

10. HIGHER PLANES

Cam can't believe that he's going to get money to tour. Believe me I'm thinking the same thing after I look at the books.

"Boys, you're going to have to sell loads of CD's to make this thing popular."

Lee wonders, "Is anyone going to actually listen to our music? Or are they buying the shit just because they want to be popular?"

Jay makes this Woo-wee sound as if he's imitating a guitar.

"That's what the girls are looking for."

"You're being sent out there to do a job. Just don't fuck up." I tell them.

Cam asks, "Why don't you come along. You can drive the van. I can't see at night. Lee gets too tired. And Lee and Jay want to drink."

"I need you to act like adults. I can't afford it this time out."

So here we are with me driving the bloody van. Our first stop out is the Nick in Birmingham. I'm in the back for most of the show trying to move merch. It doesn't really happen until Cam heads back there. All these girls think that they're buying his bones. I thought I was the indie kid. Where did my charm go? I should have taken Passion up on his offer.

I don't know why we were booked into Little Rock. Jay gets sick on ribs. But they put on a great show. He rushes back to the hotel room to puke his guts out. Lee gets a little trashed. I get everyone up early in the morning to drive to New Orleans.

It appears that somewhere along the way, we are going to run out of hotel money unless we sell more t-shirts. I never realized that Lee's bar tabs were going to be so high.

Cam jokes that we can hide the beer from him.

"We're playing fucking bars. How do you hide the beer?"

We lose Jay in New Orleans. He leaves with this shady girl after the show. He doesn't show up at the hotel when we're ready to go.

Steve is sitting in the back of the open van. "This is not cool."

Cam pretends, "We could play without him."

I am more intense, "This is the point where I'm supposed to show you what I'm made of as the manager."

"So what do you intend to do?" Lee asks.

"I haven't the faintest idea," I say.

They all laugh.

"This isn't a time for laughter," I try to put on a serious face.

Right then a car skids in the gravel. Amy pulls in with Jay in the car.

He gets out, "Sorry, that I took so long. We slept in."

We all get in the van and head to Houston. There's not much that I can say at this point.

I tell them, "I think after Austin, we sleep in the van."

Cam is on stage, "Ladies, us poor Georgia boys are running out of money. So I'm going to have to auction off my body."

We sell 5000 dollars worth of merch. I'm on the phone to order more.

I tell Steve, "Maybe Cam's on to something."

Steve comments, "I just don't want them getting home with the CD and realize that it's a

pile of crap.”

It seems to help that we’re opening for some well known bands. Jason has offered me booking help as well. The crowds are really digging Cam. I wonder what can possibly go wrong.

I find out after Austin. The van breaks down in 100 degree weather.

“I thought that it never got this hot in September.

“I think that we’re in a desert,” Cam tells me. Our next gig is 200 miles away. We can make it. But it’s going to be tense. I keep calling ahead as we’re driving in. They keep moving us up on the bill.

The manager tells me, “If you don’t hurry, you’re going to be playing to an empty house.”

When we finally get there, these girls have passed around pictures of Cam. They all clap as he walks in. They’re not going anywhere. It’s catching on. The band plays a great show. Afterwards, Jay is a little miffed. He feels that Cam is taking all the glory.

“This is a band. Not a one man show.”

It doesn’t help that some of the industry people are taking a real interest in a Cam Pearson solo career.

“Just ditch the whole moaning thing, get rid of the band, and start anew. That’s the way that it has to go.”

I’ve heard that kind of thing before. Of this Age would have gone nowhere if they hadn’t stayed together. Cam pulls Jay aside for a talking to. It seems like it’s worked. At the next performance in Albuquerque, the band is again playing as a unit.

Lee still is drinking pretty heavily. I really feel that it is a detriment to the tour. I pull him aside.

“We have to be on our best in California. It could be something really big.”

He looks as if he wants to fight, “You’ve been riding me since this thing began. I’m just here to have fun.”

“We all are, Lee. You just have to learn how to draw the line.”

He tells me, “I just see the line going back to Atlanta.”

We can’t have him quit now. Cam and Jay pull him aside. They seem to have quieted him down.

Jay tells me later on, “I feel like I’ve been setting a bad example. I want this more than anything.”

I give Jay a hug. He’s been going through a rough time. He seems willing to make the sacrifice. I just hope that Lee is going to get himself clean.

We have gigs in Flagstaff and Phoenix. There are some open travel dates. The distances are long out here. On the open dates, it seems hard to survive. We try to do some impromptu stuff at record stores. We’re making friends even if we’re not selling albums.

In Phoenix, we hook up with The Painted Wings. This is nothing but trouble. Their singer, Sally, is a real mess. And her lover Ernie plays guitar. They both seem strung out all the time. They get drinking with Lee one night. Jay starts off with them. But he can smell a disaster. He smartens up. Lee never goes to bed. We’ve got a gig in San Diego. The Painted Wings are off for the night. They don’t have to worry. Lee tries to sleep it off in the van. But it is more than just sleeping it off.

Before the gig, I go for a walk. I am on the phone to Chicago.

“Jimmy, I’m going to need you out here. Bring your bass.” I don’t have much money. E agrees to let me pay him back. I tell him about the merch sales. He welcomes the opportunity. I’m not going to throw Lee off the tour. I just want to be safe when we hit LA.

At the gig in San Diego, Lee seems OK on stage. He seems strung out “I’m sorry if I’m fucking up on stage”

I tell him, “You played well.”

He needs to explain, “I just am a little distracted. I miss Georgia. I feel so self-conscious.”

I am trying to be understanding

“You never wanted me in this band,” he says.

“That’s not it at all,” I tell him. He’s trying to set me up as the bad guy. He just walks off.

I tell Cam that Jimmy is going to meet us in LA

“I’m not going to be the one to throw Lee out of the band.”

“I’m not trying to play the hard ass manager. You guys need to tell me what you want. It’s not just about the drinking anymore”.

Ernie and Sally show up after the show. Lee disappears with them.

Jay comes back in. I’ve been looking for Lee after the show. I can’t find him. If I can’t find him, he’s doing smack. If he’s doing smack, I don’t want him in the band.”

Cam tells him, “We were just talking about that.”

Jay says, “I never thought that we were that kind of band. We’re just a bunch of kids that love to play music.”

Cam is a little cold about it, “What do we owe him?”

Jay answers him, “A good kick in the ass.”

Cam qualifies things, “Maybe he needs our understanding.”

“We gave him understanding when he was drinking. This is way beyond that. He’s fucking up now.” Jay understands. They were both scoring coke in Windsor. It’s not as if this is something completely new.

Jay is personally insulted, “I told him after we got arrested that we needed to smarten up. He’s like a kid whose parents aren’t around. He’s testing the waters. I’m just afraid that he’s drowning.”

I’ve just been listening. I don’t want to interfere. I ask them, “Have you told Steve.”

Cam admits, “Steve is just about the music. He has less tolerance than we do.”

Jay says, “This seems like the stuff that you see in the movies.”

“I think that Sally was the last step. Ernie waves her at Lee. He makes him think that she’s available. And they’re all using together. It’s this sex and power trip.”

Sally has her magic. I can feel it. You know it in her songs. You just wonder how long she is going to hold it together.

Jay tells us, “I don’t like this story.”

The next morning the band is waiting at the breakfast table when Lee rolls in. “You know,” he says.

Steve is the first to say something, “It’s getting too big.”

Lee defends himself, “You’re the ones getting lost in career. You’re almost in LA, and you can smell the big money already.”

Steve has been silent all along. “Careers. We all have careers in Atlanta. This is about putting ourselves on the line. Some nights we get no money. But we love what we play. You’re acting like a fourteen year old. We’re your family.’

He has tears in his eyes. He wants to make good. But he is way beyond making good.

“I’ve got an errand to do. If I miss the van, I’ll catch up to you. Sally and Ernie are going up to LA.”

When he leaves, Cam says, “If he misses the call, he’s not coming back. Sally or no Sally. Agreed?”

Jay and Steve nod their heads, “Agreed!”

I am just watching it all. I’m not going to say another thing about Jimmy until we get to LA.

Lee formed the band with Cam when they were 10. Sure it wasn’t the same band. But they played together for years. They were always Cam’s songs. But Lee gave it a ground. Even as they got older, they hung together. The team. This hurts Cam bad.

When we reach LA, it seems like all business. We have an extra day to prepare. Jimmy has already made it. He meets us at the motel. I shake his hand.

“We almost didn’t make it,” I tell him.”

“I’ve learned the stuff.”

“That quick?” I wonder.

Jimmy tells me, “I know all the guitar parts. I have for a long while.”

Jason has got us a gig at the Viper Room. It’s been sold out due to the headliner. It’s a little uncomfortable for us with all the stuff that’s been happening with Lee. We only have a little time in soundcheck. Jimmy is spot on. No one notices a difference. Even I am a little surprised. I am still use to his wandering eye in Chicago. The man knows what he wants.

The Viper Room show distinguishes the band as a true up-and-comer. Jimmy’s presence adds to the band’s swagger. Lee was great. But he was always somewhere else. Cam does what he has been doing for weeks. And Jay’s guitar work is impressive. He finds new thing about himself. It goes without saying Steve is totally accurate. He hasn’t worked so hard to fail at a moment like this. To top it all off, they have put aside all the worries that have plagued them. The album shines through in the live performance. It leaves no doubt for everyone involved that this is a band to watch.

One of the significant people in Goldenvoice approach me to talk about a possible slot in Coachella.

He walks up to me and introduces himself, “The guys are impressive. It’s hard to describe what I feel right now. Something eerie, almost ghostly. The past in the present. Also the future. I am impressed. That Cam Pearson is everything that they say he is.”

“Wow! I’m glad that you enjoyed it.”

He adds, “More than enjoyed it. This is breathtaking. It’s like looking at a landscape. I want the board to keep you in mind. No one else embodies what I want the festival to be about. Anyone just has to see the show to know what I am talking about.”

I am afraid that some of the flattery might be too much,

He reassures me, “I’m one of the hardest bastards to please. If I thought they were bad, I wouldn’t be here. I have enough things to do tomorrow that I’d be long gone. But I needed to tell you. You yourself need to be ready for what is going to happen. This is a treasure. You have to guard it.”

After everything that has happened, the guys don’t want indulge too much. I decide to splurge. I dig into my own money and buy them some champagne. They deserve it after all this. It has been teetering on the bring. And we have rescued ourselves from disaster. We are on the way. All the work has paid off.

The next day Cam surprises us.

“I am exhausted. I need some time off.”

I tell him, “Cam, we’re out of money. We need to keep going.”

“I’m afraid that I’m going to crack. I’m not Lee. What happened is tearing me up inside. I need a week.”

I’m not sure how I can make a week appear out of the blue. We have shows to play. I call Jason’s manager Harris. He agrees to help. I still have some money in the bank. Harris can get me some shows close by when Cam comes to.

I meet with Cam at a restaurant. “We’ve got some friends here. Jason can get the band a place for the week. Lou has a friend with a cabin in Lake Tahoe. It’s yours for the time off.”

He gives me a big hug.

“This is going to pay off in the end.”

“I hope so. I haven’t come this far to be left at the altar.”

Cam teases me by kissing me on the mouth, “You can get that dress.”

I shiver a little.

Jay and I take the time to really get to know each other. Lou sets us up in this beautiful beach front getaway. It seems too good to be true. We could use the place to get good and crazy. But we’ve seen too much of that. It’s time to set the compass again. Time to find direction.

Jimmy and Steve have gone into town to scout around. It is near sunset. Jay and I are hanging out.

He starts off, “I’m sorry that I acted like a baby for so long. I don’t think I realized how blessed I was.”

“You never really know what you have until later on.”

Jay points out, “All of this has been so unreal. Look at this place.”

It is a soft grey sky. The lull is so relaxing to us. You can sense the surges of color as the sun heads down.

Jay has more to say, “I think that it’s easy to get angry. I have so much inside me. There are so many things that I want to share. And it’s hard. Cam is great. It’s easy to lose sight of his greatness. I mean he’s a guy. Just another guy. And it’s so easy to get envious of a guy like that. He has the talent. I look at him, and I tell myself that I want what he has. I want it now!”

He keeps on, “But I have it in my way. And so much more. Just being around him, I can help Cam project what he sees. I know that sometimes he feels misunderstood. I can show the world that vision. That’s why we’re a band.”

He wants to tell me what he thinks of the change. “Lee held too many things inside. He didn’t know how to work for a band. Steve has always been giving us a hundred and ten per

cent. Lee wasn't bad. That was his way. He wanted to curl up and be on the inside. You've got to tolerate that when you play with something. But he has to come out of the shell. Eventually. There was no eventually. And a little bit of success was starting to spoil him. What would have happened when he came across thousands of Sally's and Ernie's. Lee was always our man. But he lost it for himself."

I am getting to really like Jay. It has been hard. For so long, I thought that he was just about ego. He is a truly gifted guitar player. But he used it for more than that. It was almost a weapon. Lee's departure has cemented that part of his character that shows him to be strong. He has cast off his arrogance.

He wants to add something about Jimmy, "I loved Jimmy from the moment that he took us around Chicago. I never knew that he was going to be such a fantastic player."

I recognize that the band is hanging on through the kindness of some friends. I feel gratified to have such a crew backing us up. Jason is more than a friend. Again and again, he has been my lifeline. And Harris is the new prince. These people are not about themselves. Not in the least.

I want to use the week to try to track down Jim Riverdale of the Glass Idols. They were one of the truly great bands of the 80's. They never gave into the cheap trends.

Jim is in a cheap motel off the strip. It's a really rundown place. I find him by asking around some music stores. They refer me to a couple of pawn shops that have some of his equipment. I pose as an interested buyer.

Jim lives on disability and weekly royalty checks. He can't keep up the lifestyle of old. But he manages. The only thing that he misses is a bodyguard. He hates how vulnerable he is now.

I really take advantage of his one weakness. As a kid, I collected vinyl from the Glass Idols. You could find loads of it in thrift stores and garage sales. Everyone wanted to get rid of their record collections. I was a willing buyer.

I don't only want to see him as a fan. I feel that Jim still is in possession of some real wisdom about the time period. More than that, I felt that he used the music as platform to discover something deep about himself. This impresses me a great deal.

Jim doesn't only resent my intrusion. He seems angry that he can't keep people like me at a distance. He still wants that bodyguard keeping me at bay. He still expects the same devotion of an earlier era. He has not learned to let down his guard. He is used to the worship of millions. Then he can pick those who are worthy to pass through his security barriers. His present reality is too brutal to accept. So he forces me to accept the past hierarchy.

I am surprised that he can't appreciate someone who remembers, especially someone so young. But that is exactly why he keeps me at bay. He now realizes that the revelation that he gleaned was not sufficient to lead him through these times.

Jim doesn't sit in his room writing new songs. He takes his former celebrity for granted. He often wonder why he couldn't find more currency in the modern age. What if I really offered him something? A revival of his career. How would he react to that?

Of course, he wouldn't let me approach him on the street. I would have to go through the proper channels. It becomes a little weird on my part having to give up. He is the hollow shell of the star. There is only the belief in his own nobility. But there is no longer anything that is

remotely creative in this man. The art has withered away and died.

Particularly at a moment like this, I would hope that there was still something of the spiritual struggle. But that is why he is at this point. That is the part that he has lost the most.

As I see him struggle back to his room, I feel a sadness for the plight of Lee. He hasn't even unearthed the ghosts, and they are already starting to take him over. A few more desperate years, and he won't even have the success to protect him. He will be naked with his helplessness. There is nothing remotely poetic in any of this. It is the pathetic in its rawest form.

When I get back to the house I find Jay. I tell him about my experience.

Jay informs me, "I think that Lee is going back home. He realized that it was a dead end trying to stay here. He's a good player. But he just get lost out here. There's only thing her for him. The junk!"

When Cam returns from his journey, he is a changed man. He really needed to get away. He thanks me for the time.

While away, Cam Pearson has composed one of the sweetest ballads. It has been inspired by the recent troubles: "All these voices, they are talking, all these voices, in my head. Learn the language, they speak of trouble. Let the living talk to the dead. Outside my window, she is calling, painted bird, baited breath. It is treason to ask her question, to ask the reason, I love the flesh. I have fallen from the mountain, I will serve your love instead." He is a restless traveler. He is bored staying in place. But he can hardly reach the wished-for destination.

Cam knows the temptation. For him, it is celebrity. He can feel that he is giving in. The band would have never survived on the road if Cam hadn't exaggerated his role as sex symbol. But he realizes that is destroying all that he wants from music.

"Lee believed the bull shit. He was afraid. And when he was afraid, he turned to the most powerful drug of all. The self."

He sounds like a man with a mission. At the same time, I don't want his message to destroy the message. He can't become a crusader. He needs to maintain his role as artist. He needs to stay uncertain. Too much certainty, and he will stop looking.

"Mighty ocean take me with you, let me float away in your dream." Cam has completely offered himself to the healing power. It has not been a journey without. It is his journey within. He can sense the currents rushing to the raging rivers. And they push, push to that all containing ocean.

It may be a little frightening that he is willing to risk so much of himself. Once you become accustomed to that level of enlightenment, it is hard to settle for anything less. I almost sense a tragic side to his quest. No wonder Lee kept with it for this long. He saw Cam as a prophet. But he couldn't get close enough to him for that miraculous touch.

Lee was always falling short. But Cam presses on.

"I am a child in your waters. I want the power, I want the years. Give me time, give me all time. The rage eternal will rescue me."

Some might object with to the rather vague imagery of Cam's portrait. He could have gone the other way. He could have walked the strip with me. He could have remarked on Jim Riverdale's pain. But that would only feed the downward spiral. Cam knows what it is like to face vertigo. That is why he has needed the time off.

He shows up at the beach house with his acoustic guitar. Jimmy and Jay sing the chorus

along with him. Steve is tapping out a beat.

“The rage eternal will rescue me, the rage eternal will rescue me.”

I feel like a man who has been saved. In some ways, it is too much. I don't want to have to bear the burden of the world. What separates Passion from Cam? Both have sensed the same enlightenment. Even as they rage, Cam is trying to still the waters. Will that destroy him? Will it make him too placid, too complacent.

Passion has been balancing on the razor for years. But he is too absorbing. Cam sees it differently. He is letting nature talk through him. He hopes that the audience will ultimately be refreshed.

I really enjoy to be part of all of this. It is so very private. But Cam has invited me into the circle. And Jimmy has been accepted in their midst. They are ready for some heavy touring. I only hope success will come their way. I'm going to stay on board as long as I can. But it is probably time to expand the operation.

We are already negotiating to get on some bigger supporting slots. In some cases this means dishing out some cash. But it comes back in the form of merch sales. At the same time, they are trying to bump the album up to a major. It is already charting on college radio. It is about to break in the UK

Cam has put on hold the UK tour.

“The band has experienced too much stress in the last months. We have to take it easy. We're already going to face an uphill climb.”

He is right. I really dreamed of them following the wake of Of this Age. But there will be plenty of time for that. Now it the time to consolidate the US audience. If things go well, they may have a real chance of the Coachella gig. There is talk of South by Southwest before that. We've already have a good gig in Austin.

While we wait for the next step, we continue to head up the West coast. We are a storm finding its destination. They hear about us coming. They really don't know what to expect.

Cam is still torn between the active public persona and the private reality. Jimmy and Jay are helping a smooth transition. Jimmy has assimilated the band's style so well. And he is adding to the harmonies. In rehearsal, he'll bring the acoustic along. He adds suggestions to the arrangements. He adds a maturity to the band. There are no longer the self-doubts. He has made it all professional.

Sure, he loves to party. And he probably takes the most risks. The rest of the guys are afraid of it coming crashing down. Jimmy has gone beyond that so he is not afraid.

In Portland, a young girl approaches Cam. “I was able to download the acoustic version of that new song. It's been everything to me. I listen to it all the time.”

Cam is entirely appreciative. There is none of Passion's arrogance. I am impressed. He doesn't take anything for granted. Some might say that it is his youth. But he is wiser than his years. He is only a couple of years younger than me, and I am in awe of him all the time.

Unlike Passion, Cam also seems to avoid the borderline types. Maybe some of them are into his music, but there is a feeling of completeness that is absent in Passion's songs. Passion thrives on the desperation. He feels salvation. But the surrounding world is murkier. Cam is about the redeeming sunlight. He refreshes himself in the mountain stream.

Once we hit Seattle, I can tell that he is in his element. Canadian immigration seem to

have no record of the Windsor incident. We have no problem passing over the border.

In Vancouver, Cam is ethereal. It is an other worldly poetry reading. He is including a lot of his new material. The band is learning how to make these moments rock. Even the ballads have this extreme tension. Cam lives the struggle on stage. He wants to present the opposition there so it will not destroy him in private. He expresses the turmoil. But he is not lost in it.

The surrounding countryside in Alberta inspires us even more. Dates in Calgary and Edmonton add to the band's reputation.

Eventually we head south to Minnesota. Minneapolis is stupendous. The crowd really understands the poetry. Milwaukee is great as well.

I hardly realize that we are heading in to Chicago. Brenda shows up. She wants to see me after the gig.

"Do you have some time?" she asks.

"Of course."

We go get some coffee. The band is packing up and heading to Jimmy's for the night.

"It's been a while," she says.

It seems like years although it's only been half a year or so.

"I'm overwhelmed with the band. Jimmy is a great addition. And Cam is so charismatic. You're definitely in a different place." She is in a daze.

I wonder if she misses me. She is very coy trying to avoid getting too personal. Is this how we are starting out, or will this be the feeling of the whole night.

I ask, "Are you still seeing someone?"

She nods her head, "Paul and I are talking about getting married. Nothing is certain."

"Do you think that you might leave him?"

I can't see myself riding into town on the white charger. But she seems in awe of my accomplishments.

"It's not quite the indie dream," she says.

"What do you mean?"

"These guys are already gods. They walk on water. Isn't that what you always wanted?"

I feel that I am saying yes without speaking. That only keeps me more separate from her. There is a warm sweetness just being in her presence. I want to take her close and hold her. She can sense that. She seems to enjoy how I feel. She could leave.

For me it seems like love. But it is all conditional on the fact that she is with someone else.

She seems apologetic, "I always felt that I wasn't the girl for you. I was too real. You wanted to be with someone on magazine covers."

I tell her, "I've never dated any models."

"You know what I mean. You go for stars. Girls bathed in that natural glow. I always knew too much to hide behind the camera. Ultimately, you resented that."

I find the perfect excuse, "I'm the one who's alone. You're with someone."

"What did you want me to do? Die of a broken heart. Then you could put my photo on the next album."

I'm not sure what to say. She is not leaving me much of an opening. "You seem so cynical."

“I’ve been in love with you all this time. And you’re calling me cynical.”

I feel like I am putting words in her mouth. She doesn’t want to say any of this. She is inviting me back to her place.

“All that I can ever think about is you living inside of me.”

Why is she telling me this now? It hurts too much to admit it. It is actually making it harder for me to want her.

It’s so strange. I haven’t given a second thought to Hattie. It’s been almost a year. And now this. I want to go back to Memphis. I feel crazy. There is absolutely nothing for me down there. I know that I will never risk it. But I am having the feeling.

I see it now. Passion was the same kind of spirit as Hattie. Both touched me deeply. Brenda has given me so much. But I can’t let her in. I feel like a dick.

I know what Jimmy would say. He would tell me to pretend. Eventually it would all be the same. But it goes back to Melissa. It goes back to my Mom. Something has made me fucked up.

“You have to quit blaming women for something that is all about you. It’s all about you, isn’t it?”

Outside the restaurant, we kiss. I contemplate going back with her. I hope not. But I feel that this is the last place that I will see her again.

I have made arrangements to stay with my uncle. He doesn’t mind me coming in late. We have a brief reunion in the morning. Then I meet Jimmy.

Jimmy knows what has happened.

“She wanted you to come back to her place. You didn’t go.”

“She’s with a guy.”

He tells me, “It would have been for old time’s sake.”

“I couldn’t go. She would turn on me at some point.”

He smiles, “She’s not a pet tarantula.”

“You know what I mean.”

The tour has been out for quite a while. We make our way east by Indianapolis and Columbus. We head over to Cleveland. And then it’s back south.

We are just on the verge of winter weather. It starts to get cold up North, just as we head for South Carolina. At Greenville, we feel home. It is not a big crowd. But they all know the words. They love the new stuff. We sell a load of t-shirts. What could be better?

In only a few days, we will be back in Atlanta. We have a gig at the 40 watt in Athens. We play with Of Montreal. They draw a great dance crowd. We may be a little too rocked out. A little too country. But they love Cam’s poetry.

Back in Atlanta, I am staying in my mother’s place. She has been keeping up with the band with stories from newspapers around the country. She keeps up on the internet when she takes breaks at work.

“I think that I’m keeping track on you more than on my work. I’ve got to keep my job. At least until the band gets famous.”

That’s my mother.

When I fall asleep in my bed, I feel that I have really been around the world. There’s still so much to do. I don’t let it affect me.

When I wake up, I feel like there is something tremendous left undone. It may be the dream from which I awake. Something about Brenda.

I left Chicago to pursue my star again. I feel at any moment that I could just pop back into Memphis.

I put on My Bloody Valentine. I can feel the room shake. The feeling is taking me over. I look for my CD of Of this Age. I crank it up. I am with Passion again. I am Passion. I am running around the house singing the songs.

I want to get out there again. I want to be part of the dream.

Later that day, I get a call. There is some major label interest in the Sun Runners. We need to be careful. We are not desperate. We will not sign away our souls.

I meet first with Cam. He is even more cautious than I am.

“We have a couple of weeks off the road. I want to rest. I’m not going to think about it. If they want us now, they will want us even more.”

For the time being, he is right. I never thought that I could come this far. Or course, I am living through the band. I am living through someone else.

Jimmy asks if he can go back to Chicago for a while. The band wants him in Georgia. He’s agreed to relocate. But he needs to take care of some things. Everything is cool!