

Chapter I: Dylan

The smell of whiskey and beer was all over our old, small one person flat. Empty beer bottles and needles basically covered the entire floor.

We had bought this flat, just for this one purpose. Because what person, in his right mind, would throw parties like that in the same house where they received family and other descent guests.

I was surprised I could even recognise myself in the mirror. It took me quite some time before I noticed there was a man lying in the bathtub. His clothes were soaking wet; it looked like someone turned on the shower trying to wake him up.

“Guess they failed at that” I coughed, not knowing I was talking to myself.

I was halfway brushing my teeth when it finally struck me that it was my own brother that was lying in the tub. Things like that were quite normal with Shawn, so I didn’t stop to think why he was sleeping there.

“Hell of a party!” he said right before he threw up in the tub.

During my whole morning routine, some parts of last night were coming back to me in flashes.

I wasn’t even the slightest bit surprised when I noticed all the other people crashing on my living room floor. Although, I was kind of surprised when I noticed some people were completely naked.

I know we have the reputation of throwing the wildest parties in the neighbourhood, but this was the first time people actually used drugs inside. We were aware of it last night, but at that time we were already to drunk to do something about it. As soon as I got rid of everyone that was still here, I tried to wake up my brother. He had a job interview in about three hours and I didn't want him to mess this one up too. The least he could do was clean himself up and try to look like a descent guy.

“Why bother? It's not like they're going to hire an ex-musician like me, you know.” Shawn said while he quickly turned around trying to find a comfortable spot in the tub.

“Not if you don't sober up real quick they won't.” I actually couldn't blame him for thinking like that you know, the chance they would hire a man with a fully tattooed upper body for a management position was kind of slim. But hey, he could at least try, right?

Come to think of it, we should really stop throwing these wild parties on a Sunday night. Even though most people are used to the fact we usually look like crap on a Monday.

I got to say I really like my job, but I still hate going to work on a Monday morning, especially at times when I have to take the bus to get there. My car recently broke down and it's been in the shop for the past few days now. But I guess I'm probably not the only one who hates Monday mornings.

It certainly didn't help if I have to wait in the rain until the bus driver finally decides to show up. You probably know that most musicians have a really short temper and I certainly wasn't an exception. But since I was still a bit hung over from last night, I just looked for a place to sit, without yelling at the bus driver.

There is one thing I enjoy about taking the bus. You get to see a lot of different people, from different origins, different working classes, different age, etc. And I love watching people, how they act and react towards other people in all kinds of different situations. And besides the music on my iPod, it's the only thing that keeps me from falling asleep. In fact it's the only thing that keeps me sane during the whole bus ride. But there is this one thing that has changed over the years. People don't talk to each other anymore. I actually miss the time when someone took a seat right next to you and started talking about music, movies, the weather or whatever they felt like sharing at the moment. Just small talk you know. But now, now people just seem to get scared of the slightest bit of human contact.

After about an hour of listening to The Stones, I arrived at my work. A small jazz club, that goes by the name 'Remedy'. It's not much, but since our band disbanded, I didn't want to lose my connection with music. I wanted to keep learning about it. It was, and will always be my first true love. Besides, what is a better way to get in contact with fellow musicians than owning a music bar?

I get to meet different bands and people every other week.

Remedy was a small, but cosy, club where one could listen to artists like Miles Davis, Django Rheinaerdt, Ella Fitzgerald, Marcus Miller, etc. But besides jazz, they would also play a lot of blues and classic rock. Most of the customers are older than me, but occasionally some young people would come by too. Mostly during the weekend, it depends on which band is playing. In this town, not a lot of young people listen to jazz or classic rock anymore. It's something I'm trying to change and hopefully my bar will help with this cause.

Another benefit of working in your own bar, is when one of the band members can't make it, they would let me play in their place. It certainly has its advantages of being a famous bass player.

That way I was kind of hoping I would get a chance of playing with one of the big boys again. I try to be realistic about it and I know the chances are slim, but a man has got to have his own dreams, something to live for. And this was one of mine. I just wanted to be famous again, no matter what. But if I was to become famous again, I would like it to be with my old band members again.

Sometimes I even miss the times we only used to play covers with our band, even when we were sick of playing them all the time. Although they were all great songs, but playing them time after time, kind of gets boring after a while. But a band has got to start somewhere, right?

January 12, 2000. A club that can hold up to seven hundred people, all sold out. Even another hundred or maybe even two hundred people were waiting outside, hoping to get a glimpse of the rock & roll sensation of the night. 'Ruby Tuesday', named after a hit of the legendary Rolling Stones.

It was our first show of the new millennium, so we were pretty excited. For our opening act, we chose a cover band from The Beatles. Most songs of their set list consisted of their most famous hits, like Hey Jude, Yesterday, Come Together and Let it be. But as a hardcore Beatles fan I consider all their songs as hits. But what do you expect from one of the greatest bands that ever existed? After a short break of about twenty minutes, the lights went out.

Backstage we were preparing to start the main event of the night.

You should've seen the crowd go wild when we started playing our intro tune of 'Navy blues suit'. It's an easy, but very entertaining riff, but the crowd always seemed to love it. So it was definitely a good idea to start with that song.

You know bass players mostly stay in the background during a show? Well, I definitely wasn't one of those. I mostly had the tendency to try and steal the show from the rest of the band, together with Jake, our lead guitar player. We had a certain connection, like Jagger and Richards or Lennon and McCartney, probably because I've known Jake pretty much all my life. We started hanging out together around kindergarten.

We were inseparable ever since. Not many artists had it these days, and that is what made us a great band. And the audience seemed to notice that too, always cheering for more. We also had this thing on stage, where we were always battling against each other, trying to be the best. But again and again we found ourselves playing on the same level. It was like this ever since we first picked up an instrument when we were only fifteen years old, always jamming, playing battles and writing songs. Unlike other teenagers, we weren't going to parties or hanging around in the city. We were always busy with our guitars, or going to rock shows. I possibly couldn't imagine a better childhood.

Most of our songs were about events that occurred in our own lives, like friends, parties, love-hate-relationship and school. Things that people can easily relate too, and in some cases can find shelter in.

During our shows, there were mostly a lot of fans trying to get close, and this concert wasn't any different. Security certainly had their hands full that night. But they couldn't stop us from taking some groupies back to the hotel to have, what we call, one hell of an after party. And of course we had written some songs about some of those nights.

The last song of our set list, 'Black Flying Fox', was one of them.

Somehow I felt kind of awkward during that song. The girl I wrote the song for was standing right in front of me.

I kept hoping she wouldn't notice the song was about her. But when I saw the expression on her face... That small bit of hope quickly disappeared. I was quite sure she had noticed it, because when the song was over, she threw an empty beer bottle at me. Luckily for me, I'm blessed with good reflexes so I was able to dodge it in time. Otherwise I had to perform the rest of our shows with a black eye. Naturally a lot of people would find that rock & roll, but still, I wasn't very keen on the idea.

Besides, if you're going out with a musician, you can be quite sure they will write something about you. And that can go in two ways, either it can be about something good, like a love song, or it can go completely in the opposite direction. Especially when things don't work out the way they wanted. Jake and I have written over a dozen songs about girls we used to like, but didn't like us back. It's what musicians do to make themselves feel better, to help with the process of healing.