

2-4-97

On My Time

The best and worst two days of my life took place at Bogarts with my band Radioactive Weasel last month. We had practiced daily for near three years, and our group decided to pull together again and enter "The Battle of the Bands." This was the first time we sparingly paid fifty dollars to perform anywhere. All the other competitions we had entered were mail in tapes and then wait for a response. We got out of bed at five in the morning, then raced to our drummer's house. Loaded on uppers, practiced four and a half hours to perfect our original songs, we were to play that night.

Pumped and ready to get started we packed the van with our drums and guitars then started our journey to Clifton for our show. As usual, we got there way to early, so we did what any fun seeking under aged musicians would do. We searched the allies and found a half passed out drunk and took him to the local bar, then got a few beers each before the show. We then returned to draw numbers for the order of the bands.

I eagerly pushed my way to the front of all the other bands, being the obnoxious prick I am, and drew the first card. Unfortunately I drew the second band on stage out of nine. The best position to be in is about fourth or fifth band because that is when the crowd starts getting into the music. Pissed off I haphazardly wondered back to my group to inform them of my greatest mistake.

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We loaded the equipment into the worlds slowest elevator, and stumbled our way to the backstage lounge. After I had read graffiti covered walls until my heart was content I noticed much writing by some of my favorite groups like Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Mansion, Korn, and The Dead Milkmen. Inspired by them I also signed the wall with some chosen words. The time had rolled around for the first band to hit the stage. Excited, we rushed our way into the mosh pit, (in my mind the only place to be). Screams turned into whispers as Pieces entered the stage in a cowardly manor. After they vaigly introduced their band, in a well-maintained surprano voice we listened to about a song and a half. Our group returned to the lounge to put on our stage clothes. I screamed in front of the other seven bands as I dropped my pants and underwear and slipped on my vinyl pants and a black T-shirt. Not noticing the rest of my band had found a dressing room. Unconcerned I grabbed my bass and a back up, and headed for the stage. I wondered onto the main stage for the night, and danced my way to the front.

After jump starting my ego I started to dance a jig with our singer Rob. Stage crew finished setting up our amps, and we broke into our intro. we made up on our way to the show. With four clicks from the drummer I felt the energy flow through my body while we started with our cover song from Kracker called Low. With my subconscious mind going wild, I played flawless without even thinking about it. This made it easy to go crazy and have a good time. It's a proven fact that if the band show enthusiasm, and talent the crowd will loosen up and join. I think that is the reason I love performing so much.

Sliding into song two "Spectrum," a song the guitar player and I originated came off the same way. After moving more than I ever moved on stage before, I noticed a

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blurred object flying right at me. Hitting my hand, I recognized the object to be a bra. Then with a gentle laugh, and a sigh knowing it was not another one of those horrid, full, open, beer bottles. I ran to the front of the stage, with rage in my eyes, and smoothly pulled off my first solo of the night. Satisfied, I paced back to the center of the stage, and continued my rhythm with a slow motion filled dance.

Song three was starting as our two guitarist finished "Spectrum." With heavy

bass beats and whaling drums, the crowd started to move viciously about the floor. Without any care in the world I began to jump up and down with the beat of the song. Starting to sweat, with great pride I began to play even harder. Inspired by me, the two guitar players also started to loosen, as they enjoyed the heavy flow of riffs in "This Side Down," previously written by our rhythm player Mike. Moving more than ever we started the best song written in our three year history "On My Time."

Pushing our selves to the limits we still played with compassion and pure energy. Wearing down, near exhausted, sweat covered, and dizzy I went into my final solo. With the sting of sweat in my eyes, and blood running from my finger tips from frayed strings I still pulled off the solo in which had given me hell for such a long time. With no doubt in my mind we would make the next level, I queued the band to do the extended version. We tried to get every last bit of enthusiasm out of the crown we could. Rob thanked the 950 people for coming to the show, as we grabbed our gear and headed for the van.

Grouped back up with our shirts off we returned to the pit. Clashing cymbals and untuned guitar screeches filled the air the rest of the night. Scratched records could have played clearer than the following bands.

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Upset that it was us chosen to play the same night as a group of uneducated, punk ass losers. We returned to finish putting the final pieces of the drum set in the van. Acting in our best behavior, and as friendly as possible we congratulated a few chosen bands with the same taste of music..

After getting in the van we returned to our natural state as we left the parking lot waving good bye with single digits while our friends mooned the feeble opponents. While we swerved all over the road, we screamed the lyrics to every song on the radio and talked about the show. Some nicely chosen colored lights, flashed from behind, which startled us. I pulled over to see no other than our best friends, the Cincinnati Police. He pranced his way to our smoke filled van, and signaled me to roll down the window, With a grim smile I eased the window down about three quarters of the way. By this time, I had handed him my drivers' license and the vehicle registration as he asked for it. He then asked where we were heading, and if we knew why we were stopped. After I had explained we had just finished a show, and were on our way home, I then asked if it was because of swerving.

Having known I had been swerving all over the road. He remarked yes, as I told him the van was out of alignment, and I was just getting the feel of driving it. He told us to be careful as he walked back to his cruiser. With a slight voice, I told myself of just how perfect I really am. While the stereo blared, we continued to bellow the lyrics, to the songs on the radio again. As we pulled into our drummer's house at three in the morning, we carried out tradition and drank all night. The loud ringing, of the phone I had passed out on, woke me. Delighted when the person on the other end told me they were the owner of Bogarts. After I realized whom I was talking to, I was happy to hear him say we could "come

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back and play anytime." He quoted, "Radioactive Weasel scored extremely high for an unsigned band." I smiled to myself as he then said, "However, you have been disqualified for an unknown reason." My heart stopped as time flew by. A nameless face had just crushed what had seemed so great to me. The thing that confuses me is why to this very day, do they still refuse to tell us any reason for our disqualification.

