

Anecdotes of a Roadie

SAMPLE

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WARNING: This book contains
sex&drugs & rock&roll



Preface

Some of the names in this book have been changed to protect the guilty

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website



Chapter 1

Cosmic Joe & Larry the Lamb

The Body guard and the drug dealer



Section 1

Larry the Lamb & Cosmic Joe

Denver



This is a story about Cosmic Joe and Larry the Lamb. We arrived in Denver, Colorado in 1974, and took over a whole floor of the Hotel as we often did. This guy turned up and moved into the hotel. It turned out that he was a drug dealer and a floor of a hotel filled with musicians and road crew provided him with ample opportunities to peddle his wares. Because of the service he was providing, he was tolerated and allowed to hang around. He was also a source of amusement because when anything was said to him he would reply "Heh man, the answer is in the Cosmos" like some remnant from the hippie days. His name was Joe and so he became Cosmic Joe.

The other character in this story was a bodyguard who had been sent by the concert promoter to look after us. There was a rodeo in town and the potential for trouble between redneck cowboys and long haired English roadies, prompted the arrival of Larry to 'protect' us. Now Larry was the biggest guy I have ever met, he had to turn sideways to get through any normal sized door. So, with



Chapter 2

Marianne

*The night I spent in the back of a van
with Marianne Faithful*

The night I spent in the back of a van with Marianne Faithful

After a gig in Birmingham in the early 70s, there was the usual crowd of people backstage. Among them was **Marianne Faithful**, some of the road crew had deliberately gone out and bought **Mars Bars** that they ostentatiously chewed. I thought this was in very poor taste because of the myth reported in newspapers at the time of the **Redlands drugs bust**. They of course thought it was funny.

I was chatting to Chris Wood from the band **Traffic** who I had worked with the previous year. Marianne Faithful joined the group to enquire if anyone was going back to London that night. I said I was, but only in the back of a van which belonged to the lighting crew, I said she was welcome to join me if she wanted, mostly as joke, thinking she was hoping for a better ride as befitted her status, but she said, OK that would be fine.



Mick & Keith at Redlands

Chapter 3

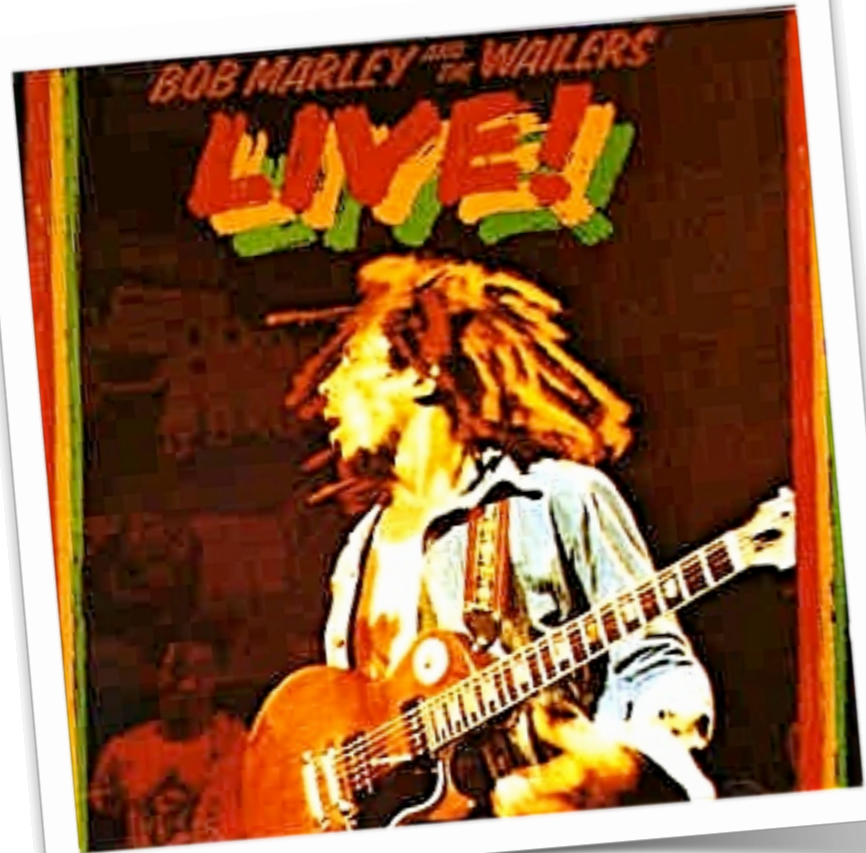
Bob Marley and the Wailers

On stage with Bob Marley and the Wailers at the famous Lyceum concerts of 1975 where the Live album was recorded



Section 1

Bob Marley



I first heard of BMW in 1975, when we got a call from Island records to go to America and sort out the BMW tour, which we were told were having technical difficulties as they had no one on the tour that had much experience with the tech side.

I remember listening to the early BMW albums to familiarise myself with the music, as I often did before a tour, and at that time I had never heard of BMW- I knew about ska and blue beat and of course the relationship between Island records and Jamaican music because I had worked for Island. I did not like the ska stuff so I was not expecting much, but the reggae sound of BMW and particularly the lyrics of that early stuff were very impressive and I thought the music was great.

I was working at the Central School of Art at the time, but due to an accident, I was officially off sick when I was phoned from America and asked if I would join the tour when they got to England, because they needed somebody on stage.

Stories preceded the arrival of the band. I remember meeting up

Chapter 4

Freddie Mercury

With Freddie Mercury in a night club



Section 1

With Freddie Mercury in a night club

I worked for a while at a night club on Jermyn Street just off Picadilly in London. I designed and operated the lights for the cabaret acts. The acts were mainly singers including



Jazz singer **Annie Ross** and **Viola Wills**



Chapter 5

Hannibal Lector

*I had dinner with Hannibal Lector and
survived*

Antony Hopkins

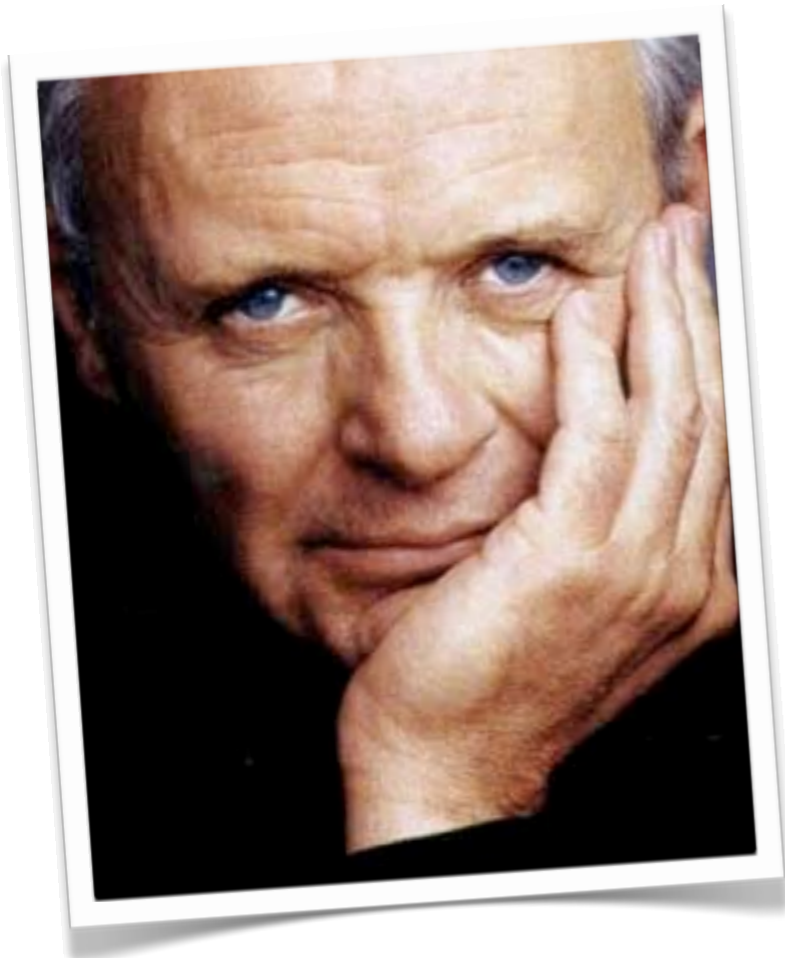


A friend was working on a film with **Antony Hopkins** in 1974, which was set on location in Yorkshire.



Our friend often came round for Sunday dinner at my house, along with a few others, and so he invited Anthony Hopkins to join us in order to break their journey back up north, were they were to resume filming early Monday morning. They had been provided with a car and a driver by the film company, so Anthony and the driver joined the usual crowd for Sunday dinner.

It was the classic english Sunday dinner, roast beef, vegetables and appropriately Yorkshire Pudding. At that time Anthony Hopkins was not the big international film star that he became, particularly after his role of Hannibal Lector, but he was very well known in theatre and had starred in a number of films.



Chapter 6

Playmate of the tour

Playing with a playmate



playmate of the tour

Hyatt Regency San Francisco



We arrived in San Francisco with time off as we were not doing a concert that day. We were staying at the Hyatt Regency hotel in the Embarcadero on the waterfront where we could look out to Alcatraz. We were quite impressed with the hotel as it was the first one we had ever seen with an indoor atrium.

The hotel featured having the lifts (elevators) on the inside of the hotel going all the way to the roof and included artificial trees and a river with recordings of bird songs, so you sit around in a bar as if you're in the countryside inside the building

So me and a couple of the sound guys were going around the bars when we met these three girls.

Chapter 7

Orange 1975

The French Woodstock



Orange music festival



In 1975, I was hired to be one of the road crew running the **Orange** music festival which was a three-day festival taking place in the Roman amphitheater in Orange, a small town near Avignon in France. Later the Orange festival of 1975 became known as the French **Woodstock**, perhaps it would've been better to call it the French **Altamonte**, because the security was provided by a mixture of French Hells Angels and Belgian gangsters.

Things started off well as we set up the lighting equipment and sound stacks and were preparing for the arrival of the bands. However, being English, we looked up at the sky and decided it was going to rain.

The local French people insisted that it never rained at this time of the year in Orange,



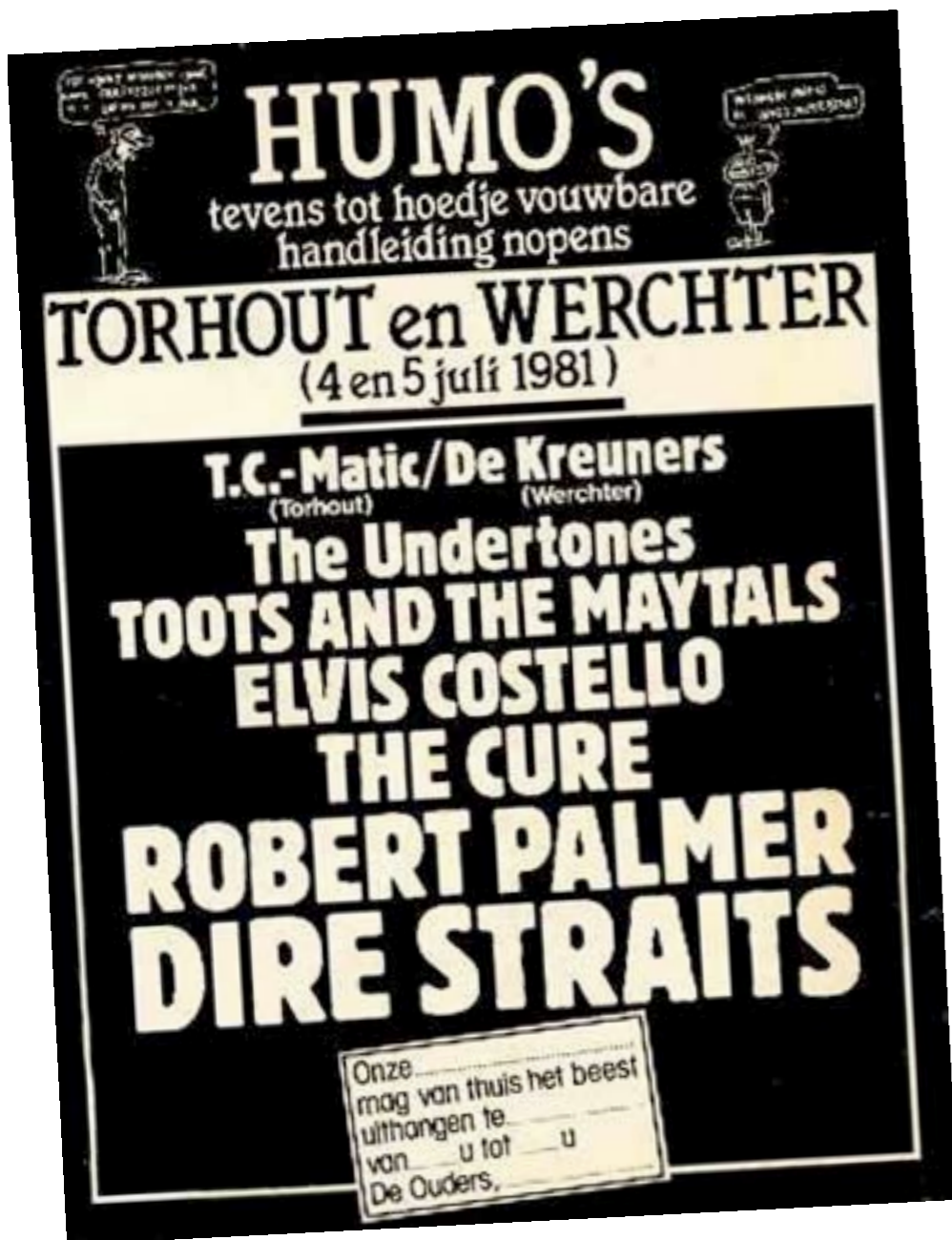
Chapter 8

Werchter Festival

The infamous F... Rock'n' Roll" incident



Werchter festival 1981



Another festival I worked at was the Werchter Festival of 1981 in Belgium. I am partly including this story to put the record straight. There are a number of sites on the internet concerning what has become known as the "F... Robert Palmer..." incident.

This was when a member of the The Cure shouted out at the end of their set "F... Robert Palmer, F... Rock & Roll"

In a book about The Cure, entitled Ten Imaginary Years, there is an account of this incident by the lead singer Robert Smith.

[See Website](#)

Robert: "We'd only been on for about a half an hour and everything was running late so Robert Palmer's road crew started motioning to us to stop. This bloke ran on and said 'If you don't stop playing, we're gonna pull the plug'. Simon immediately walked to the mike and shouted 'Fuck Robert Palmer! Fuck rock'n'roll!' and we started playing a really slow version of 'A Forest' which lasted about 15 minutes. It was fucking brilliant. Unfortunately, when we finished, they threw all our stuff off the back of the stage ..."

Chapter 9

tripping in phoenix

Taking LSD in Arizona



a strange night in Phoenix, Arizona

Phoenix

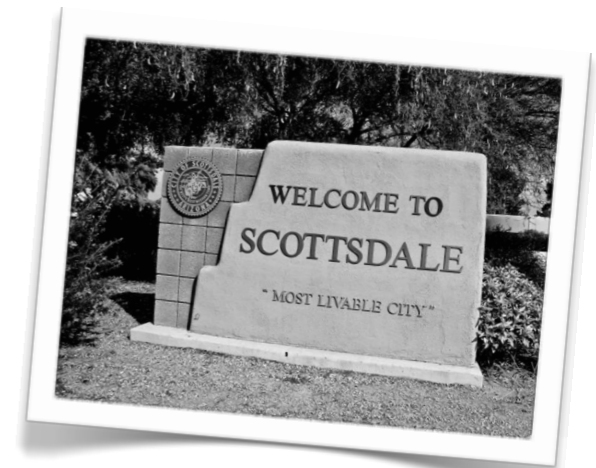


During a tour in 1974 we had two days off in Phoenix, Arizona. Plenty of time to get into trouble, so we did.

One night we started off by going to a club and two of the guys got into an argument. I had no idea what it was about but they happened to be the two people driving the cars. The first I knew of it was when the guy (I'll call him Dave) driving the car I was in, rammed the car in front which was being driven by (I'll call him John). This happened 3 or 4 times on the way to a Restaurant in the Phoenix suburb called Scottsdale.

We sat down to the table in the restaurant, John was sitting opposite me and Dave was standing at the head of the table still arguing.

We had been drinking for most of the night so I was a little 'confused', because as I was looking towards the other end of the table to what I thought was an alcove



road trips

No memoir would be complete without an account of some of the ridiculous traveling involved in being a roadie

on the road again





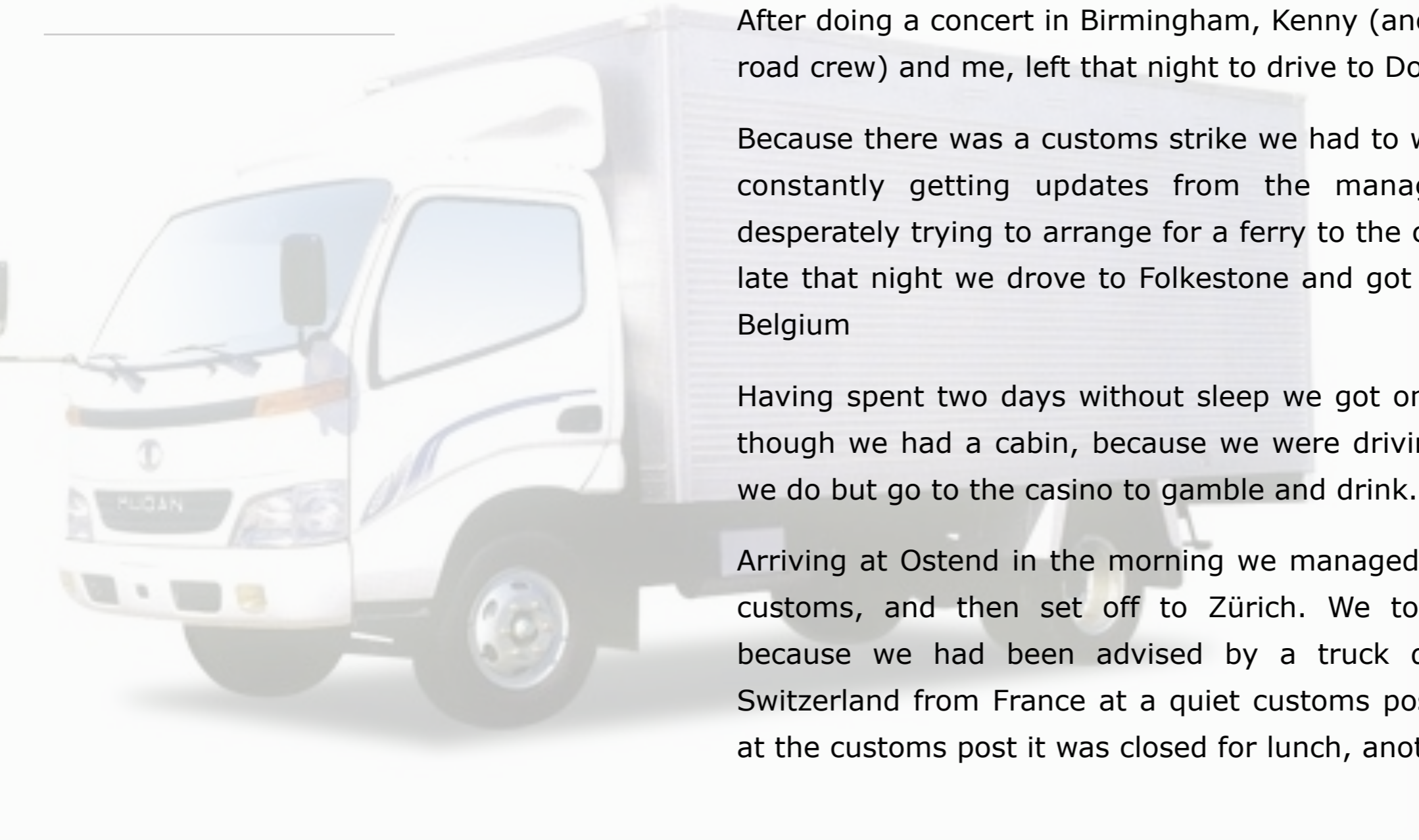
Road Trip

After doing a concert in Birmingham, Kenny (another member of the road crew) and me, left that night to drive to Dover.

Because there was a customs strike we had to wait in Dover all day, constantly getting updates from the management, who were desperately trying to arrange for a ferry to the continent. Eventually late that night we drove to Folkestone and got a ferry to Ostend in Belgium

Having spent two days without sleep we got on the ferry and even though we had a cabin, because we were driving a truck, what did we do but go to the casino to gamble and drink.

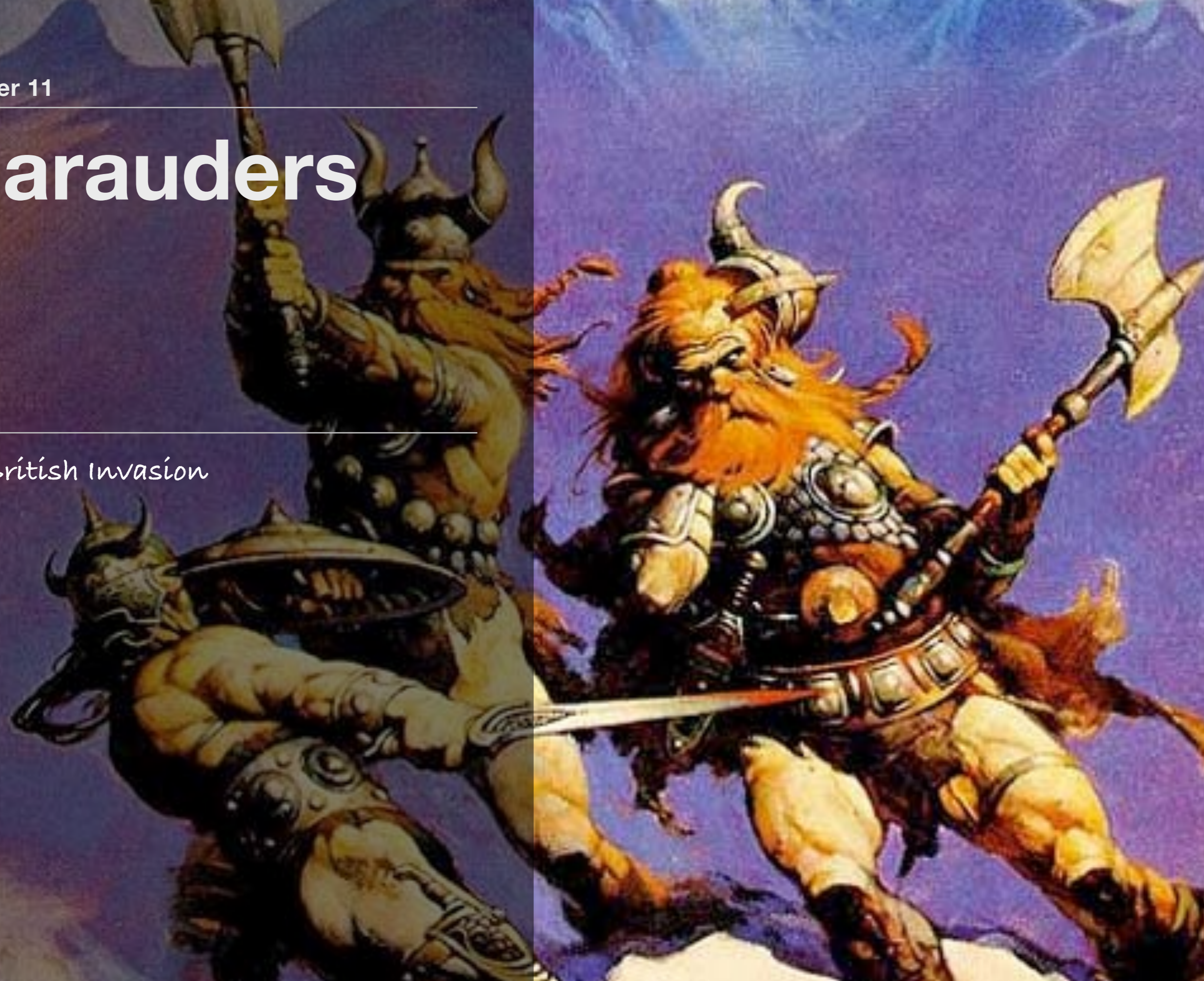
Arriving at Ostend in the morning we managed to struggle through customs, and then set off to Zürich. We took a strange route because we had been advised by a truck driver to cross into Switzerland from France at a quiet customs post. When we arrived at the customs post it was closed for lunch, another two hour wait.



Chapter 11

marauders

The British Invasion



Section 1

marauders



I began as a roadie, as most do, by being a friend of somebody who was in a band. I was at a loose end and one day he said, "We need somebody to drive the van would you be interested."

This was a time when we didn't tour but simply did gigs that meant driving to wherever the gig was and then driving back home every night.

Occasionally we would meet up with other groups on the motorway at the infamous **Blue Boar** services at Watford Gap which has passed into rock 'n' roll legend.

Most of the gigs were pubs and clubs but we also did a lot of American air force bases in the late 60s - the infamous nuclear missile bases. Many of the men had been to Vietnam and regaled us with their war stories.

Going to these bases was like entering another country in that they were set up to be little bits of America in a foreign land.



Chapter 12

mementos

TRAFFIC
OCT. 27, 1974
AUDITORIUM

Section 1

mementos

I only have 3 mementos from my touring years. My Zero Halliburton briefcase, my personal flight case and one T-shirt.

The Zero Halliburton briefcase was a required status symbol for roadies in the 70s. One reason being that you could only get them in America, so it showed you had toured the USA, and the other was that they were very expensive. These cases have gone on to star in numerous movies where they are filled with either money or drugs. Indeed, I did cross London once with mine full of money - the reason is between me and the tax man. It was never full of drugs in case the police are reading!

