

# PEABODY

**Egon** is about one of those relationships that is full of passion and love, but no good for anyone involved. Written from his lover's perspective, it is loosely based on the character of Egon Schiele an Austrian painter of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Schiele's work is sexually charged, angular and awkward as were his relationships. His lovers often modelled for his works and vice versa, with his models often becoming his lovers. The romance between Egon and his subject in the song is rocky and doubts of infidelity plague the relationship. However, when they are together, as it can be when your attention is truly captured by someone, you are happily lost in the moment... "coloured paints and cigarettes and endless late night chatter/about things we don't know and places that we have never been". The shoegaze guitars and an open tuning reminiscent of the Underground Lovers, anchored by a thumping and repetitive rhythm, provide a solid basis for the melody to float higher and higher, following Egon as he climbs in through her window, leaving us and the relationship's problems as unresolved as the song's dissonant guitar hooks.

**Big Sur** was lyrically inspired by the Jack Kerouac book of the same name and particularly the poem at the back of that book titled *The sounds of the South Pacific at Big Sur*. Although I have never been to Big Sur I imagined Australia's eastern coastline would be similar to the craggy beaches and cliffs of the Californian coast that Kerouac describes in his novel. *Big Sur* was written at the height of Kerouac's fame, worn down by alcoholism and artistically spent, he escapes to a friend's holiday house in Big Sur to regroup. However the sounds of the Pacific haunt him, as do the ghosts that follow him there. As sure as the unceasing pounding of the surf, Jack is overcome by his demons and inevitably returns to his old ways – it seemed like a fitting sentiment to accompany the rhythmic, detuned drone central to this song. Trix's stabbing guitar parts in the verses are like Jack's demons barking and squalling at the back of your head and like Jack, they'll get you, in time.

**The Devil For Sympathy** takes bands such as *Blonde Redhead* and *The Brian Jonestown Massacre's* appetite for appropriating pop culture and sinks its teeth into the title of the iconic song - you can work out which one – that opens the *Rolling Stones' 1968 Beggars Banquet* album. It also touches on the timeless theme of being down, out and with nowhere to go. However in true Peabody style, as the song comes to a climactic close and Bruno repeats the refrain "I've got the devil and you... you got the devil and me" any despair is long forgotten. Like the best melancholic pop songs, through empathy, we emerge redeemed.

**Buzzard Vs Ibis** - Two longstanding friends, the Buzzard and Ibis, have a great falling out – much indignation ensues. Relationships with old and close friends are so loaded with meaning and emotional baggage that when they turn bad, they turn flapping-nasty-bad. The Buzzard and Ibis seemed like a comical pair to personify in order to act out this man/bird-folk-tale. Particularly the Ibis – they're gangly, awkward creatures with a lot of humility – not really like the incensed maniac-bird in the song. However the Ibises that eat the lunchtime scraps in Hyde Park that were the kernel of inspiration for the song, with their diet of burgers and fast food, seem to get all nervy and hyped up on the sugar and food colouring. Generally the Hyde Park Ibises stink and behave badly. As this song came together in the rehearsal room I could picture a certain friend of mine wearing feathered wings, a mask with a beak and a g-string, acting out the scene in the imaginary video-clip in my mind. "I am the Ibis!#%" has a bit of "I am the walrus" about it too... which could all be a bit of a Steve Coogan/Alan Partridge-styled dream sequence couldn't it?

**If The Accident Will** is a dreamy epic, perhaps Peabody's first, inspired lyrically by the Kurt Vonnegut novel titled *Slaughterhouse 5* and musically by some of the dreamier tracks on *Sonic Youth's 1990 album Goo*. In the novel the central character has "come unstuck in time" travelling through his life in a random, non-chronological order, rendering him detached, almost an observer of his own life. Essentially, this is an outsider's song, for those people who live in daydreams. To me the middle instrumental prior to the crescendo is full of lazy sunshine and the chorus full of melancholia.

This song went through various incarnations and almost didn't make the album until everyone told me I was an idiot and it should be included.

**Where Are you Coming From?** ponders the way people drift in and out of each other's lives. I guess I was in a reflective mood after Graeme left the band and I found myself wandering around the house strumming my guitar. The chords in the verses are reminiscent of *New Order*. Trix plays a nice slide part and the words are from brain.

**Something To Someone** - This was the first song penned for *Prospero* signalling a change of approach thematically and musically from our last album and setting the tone for this one. For this reason it's fitting that it sits at the heart or in the middle of the track order for the album (of course this is rendered irrelevant by iTunes etcetera, but that is another story). Basically it's about disillusionment and escapism and a shift from the anglo-punk political rants of *The New Violence* to the auteurish individualism of US indie. *Something to Someone* is the dictum at the heart of *Prospero* or the rules of play for the album which are along the lines of "sick of the drear? Get beautiful, go forth and prosper you motherfuckers!"

**Closing In On You** - The sister song to *Where Are You Coming From?*, *Closing In On You* plays on the title's double meaning. It's about travelling to be reunited with a loved one, but also about that feeling of things becoming too much, being overwhelmed or feeling like the world is closing in on you. The setting of airports, transit lounges, phone booths and internet cafés sets a suitable scene for the central character to have a valium/ephedrine fuelled meltdown.

**The Only Way I Know** - This song is both a snarling rant and a brief walk through human nature and evolution, wrapped up in a punk deluge. Living in Sydney can be a truly bizarre experience. At the time I was working on the lyrics for this song I was living on a subsistence wage in a flat on Bourke Street in Darlinghurst, Sydney. There were junkies, hookers and winos on my doorstep, while 30 metres away there were beautiful people (on William Street) faced with the terrible dilemma of whether they should buy the Porsche or the Maserati. As the first verse screams, "*isn't she pretty it's like the tale of two cities, that occupy the same spaces, but the difference is plain to see*" it seemed obvious on witnessing this, that humanity is destined to consume itself into oblivion. Like it's hardwired into each of our rodent-like brains. But "*what do I know, I'm just trying to live my life, this way, the only way I know, the only way I know*"

**Sweet Oblivion** - Speaking of oblivion... it would probably be more aptly titled *Sweet Obliviousness*, which doesn't sound as cool, hence the actual title. But I have to admit I like the blasé, off-handed, self-absorbed, arsehole this song is. Able to recognise only its own image, it wanders around the room lost in a fog of feedback and shoegaze guitars. Please smoke a bong before listening to this song. Musically it tips its hat to everyone from *The Stooges* to the *Happy Mondays* to *Swervedriver* to the *Velvet Underground*, to whoever cares to take any notice of it. It's fun to play and hopefully fun to listen to at late o'clock. Though you may wake up with a headache in the morning.

## PROSPERO' OUT SAT 23 AUGUST 08



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