songs took nine hours for a total of eight recorded minutes of recorded music.

Adding the vocals at Chris's house the next day was embarrassing as hell for me as I threw-up while singing and almost got the slop on one of his expensive microphones. I apologized like hell and he was very cool about it, but it still made me feel like a real skeeze.

Billy Z is adamant that we record something new soon. The guys at Hitch-Hyke records appear to have little to no interest in us, so it looks like it's up to us to go indie and try our luck there. He also scored two more gigs for us. One on December 19 at Mad club, where I was sure we'd never play again, and one at After Dark, where we had a great gig a couple of weeks ago.

December 5, 2007, 6:30

I remember a few years ago I had a psychiatrist friend named Carla. She was from Sao Paulo, Brazil, and had something like fourteen PhD degrees. She appeared to be wealthy as she would show me photos of her villas and teams of Akita dogs, etc. One night I asked her what she thought of me, my mindset, and my mentality. She told me she believed I was staying alive merely for purposes of revenge.

I'm getting bitch-slapped at work by my boss because I don't work very fast on the computer. She's a nice woman when she's not under stress, but when stressed she becomes an obnoxiously loud, hyperactive, chain-smoking vampire with no restraining checks and balances system to curb her ire. She's set herself up as tsarina in her world and plays the part perfectly. I like her, but at times I could cut her throat with the edge of a tin can and feel nothing.

Around the middle of April, 2007, we were feeling like shit again. We could not score a gig for any reason. We were flying high after the second Soul club show, but the groovy feeling had worn off some time ago. When we were just at our lowest point, DJ Pete, through his connections at the Gagarin club, got us a show supporting the famous Greek rock/garage band, Last Drive. They are something like a legend in Greece, as they've been around, on and off, for about twenty years.

The DCJ guys went bonkers when the gig was confirmed and we practiced like monkeys up until the day before the show. Oddly enough, I knew one of the Last Drive guys but wasn't aware he was their guitarist until we met at the gig. Guitarist George has a sci-fi book store in Exarchia and I went there looking for work a few weeks before the concert. It was a bit embarrassing for me when we met at the show but he was cool and my chagrin soon passed.

Some people who have seen us play several times say the Last Drive gig was the best show we've ever played. The sound at Gagarin club was fantastic. We all had big Marshall amps and roadies and free attention and techies and the works. We were, undoubtedly, rock stars that night and we played like rock stars.

The crowd was ready for Last Drive and had never heard of us before. We played a forty-minute set and the first couple of songs only had the people in the first few rows dancing. By the end of the set the place had gone crazy with people jumping around like apes and boogying everywhere. Our secret-surprise encore song was "Brand New Cadillac" played speed-glam-punk style. It brought the house down. Billy Z screamed his brains out on vocals and played Joe Strummer guitar better than Strummer himself and I'm sure Strummer would agree with me on the matter.

Gagarin club was sold-out, it holds about 1500 people and it was our first taste of the big stage and it was like opium for all of us. At that gig, we pretty much all decided that this kind of stuff is what we're going to do for the rest of our lives.

December 8, 2007, 8:45

I remember reading *The Brothers Karamazov* some years ago. Dostoyevsky said in his work that a man is at his best at age fifty-five. Fyodor was a very intelligent guy, a genius so they say, and considered by some to be something of a demigod. I'll be forty-nine years old next week. This means,

according to the great Russian author, that I've got about six years to get my shit together and make something of myself before general fucked-up old age begins.

Sometimes people tell me I don't look my real age, they say, usually, that I look to be about thirty-five years old. William Burroughs in his book *Junky* says that many career drug addicts look younger than they really are for any number of reasons. Usually monomania for their substance of choice and the fact that most drugs have preservatives in them probably helps this point of interest.

Last summer I wrote a song called "Fifty year-old Poster Boy." It's about an older guy who looks young but is just a nice-looking, middle-aged, talentless twit. Sometimes life's little ironies can really catch-up with you.

I finally got a free hour from work yesterday and ran to the Internet café to send a note to Spinalonga records about our show on December 26<sup>th</sup>. The show scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> looks shaky as we've heard nothing from our quasi-manager Stelios, who hangs out at Studio 2 and offered to make some calls for us. I also bought a new mobile phone yesterday. It's kind of retro-future looking and makes space-age noises and stuff. I just hope it will start ringing one day.

December 8, 2007, 17:20

There was about a month of lag time between the Last Drive show and our next big gig which would be the Ejekt festival, supporting the Beastie Boys and Madness at the Olympic baseball stadium in Glyfada. We were all stoked about ourselves but tried to keep cool heads but it was impossible. We'd become not quite rock stars, but something like baby rock stars. We were queer for the little bit of attention we were getting and were scraping for shows everywhere because the adrenaline rush from a big live show blows any other drug out of the water.

Quick Nick scored us this gig as he had grown-up in Glyfada and actually knew the promoter, Vasillis, who is now also something like a part-time manager, along with Stelios from Studio 2. During this month-long break, Quick Nick kept begging us to do some real, professional band photos because we would need them one day for promotion, but we never did it until August which I'll tell you about later because we had a great opportunity to promote ourselves and didn't have one band picture to our name.

December 9, 2007, 15:30

I think my body and brain are still adjusting to the no-booze sitch although I've been seven months without a drop. The newest event is, for no apparent reason, that I have fits of uncontrollable crying and a dull, Chinese water-torture style headache that never goes away.

The crying is terribly embarrassing. I was feeling awful at work on Thursday and started with the tears that I could not stop for any reason. My boss became worried about me and took me into her office to talk and try and calm me down. I told her, between sobs and coughs, that I had stopped drinking lately, had some difficulties at home and with girlfriends who split, etc. I was sure I had some form of depression and she was sure also.

I felt more useless and puny with every effort of hers to give me a psychological boost. Finally things settled down, but I've rarely felt so humiliated in my life. When I was young, I got kicked out of the house a lot and lived in an abandoned economy car for a while during a particularly difficult time and didn't cry at all. I don't understand this new phenomenon. I hope it's just a phase I'm going through.

We've got practice tonight after about a three-week intermission. I've been going over the lyrics and chords in my head in an attempt not to forget too much of our stuff. This situation is exactly the reason why I like short songs with few words. I like our 2-3 minute, slash n' burn format of music simply because it's easier to remember the pieces. Long songs suck, wordy songs are deadly boring.

December 10, 2007, 8:40

Practice was good last night and we have piles of new songs that seem to be pretty good. Billy Z wrote one that sounds exactly like 1965 Who and I've got some that have the Rob Zombie/Johnny Thunders/Ded City Jetz feeling and all appear to go well together.

Dimosthenis got a call from Ringo, the drummer in 700 Machines, and it looks like we have a gig with them on Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, at After Dark club. Fortunately or unfortunately, After Dark appears to be the only real rock and roll club left in the city as An club has become a pay-to-play hell hole for teen mutants and rich kids.

December 12, 2007, 10:00

There's a general worker's strike today in Athens and everything is shut down until the afternoon. That's how they do things here. I don't know if the strikes work in an effective way to produce change in the government or not, but that's how they do it. There are strikes all the time, except in August, when everybody goes on vacation.

I tried to put the electric lights on my artificial Christmas tree this morning but somehow they stank of old cat piss so I threw the whole bag of them out and will get some new ones later today.

One day this spring Quick Nick and I were dicking around with his computer at work. We decided we needed a sticker to hand out at shows as we had zero propaganda to give to people. We thought of all kinds of possible logos: iguanas, skulls, monsters, etc. Finally, we decided to personalize our image and found on the web a great photo of later period Steve McQueen. In the mid-late 70s photo Steve is unshaved with a cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth, and doing his best steely glint for the camera. We took that photo and put our band name and web address on the front.

It became a smash hit and everybody wanted some of them at the shows. Steve McQueen became the unofficial band mascot of the Ded City Jetz for some period of time until our artist friend George came up with the dinosaur logo, which all of us believed captured our genuine essence. Dinosaurs and Steve McQueen- how can we lose?

So one day this summer I'm being a goof at home and got a call from Studio 2, our rehearsal place. Mr. Vlasis called to tell me that a journalist from one of the big newspapers in town wanted an interview with a real rock n' roll band. He gave me the journalist's name and number and I called her in a hot minute. She wanted an interview with DCJ and said I should email her a band photo and biography tout-de-suite. Of course, as I've said before, we had no decent, publicity photos of ourselves despite the fact that our bassist is a professional photographer.

December 17, 2007, 19:00

We all got weird and wiggly and didn't know what to do about the no-photo situation. Quick Nick calmed us down and we had an emergency meeting at the photo studio where he works. The people who work with him arranged the lights and reflectors and we posed like L.A. vampires for the ad hoc shoot and they turned out pretty well.

Remember, this took place in Athens, Greece, in August. It was about forty degrees centigrade and we all had leather jackets on. Under the studio lights it was unbelievably hot. Quick Nick wore Bermuda shorts under his slick bomber jacket. The photo was taken from the waist up, so no one could see his floral print shorts. If the shoot had taken five minutes longer, we all would have passed out from heat exhaustion and dehydration.

The interview was done over the phone and the chick journalist had not a clue about rock music. She was pleasant and well spoken but didn't know an electric guitar from an electric can opener. When the article came out, she said we were a five-piece band, which we're not, only play Led Zeppelin covers, and do this band-thing mostly for relaxation purposes. That interview was our final communication with her. However, it must be said that our photo in the newspaper was beautiful.

After the gig with Last Drive at Gagarin, we were feeling really good, but when we got the call to open for Beastie Boys at the Olympic baseball stadium in Glyfada, we became psychotic joy monsters.

December 18, 2007, 6:30

Quick Nick's friend Vassilis was the organizer of the Beastie Boys gig and he was nice enough to let us open the show. On the day of the concert, things started off a bit weird and got progressively worse, in the end it was a complete nightmare.

The sound crew was a bunch of conceited morons and wouldn't help us for anything. We essentially did our own sound check, without a sound man. We started playing around 18:00 in the afternoon and there were not a lot of people in the place. A bunch of punky kids came down to the front of the stage and pogo danced around while we played our forty-minute, standard set.

After the show lots of kids came up to us to tell us congratulations, good show, etc. It felt good for a while, but something wrong was in the air. The tickets were so expensive, 70 Euros, which is a lot of money for a teenager to shell-out for a rock show. The security guards seemed twitchy and neurotic about things. After we played, another local band called Absent Minded played their set and then

Madness came on. They were pretty good, real pros. I hung out with their road crew in the dressing room for a while and they were all nice guys.

While we were backstage the Beastie Boys arrived and it was like some kind of visit from a third world dictator's touring party. They had their own crews of liggers, hangers-on, security, blah-blah. I only talked to one of the Beasties for a few minutes (name unknown) and he was ok but seemed obliged to be detached from the crowd around him- kind of there and not there. What really wowed me is that they have their own tour-chef who travels with them. She was very thin and nervous, which is usually a bad sign when it comes to chefs.

December 19, 2007, 7:15

Yesterday, I forgot, was my birthday- 49 years old. Keith Richards turned 64 yesterday as well. I can't go on, I'll go on. I've discovered recently that sleep is not a 100% safe bet for escape from depression, as I wake-up crying and with a headache every day. I dream about screaming and wake-up in tears in the morning. I saw my boss last night at her other bookstore and she told me she's sure I need to talk to a psychiatrist. I am at the point where I'll try almost anything to feel better. Who knows, going to see a shrink might be the amusement necessary to get over the hump of the booze come-down.

The supreme mental crack-up came when I went by Daria's restaurant to say hi and I was informed that she's moved out of Greece to work for a beer company. She didn't say goodbye before she left.

December 25, 2007, 10:30

It's Christmas, who cares? I called my ex-fiancée, Evi, a few days ago to try and make myself feel better, to try and connect with the outside world. Perhaps this was a mistake. She's still crazy. At least she's someone to talk to about shit, no matter how psycho she can be.

We've got a gig tomorrow at After Dark club and I've got to change my guitar strings because they're all brown and corroded looking.

Practice was weird the other day as Quick Nick has the flu and couldn't come. Billy Z arrived really late. Me and Dimosthenis jammed and worked on new songs called "The 300 Spartans" and "Santa Claus Killed JFK." Regular practices have become creative as hell lately and we rarely play old stuff and jam our new tunes constantly. We have so many songs now we can't remember them. Why can't we get it together and record some of them? What would Dr. Freud say about this situation.

I don't know if it's middle-age crisis or my brain is just melting from years of abuse, but I really can't stand much of anything anymore. TV, radio, culture, history, fashion, books, blah-blah, just make me angry as hell. When I was young and drunk, I could easily ignore the banality of everything. Now I can't do it. Shit just makes me mad.

I've reached the point where the only thing that makes me happy are the worst, cheesiest, 99 cent, emotional blackmail bouzoukia-star video-clips on the local TV stations. The really bad ones are the best- the ones with cardboard acting, shattered mirrors, defiant posturing, slammed doors, garish make-up, etc. One-dimensional, empty-calorie, masturbatory blow-outs are the only thing I like anymore. I can feel the vampire in me beginning to stir. Living in a magazine is starting to look good to me. My university degrees are meaningless. I've wasted my life looking behind the curtain if there is a causal reality and foundation of meaning I don't care anymore. Let's all dress up like Fellini characters and be done with it, man. It's all the same BS everywhere, all the time, and the aloof dumb-shits in this life appear to be having all the fun. I want bikinis and popcorn, I want to be a perfectly sexy, mentally occluded hologram. I want it all, I want it now, I want it bad.

December 26, 2007, 9:45

I got really sick last night and didn't go to a bouzoukia like I wanted to . A few days ago I bought a really shiny-looking mafia style suite to wear over the holidays. It's a complete Tony Montana style thing and it makes me look like a lieutenant-level Cosa Nostra, which is the desired look, because I'm going to become a happy hologram in 2008, as you have read above.

We've got a gig tonight and I've got to make set lists and figure out what the hell we're going to play. George, our artist for posters has a band now, D-Volcano is their name, and he'll open for us this evening. The place should be pretty full as all the kids are home for Christmas break and looking for something to do with themselves.

Back to the Beastie Boys- So we were partying around with people in the crowd at the festival where we'd opened for the Beasties. I had been a strange day, as we'd done our own sound check and were treated like real nobodies by the crew there. At about 21:00 the Beasties played their set and they were lame. They seemed medicated and uninspired to say the least. And shortly afterwards, the whole shithouse went to blazes.

December 28, 2007, 5:30

Our gig on Wednesday was great. We're getting to the point where we know stuff pretty well and can play around with the songs on stage without fucking-up too bad. After Dark club was about ¾ full and finally there are more people we don't know in the audience than friends of the band. I have a cold and it's getting worse, so the only logical thing to do is scream your brains out for 90 minutes when you're doing a live show and deal with the consequences later. It's worth the extra day or so of sickness when you're having a good time. I'll worry about my stupidity later in the week.

Katarina, the radio programmer from En Lefko radio is asking me for some new material to play on the air. We must be the only band in Greece who are being requested to give music to a decent radio station and can't come up with anything to give. It's embarrassing. If we don't record something soon we should all just get jobs working in banks and forget about the whole music thing. There, I finally said it.



December 29, 2007, 8:00

So, as I said before, I was hanging out with Madness's road crew back stage at the Ejekt festival where the Beastie Boys were the headliners. About an hour into the Beastie's set, an army of very well organized hooligans started smashing windows, setting fires and beating up securing guys with baseball bats. When this shit started, I was physically picked-up by a huge security guy and carried into a utility room. Windows were exploding everywhere, kids were screaming, thugs wearing motorcycle helmets and carrying blackjacks ran through the place taking everything they could get their hands on. They even took Billy Z's backpack and my reading glasses for some insane reason.

The show's security crew was basically clueless and just kept herding us into different dressing rooms in the baseball complex. More windows exploded, lights went out and finally I was thrown into a closet with an Asian chick who worked with the Madness tour group and was told not to move. Of course we moved, and got out as quickly as possible onto the street. When we got out she ran off somewhere. Cars were burning everywhere in the parking lot- our drummer's jeep got torched crispy. Packs of thugs with bats and helmets were roaming around looking hungry and ominous, like a scene from *Clockwork Orange* or *Escape from New York*.

I ran back into the stadium to look for the guys to find out if everyone was ok. We had all done the same search for one another, and when we all found each other it was a palpable relief. Quick Nick had kept his mind and had some idea of what was going on. When the trouble started he ran back to our dressing room and hid our guitars and drum equipment or they would surely have been taken by the giant psychos with the helmets.

We stood in the middle of the field and watched the whole upper deck of the stadium get engulfed in flame. It was like something out of a Bruce Willis movie. The teenage girls who were working the bar were beat-up bad; the place got thrashed to pieces. The Beasties split the stage in a tick when they saw the pandemonium all around and got out of Dodge in a hot minute. One of the guys in the dance-synthesizer band Underworld was beaten unconscious and was flown back to London that night for specialized treatment. We absolutely could not believe all the horrid shit that had gone on and we just stood there for many minutes like zombies looking around at all the senseless destruction. This night was undoubtedly the night we solidified, the night we became a band. Not because we endured a hardship together, but because when the chips were down and we were in real danger, the first thing all of us did was look for one another. We did it without thinking. It was a DNA reaction- an automatic thing. Our good friend and band artist Yiannis gave us a ride home that night and we didn't talk for several days.

The only satisfaction that I got from that experience besides some nice congratulations from people who'd seen our set, was that the Beastie Boys did not get to enjoy their beautifully prepared gourmet meal, which had been prepared for them by the tour chef. It had been splattered all over the floor, walls, and ceiling of the Olympic baseball complex dressing room. Without question that night had been our little Altamount, and for a short while we enjoyed the infamous reputation of the most

dangerous band in Athens, survivors of the Glyfada inferno. And ironically, in five days time we would have our Woodstock.

December 29, 2007, 19:00

Now that I have some small experience with being straight and recovering from booze I can tell you a couple of things that I've learned. One thing is your liver takes a long time to feel like part of your body once again. As I've said before, for months while I was drinking it hurt like hell and felt like a corroded, pickled, time bomb about to combust from its own noxious emissions. After I quit drinking in May, 2007, it still felt this way for at least a few months. Then, slowly-slowly a metamorphosis takes place and it no longer feels like a wine sac full of battery acid but more like a piece of volcanic pumice or ancient papyrus from the time of the pharaohs. It feels small and dusty and dried-up and ready to blossom into a cancerous mess if you even think about putting a shot of vodka close to it. Only in the last few weeks, and I've been clean for about eight months, has it felt like an actual, organic part of my anatomy.

The second thing I've learned is there are two types of recovering alkies: normal people and Jesus people. When God comes into the situation I usually leave the situation. Emotional crutches, emotional blackmail, guilt, fear and anger can all be generated easily enough by mortal men without the assistance of metaphysical beings. When I'm sick in the liver, I rely on myself to get through the damaging time, nobody else can help me with it, be they normal or paranormal.

January 1, 2008, 15:00

I had to cancel a gig at An club yesterday because Dimosthenis will be out of town for some days in February.

My songs seem to be getting strange again and I don't know why. Today I wrote one called "I Guess You're Just another Thing to do," and yesterday I wrote one called "Smart-guy Pills." At least I'm not exploding into tears all the time for the last few days. Perhaps this is an improvement. We'll see.

I was sick in the chest last night and didn't go anywhere to hang out. I heard all the boom-booms from the local fireworks to welcome the New Year and then fell asleep like a big rock.

January 3, 2008, 6:30

In this screed I've talked a lot about my complex relationship with societal vampires. Sometimes I feel like the character in the Harry Potter films, Mr. Weasley, He's a pure-blood magic man but he's fascinated by "muggles" or normal people without magical powers. I think I'm fascinated by selfish, beautiful, avaricious freaks for several reasons: they look nice and have everything without a trace of guilt in their systems. On the surface it looks good, because there's only surface area involved in the equation of their lives,  $A=A$ , that's it.

But lately, I've had some chance for research and reflection in my life because I've stopped all the fog-machine medication that I'd inflicted upon myself for so long. The thing of it is you can, indeed,

learn a lot about life and yourself from watching vampires, because not only do they want to own everything around them, but they want it forever. The most selfish people I've ever met, the real kings and queens of the damned, appear to believe that the party will never end. The party simply can't end, because they can have anything they want at any time. After a while, this cracked mindset, at least appears to morph into fantasies of immortality.

However, the good part of the situation, the part that you must pay attention to, is that they take great care of themselves. Vitamins, creams, powders, ointments, nutritional supplement, balms, scented oils, endless trips to specialized doctors and whatever else is available for them to prolong the game is gleefully incorporated into their lives. Survival is key to the vampire because if you're only interested in your own happiness, you only have yourself to satisfy. When you're gone, the game is over. Survival, beauty, power. It's the vampire credo. Learn from the vampire: it's important, vitally important, to take good care of yourself, because no one else is going to do it for you.

January 4, 2008, 7:00

I called Soul club last night to trawl for gigs in January. As we are, so far, gigless this month. I talked to Chris who saw both our shows there last year. He seemed enthusiastic about us performing soon, but as I've learned, enthusiasm means nothing. Black letters on white paper mean everything. It sucks but it's true. Enter the vampire.

I have a new flirt at the post office name Despina. She's blonde, of course. She wears low-cut tops and always bends forward when we talk to give me a good look at the goods. I hope she likes rock music, as it's the only ace I'm holding at this time in my life.

So I've decided for 2008 that the supreme life goal is to become nothing more than a cheap imitation of a man who hasn't a brainwave of social conscious in his skull. How do I become this person? How can I eliminate every trace of the kind, considerate, polite boob that I am at this point in my life? There are choices to be made in this matter. I'm sure that cultivating interest in utterly banal shit such as sports, politics and future stock market trends are part of the process. I have to choose a team who has black, red, silver or blue as their color, as these are my most flattering colors to wear.

I should always support a winner and change allegiances with the tide of fate. Why not? Everyone else does it. Dating mindless 20-something girls and desperate middle-aged housewives probably couldn't hurt either. There's so much to consider for this transformation, so much new information to process. I hope we can get a gig soon so I can stop thinking about this nonsense and accelerate the process of becoming the one-dimensional insect that I crave so much to be.

January 5, 2008, 6:30

Mr. Vlasis, the owner and operator of Studio 2, is a very smart man. When we had a conversation the other day held told me, that when I stopped drinking in May, he thought that soon I would have started again with the some destructive behavior. He gave me his heart-felt, great congratulations for keeping straight and wished me continued success at staying this way. But then he

said something I did not expect. He said he'd noticed my development over the last few months. He'd noticed how I changed from a drunk, unemployed freak to a much more responsible person with a job, cleaned-up mind and body, and desire to improve myself. He told me to stop there. He said he could see that I was smart and have ambition and if I didn't keep myself in check Ded City Jetz will be in jeopardy because I'll be mesmerized by work and greed for more money, stuff, position, blah-blah. Which means, I believe, that he can smell the vampire on me.

He is a business man in a rock n' roll recording studio for more than twenty years and I'm sure he's seen everything there is to see. He was a friend and confidant when my previous band, Serfin' Ded, went to smash and a great help to me when I was putting together Ded City Jetz. He knows what he's talking about. He can see the monster waking inside of me. Will I have the power to control it? Will I even want to control it?

I like the new Tamta video clip very much. I like almost all the Greek bouzoukia star video-clips as they are unrepentant, three-minute time bombs of pure, crystallized, emotional blackmail- which, I believe, is pretty much what this life comes down to in the end: seconds of pleasure and pain, with lots and lots of waiting in between the above mentioned experiences.

January 13, 2008, 19:30

As I said earlier, I like the new Tamta video very much. It's a three-minute Freudian concussion grenade which sells chocolate bars and I believe it's very effective as I have a great appetite for sex and chocolate after viewing this particular video. Tamta is a thin Georgian, doe-eyed émigré with angelic facial features and body like a teenage eastern-block gymnast. Her hair is dyed bright red, the same color as the candy bar wrapper and she repeats the phrases "so sweet," and "you and me forever," endlessly throughout the clip. She is an animated, longing, restrained female orgasm who not only has the exotic, semi-Slavic Russian features, but her clever make-up artists gave her crimson lips and white frosted eyelashes for the photo-shoot. She's got it all: yin and yang, fire and ice, animus and anima, the whole thing. She's simultaneously hot and cold (mostly hot) and I'm sure she's selling a lot of chocolate in the public high schools.

As stated earlier, Billy Z had scored us a gig at Soul club last Friday after I'd talked to manager Chris last week. This time, we played for about an hour and a half. The place was full and we sounded ok without too much hassle. We're really get used to each other on stage and the people who have seen us before say that the shows are much more diverse now. A year ago we played just blitzkrieg punk and spooky monster-themed bullshit. We still play that but with a few slightly more radio-friendly songs thrown into the mix.

January 14, 2008, 6:35

I went out with my friend Marcia the other night to the plateia Exarchia. It's the arty-zone of the city and we drank tea and talked about music and our mental and psychological problems. She's a great kid, but talking about mental difficulties is starting to make me itch on a grand scale. We ended up at this art bar called Dasein. Excuse me, I'm writing a song in my head now- I must pause this entry.

## The Waiting

Hey baby, what you waiting for?

We'll I'm just waiting for love, just waiting for love

Just waiting for my check to arrive

Hey bay, what you waiting for?

Just waiting for love, just waiting for love

Just waiting for my friend to arrive

Just waiting to die, just waiting to die

That's how all our songs go. They all only have one verse. We just sing the same verse three times with a guitar break after the second verse. Sometimes we change a word or two in one of the verses to make it sound more diverse, but that's rare. That song above took about thirty seconds to write. The good ones never take very long, usually a few minutes. When you have to keep going back to a song to make it sound right, it's usually a clinker.

So, Marcia and I were at this art bar and we talked to the manager. They do poetry readings and stuff, and it appears I'll be doing a reading from this manuscript on February 10, as a guest writer. It seems that life really does imitate bad art. This sitch seems like something from a Eugene Ionesco play- a writer reading from a book that doesn't actually exist to a few people who are starving for literary material with supposedly elevated substance. If they were really smart people, they'd be at home watching Tamta videos and eating chocolate like wild dogs.

January 17, 2008, 9:30

I couldn't go to work today as my throat is fried and I feel like hammered shit.

After the Ejekt festival we all felt like rats for days and we didn't talk much. We all felt awful about Dimosthenis losing his jeep and we couldn't find the words to express our sympathy to him so we just did what guys do- we disappeared for a while.

Just when we felt like complete outcasts I called the Didi music company who is the organizer of all the big rock shows in Athens. I'd talked to them before and they always seemed polite but distant, as most professional cats seem to be. I'd done endless blah-blah about opening for Alice Cooper, calling their office every week, sending patched-together demos, etc. Finally, when we got the ok for the gig, I nearly exploded into powder from disbelief. It was exactly what we needed, five days after the cataclysmic blow-out of the Beastie Boys/Ejekt festival fiasco, we were going to be Alice's opening band at the massive Lycabettus theatre in Athens city center. Words are inadequate to express my feelings when this call happened. We were going to play with the Coop, the hero of my teens. It was better than sex, it was better than twisted sex, it was better than anything.

January 22, 2008, 6:15

I'm writing less these days as I'm always sick with something in the head, stomach or throat. I feel like crap all the time but with any luck this will pass when the weather improves. I was thinking to myself yesterday about how I hate just about everything in the music, video and cultural world these days. It's a real drag to go into a mammoth CD/DVD store like Metropolis or Virgin and look around for an hour and not want anything on the shelves. In fact, most of the stuff just make you sick to look at it. As I've said before, the only thing that makes me happy is teenage hormone cheese-pop and vampire movies, of which I've seen most of them too many times.

Not to sound too self-gratifying or egotistical, but I think maybe I've burned-out on everything or I've reached the end of the Karmic cycle. Most people believe they've won or at least finished the game when one has mastered his or her chosen discipline, whatever that may be. I believe this mindset to be in error. The leap from student to master is merely a forward progression. To return to naïveté, or innocence, or square one, or whatever you want to call it is to reach completeness. The student must become the master and become the student again to achieve totality.

In karate one moves from the white belt through the various levels and colors of expertise to reach the black belt status. But after some time the black belt fades, becomes ragged, falls apart and eventually become nothing again. The residue of the endless training and its casting off is what remains in one's character, temperament and mindset. One must become a master to become a child again.

At the Alice show, our dressing room was the place where they do first-aid and quick and dirty meatball medical treatment for the people who have heart attacks or wig out from too many drugs at the show. We were informed by the promoter that we may have to evacuate our dressing area if medical emergencies presented themselves.

We met Alice's band during the sound check and they were all incredibly cool, incredibly nice guys. They had tattoos everywhere on their bodies. I have a couple of tats on my arms, as does Dimosthenis, but we both looked like kindergarten stickmen next to these guys.

I was having some trouble with my guitar sound, per usual, and Alice's guitar technician, whose name is Tyler, helped me out with the amplifier settings. He made me sound like Angus Young in about thirty seconds. He couldn't have been older than twenty-five. He has a huge Aztec eagle and lots of other little weird shit tattooed on himself. He like our instrumental song, "Ded City Jetz," which is our sound check song, He asked me if we had a CD to give him, which, of course, we did not.

I'm still in awe of the fact that we played a huge theater, supporting a living legend in the rock genre, without so much as a single song available for anyone to buy, nothing on the real radio stations, and no management. We have basic good will, marginal talent, and some catchy songs, that's it. Just sometimes though, that's enough for you to be able to cut through the red tape and get something of substance done.

January 23, 2008, 6:30

Practice was good again last night. The new song "Rockin' Russian" is a hit. It should be good when playing live. I talked to Quick Nick before we played last night and we both agreed that the winter blues are here big time. We agreed to go out to a strip club and act like goofballs this weekend to try and feel a little better about ourselves.

When you become all minimalist and strange in your mindset, weird things piss you off really bad. Rejection has started to piss me off in the worst kind of way. I get inwardly violent and angry when someone turns their nose up to me these days. It always bothered me when this happened in the past but now I can't control the rage inside of me like I used to be able to do.

My current idea on this subject is that on a Newtonian/Einsteinian proposition, I think. We are all made of matter. All matter is made up of energy. In essence we're all just a bunch of energy fields walking around this planet, as everything is an energy field. So, what makes Pam Anderson or Bill Gates different from Jeffrey Dahmer or Josef Goebbels? The only difference between any of us, on the entire planet, is an individual personality. When some group or person rejects you, they really are rejecting you. Lots of people say don't take things personally, I say, how else can you possibly take it?

January 27, 2008, 9:00

After the Alice show some interesting stuff happened to me. I was so jazzed-up about the show that for days before we played I was telling the guys, "I can die after this show, I've reached the highest level of existence. There's nothing left to do after this. Me and Alice- the singers for the night. I can die now."

The show was phenomenal, the sound guys had our guitars turned up so loud they almost flew from our hands when we started the set. The crowd was young and psycho and pumped. We could have jammed forever. Lycabettus theatre is surrounded by big rocks, and kids who can't afford a ticket usually sit on the rocks to watch the show. We dedicated our song "Funky Iceberg" to the ones who couldn't get into the concert. The kids on the rocks whooped it up big time and waved flaming, phosphorescent road flares to us when we played. It was the greatest thing I've ever seen.

When we left the show, After Alice's set, we gave our backstage passes to some kids hanging round the gates. We were in the mood to celebrate. We drove down the hill from the theater to Kolonaki plateia and went to the Delicious souvlaki place for gyros and fries.

After we'd played I went to stand in front of the stage where Alice would sing. I was in front and the band's sound was huge. It was me and all the little adolescent punky weirdoes in front, dancing like idiots while Alice sang to us about madness, guillotines and monsters.

So, the souvlakis were very tasty and the four of us were telling each other how cool we were, when my heart sort of stopped for a few seconds. I guess I got something of a concerned look on my face because the guys stopped talking and looked at me with a certain amount of anxiety on their faces. I hope, I imagine, it just stopped for a few seconds for a quick self-diagnostic check because I'm still

here. I rapped myself on the chest and things picked-up again in proper order. It was something close to a self-fulfilling prophesy.

The Alice show was the last of our big gigs, but it was our moment of triumph. Everybody in their life should have one such night.

January 27, 2008, 19:10

I went to my Russian orthodox church this morning. Not because I believe in going to church, but because the Russians give you the best show for the money in their holy places. The services there are far more entertaining than in the Greek orthodox churches.

In the Russian churches, the whole family, which includes the furthest of known relatives come to the service together. The babushkas take care of the babies in the back rows. The greedy peasants, who seem to be simultaneously pious and looking for victims, converge in the center rows. The more affluent types go upstairs or to the very front row of seats. Everyone else sits scattered about the place looking calm and watchful, like career detectives.

I simply adore the Russian upper class patrons, as their sense of entitlement absolutely radiates off of them with the force of electromagnetic pulses. The cream of the L.A. porn stars cannot hold a candle to these peoples' overwhelming sense of self-admiration. I imagine if you are raised in the shadows of tsars, Romanovs and mystics, a certain sense of haughty superiority is simply built-in to one's DNA structure. Or maybe they're just more assholes with money to deal with. I don't know.

I got a call from Billy Z this afternoon and he had no idea that we had a gig lined up next Saturday with 700 Machines at the After Dark club. Are we rock stars or what?

January 29, 2008, 6:30

I talked to the arty book people at Dasein café and I'll be doing my first reading on February 24, not February 10. I guess I'm pretty low on the totem to have a reading moved back, in late February, the slowest month of the year in every commercial sector. But hey, that's life.

I saw a young kid the other day running at full clip to catch a bus. He looked like he was from Bangladesh or some other third world hellhole.

February 2, 2008, 8:30

So I watched this dark teenager run like a mad man, while carrying huge cloth sacks full of bootleg Prada merchandise. He got to the bus just as it was leaving, but he rapped on the side of the ride and it stopped to let him on. He had to cram all his goods into the doorway of the machine as it was quite crowded, and then he jumped on himself, and wedged himself into the tiniest of corners. I stood in awe and marveled at his urban survival skills. I realized, at that moment, a lot of things about myself- both good and bad things to be sure.



The first thing that went through my mind was the question, “could I do that kind of survival exercise on a daily level myself?” The answer was a flat “no.” The second question was “do I want to have that kind of skill?” The answer was “yes.” The third and final question was “is there a possibility to acquire these skills at my age?” The answer remains in the ether. However, one thing is for sure. If I’m ever going to get married and reproduce, I’m going to need that kind of wild DNA to mix with mine for the offspring to have a chance for survival in this world.

The truth of the matter is that I’m a soft, kind, arty kind of person. I’m a nice guy to be sure: honest, cool, funny, blah-blah. But I don’t have the tiger shark murder boy instincts. I was raised to be diplomatic and calm. Life is not a diplomatic and calm experience. As Henry Miller said, “those who are raised by wolves will destroy those who were not.” It is no wonder that the famous symbol of the Roman Empire is Romulus and Remus drinking from the breasts of a she-wolf.

What is left of my family is quite senior, remarkably freaked-out, and hasn’t had to deal with reality for at least the last century. I’m the only member still of age to reproduce. Which makes me, Perri Pagonis, a vampire for DNA. And not just any DNA mind you, I need she-wolf of the SS DNA. High grade, high octane, genetic rocket fuel is the only thing that will do for me at this point in time.

The other side of this bizarre equation is that there are absolutely no guarantees that things will work out the way you plan them. It’s like that cheesy soda-pop commercial where Marilyn Monroe flirts with Albert Einstein and talks about having a kid with her looks and his brain. There are no guarantees about the outcome of any reproductive act. One mix, endless possibilities.

February 3, 2008, 11:45

We had our gig at After Dark club last night and it went fine. We’re getting to the symbiotic level of playing where we can stop and start and do funky, bizarre shit on stage and it works most of the time because we’re so familiar with the material we’re playing. The place was full and the headline band, 700 Machines, turned out to be pretty cool guys. We’ve made verbal plans for more gigs together so we’ll see what happens with them.

I want desperately to go to Paris, France, next week as Pamela Anderson is doing a striptease show at the famous Crazy Horse club. As I’ve mentioned repeatedly in this text, emotional blackmail, cheap sentimentality and propaganda are the only things I believe in: first, they work and work well. Secondly, they keep the vampires in power and I’m on the road to becoming a serious societal nosferatu. I can feel it in the heart of the heart of my bone marrow.

Pamela at the Crazy Horse could easily be the premier cultural event of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the queen of hormonal and emotional graft extorting money from a population of French citizens who, for centuries, have considered themselves to be superior, academic beings is something I’d simply die to see. And, of course, I’d like to see Pam’s happy stuff as well. Because, you must not forget, the vampire dwells inside me.

I don't know who came up with the laws of thermodynamics, but whoever it was, I have to believe he was not a happy guy. The second law of thermodynamics which states that "entropy is always increasing," pretty much seals and cancels the fate of mankind in four little words. Neil Young came close to the same conclusion with the song, "Rust never sleeps," but those words just don't have the sense of doom, of utter finality, which simply ping off of the statement, "Entropy is always increasing." Because if entropy, or magnetic disorganization, never, ever stops, what freaking chance for success in this life do we actually have? It seems, the best you can do is try and keep the wolves from your door as long as possible, until you simply drop dead from exhaustion, or of course, entropy.

February 6, 2008, 6:30

I wish I had some dumb brother who drives a truck and has six nerd kids so I wouldn't have to worry about all this reproduction shit. We'd still be in the gene pool and I could relax and learn to speak Greek like a real Greek person and play guitar like a real guitar player, but nooo.

You can see the vampire under the cracks in the facial skin of the economic upper crust and old money folk without have to look very hard- especially the women. Under the thin veneer of civilized, cultured manner is a fish wife who's ready to knife your kidneys and get nasty as cat shit if anyone tries to remove her comforts and luxuries. Fifty-thousand years of supposed civilization cannot cover-up a million or so years of ape-like guys bashing each others' brains out for access to food and females.

The Euro-American industrial complex propaganda machine is a beautiful thing. I mean beautiful. If you watch enough TV and look in newspapers and magazines you can really start to believe that life is, or at least can be, a sustained, never-ending, Ricky Martin video. Underwater sex babes, sports cars, endless consumption of rum and go-go dancing for day as a time is the norm that is presented to the viewer. What they don't show you in these beautifully produced, masterpieces of eyeball-porn are the guys around the perimeter of the party, outside the security zone: the hungry, rabid, psychotic horde of dispossessed, terrified freaks who have nothing- the ones who will gladly snap the necks of all the pretty go-go boys around the pool for the chance to eat a donut and not starve to death.

Bernard Shaw said that civilization is great, but if you don't have the guns to protect it, it doesn't mean much of anything. Vampires, guns and greed- that's the story, that' the show we're in today.

February 8, 2008, 17:40

Ok, we're local stars, now what? Exarchia is just one ultra-minimal spit of a place on the map. I'm not complaining about our success here, I just don't know what to do next. I talked to Quick Nick after practice last night and we have similar feelings about our current condition. Do we keep playing the same few clubs in the same neighborhoods forever, or do we try to move on? We both agreed we must move on, but how? We can't even agree on one song to record for a radio station that is begging us for material, or get together with a group of actors who came to us, wanting to make a video. How can we be so together when we're playing live and so geeked-out when it comes to business?

Billy Z scored a gig at some strange little bar in his neighborhood next Saturday, the 15<sup>th</sup>. It sounds like an adventure, and I think an adventure is just what we need because all of us are getting frustrated and shaky and not sure what to do about it.

A month after the Alice gig we played at the Mad club in Keramikos. It was the middle of July and hot as hell in Athens. The owner of the place looks like mid-80s Rob Halford. He's an affable guy, but always looks at me funny. He looks at me like he believes that I covet his jewelry to wear for myself- a mid-level vampire look to be sure.

The amps they provided for the gig were tiny and dismal. My amp looked like a small microwave oven. So we did what any self-respecting group of punks would do. We turned everything up to 11 and jammed noise for an hour. Billy's amp was so screwed-up it sounded like a car alarm for the last twenty minutes of the show. We didn't get paid or asked to come back. A few weird street kids liked us and that's about it. It had been absolutely beautiful- it was the real rock n' roll, the real primal scream, the real cry for help from the furthest gland of a dying animal. Alice Cooper would have been proud of us that night. I'm absolutely sure of it.