

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY MEMBERS OF THE UG COMMUNITY

# UG Amplified



Our new feature:  
"Intros" - Starting  
this month with 'Emo'

## Dumb Hair, Tricks and Antics Onstage



An interview  
with  
Scott Reeder!

Want to get to know UG and  
its members better?  
We bring you the news about  
contests from all forums, and  
tell you who's who in the world  
of gear building, modding and repair

AUGUST 2011 - FOUR

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## Note from the Editor



blue\_strat

It's hard to believe that we're already four issues in. We've had some great contributions, including thirteen articles on Real Life, fifteen reviews of the latest and greatest releases, and eighteen engrossing stories.

For this issue I've been making forays into the various forums of UG to connect with the dynamic goings-on there.

There are always a few contests and competitions in progress, so their creators can now display the winners here in the new Contests section. For this issue, we feature the 11<sup>th</sup> round of the Short Story Competition, and version 1.0 of Calling All Of The Pit's Musicians.

Furthermore, issues of *Amplified* will now contain a directory of UGers who provide gear-related services – see the thread in **Gear Building & Customizing** to register your advertisement.

We're also looking to tap the great resource of **Bands & Artists** for people to write a series of introductions to bands and genres – there is a sign up thread in the main forum. See the Intros section for this month's introduction to emo.

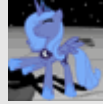
Let us know about anything you're running on UG, and you could promote it in the next issue of *Amplified*.

amplified.editor@gmail.com

## What Are We Listening To?



DeaThrash  
Dissection  
Internal Fire  
<http://youtu.be/ckBDmoFL0KA>



due 07  
Joie De Vivre  
You Ruined Everything That Was Ever Good  
<http://youtu.be/3PzgPAJvrhg>



gabcd86  
Howard Shore  
The Road Goes Ever On... (Part 1)  
<http://youtu.be/ySZgB9XZp9M>



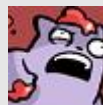
Jon777  
Devin Townsend Project  
Sumeria  
<http://youtu.be/PiLcAD4XzdA>



JustRooster  
This Town Needs Guns  
26 is Dancier than 4  
<http://youtu.be/lhPljk5EZ0Q>



jwizzle5786  
Pendulum  
Set Me On Fire  
<http://youtu.be/BeOJDgAu4LE>



MakinLattes  
Suicide Machines  
Inside/Outside  
<http://youtu.be/MmkX0tVk9fM>



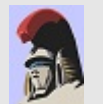
Metallica1554  
Meshuggah  
Rational Gaze  
<http://youtu.be/rkrjE4QRsys>



necrosis1193  
Weird Al Yankovic  
Party in the CIA  
<http://youtu.be/C-CG5w4YwOI>



smb  
Soul Clap  
Lonely C  
<http://youtu.be/on96ldms5K4>



Spartan101400  
Megadeth  
Rattlehead (at Phantasy Theatre, 1987)  
<http://youtu.be/772hKCC16xw>



theogonia777  
Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys  
Bluegrass Breakdown  
<http://youtu.be/k5bGe4fpLHs>



## Why I Support Dumb Hair, Tricks, and Moves Onstage



JustRooster

I was recently in a discussion about crazy guitar moves during shows. Now, I should preface this by saying that when I played with my high school band I had a couple of really cheap-o basses that I'd mod up to my standards and beat the piss out of. I hit drums with them, I did the guitar sling... hell, I even threw my bass across the stage and buried it at my friend's graduation gig. I'm no stranger to putting on a show.

So, needless to say, I support these guitar moves, but that's not what got me thinking enough to write here. What got me thinking was remember all the local shows that I've gone to in different towns, the big shows, and the overall overwhelming influence of shoe-gazing.

I've been in and out of bands since I was 14 or so, and I currently session for a studio in Deforest, WI. I've been in and

around a handful of music scenes and been to a share of bigger shows, and I've noticed over the last few years that going to a show has become somewhat of a stagnant affair. A few months ago my buddy Steven got me into Murder by Death. This was a band that wasn't really entirely my thing, but they had a strong rhythm and a fiery singer who wrote equally fiery lyrics. It was St. Patrick's Day, the crowd was drunk, the band was hot, and no one was dancing? Not even a simple head nod and foot tap from 80% of the crowd. I was amazed. An Irish/American folk band not even as much as generating a general buzz of excitement from a wasted crowd? Madison's a pretty hipster town as it is, but I didn't think it had reached this degree!

Now, it's not always like this. When I saw the Stone Temple Pilots and Cage the Elephant the crowd was spectacular. Everyone sang along and moved properly at the proper times. I go to shows now and it's a purely observational event, I've come to feel, the most notable being most local shows outside of Madison or Milwaukee. I've played shows mostly in Stevens Point, but my band at the time played a couple of times out to the Twin Cities and around a handful of other towns in Wisconsin. I'm not saying we were better, but we had motion on stage. I was always doing something fucking retarded

with my bass, the singer was almost going from end to end on the stage, the drummer was forceful, and the guitarist didn't do much, but he wasn't stagnant. Our crowds usually responded. The more we moved, the more they would. We'd include them, they'd react.

I went to a show in Stevens Point last week to support a couple of good friends of mine by going and watching them. I saw three other bands that night. They all... just... stood... there. I didn't think anything about it till now. Looking back I think to myself, "Wow, what made that show so boring?" only now to realise that my answer could really just be that simple. The whole crowd (armed with thick rimmed glasses, knit caps, and PBR) did the same thing. They stood and observed. Not a notable cue that they could be enjoying the music.

So to come full circle here and summarize, I support stupid guitar moves, not because I use them, because I've noticed that the crowd reacts. I've seen a number of good bands with bad stage presence get left behind as a result. If you're a band and you want the crowd to stop staring at you while you plink away at your songs, then treat them how you want to be treated: with flying guitars and fucking high kicks.

# PIIGS in Shark-Infested Waters



gabcd86

Living on the border of Switzerland and France, you quickly learn to play with exchange rates. A night out can start in euros and end in Swiss francs, and you always feel cheated by the conversion. Still, you get a rough idea of the relative values of currencies, which tends to more or less stick in your mind for good. Two euros was about three francs, simples.

Playing with exchange rates on a regular basis, you quickly learn the real meaning of those stories on the news that worry about “la chute de l’euro” or “the pound’s decline”. As of today, 2€ will get you 2.3 Swiss francs. And why is the euro tumbling?

The eurozone debt crisis. Smooth transition or what?

It’s been just over a year since the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund put together a €110 billion bailout deal for the Greek government. Since then, Ireland and Portugal have also received bailouts. And, in a pattern that is becoming depressingly familiar, sharks are now circling the other members of the PIIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain). Spain has been the target of speculation for months, and it has now infected Italy, too.

Things play out roughly as follows. A country on the periphery of the eurozone has high government debt and is running a high budget deficit. Doubts are raised about their ability to pay these debts. The credit ratings agencies will issue a proclamation, “downgrading” this country’s debt. The government, desperate to calm the markets, start talking about austerity plans. Ultimately, they can’t pay their debts, and the “Troika” (EC, ECB, and IMF) start negotiating a bailout, with all sorts of punitive strings attached.

In Greece, they are going through their second round of austerity measures and there is talk of a second bailout. These austerity measures include tax rises, public sector pay cuts (including 30% cuts to wages of employees of state-owned enterprises), cuts in benefits and other government spending, privatisations, and, intriguingly, reforms of labour law to make it far more employer-friendly and facilitate firings and redundancies. Some of this makes sense for a government trying to balance its books - cut costs, raise revenues. However, a lot of it is just classic Shock Doctrine tactics - the privatisations, the liberalisations - all making it easier for international finance capital to extract profit out of Greece. Meanwhile, the Greek people are having their belts tightened several notches and being told this is all their fault.

This “harsh medicine” is being prescribed across the eurozone. At the start of the crisis, a few lone voices were suggesting that Greece should simply admit it couldn’t (and possibly still can’t) pay - i.e. default. Those voices have progressively gotten louder

and louder. It’s almost as if, now that the markets have extracted all the concessions they needed out of the Greek people, they’re now going to try and make what they can out of the Greek debt.

As mentioned before, Ireland and Portugal are already set on this path. Spain and Italy are also enacting austerity policies. Many commentators, including Nobel Prize winners Paul Krugman and Joseph Stiglitz, warn that these extreme austerity measures stifle growth, actually making a reduction in debt *less* likely, as well as damaging the futures of countless people. And these aren’t peripheral, minor economies like Ireland, Greece, and Portugal (who, collectively, produce about 4% of the EU’s GDP). Between them, Spain and Italy produce 20% of the EU’s GDP. If they go through a similar crisis, it is possible we’ll be straight back into a second recession.

And it’s not just the eurozone. The UK is charging blindly out ahead of the pack down Austerity Lane. Perhaps even scarier, the idea of the United States of America, the largest economy in the world, defaulting, is being tossed around as a political football.

The sharks are tearing into Greece, Ireland and Portugal. They’re circling Spain and Italy. And if we’re not careful, the whole boat will sink, and then we’ll all be PIIGS.

# Interview

## Scott Reeder

(Kyuss / The Obsessed)



smb

*Hi Scott, thanks very much for agreeing to do this interview for UG Amplified from Ultimate-Guitar.com.*

*What are you currently working on?*

I just put out a new solo thing on iTunes called "I Never Wanted" that's kind of an ode to whatever vice gets you through the day.... I've got a record just about ready to master by Auto Modown, which is Mario Lalli's new band with his kid, Dino. Almost done with the Ark record, too - they're from 29 Palms, California - definitely the heaviest record I've done with anyone. And a related band from 29 Palms, called Rise Of The Willing - just about ready to finish tracking and mix that stuff this week, actually.

*Are there any secrets to your live or studio tone?*

On the Kyuss stuff, I plugged my bass straight into a 1970 SVT with all the tone controls cranked, but the volume had a sweet spot at around three or four. The mid control gets it really growling, so if I needed a cleaner sound, I could just back that off a bit. On the road with Kyuss, I used a

TubeWorks DI that actually was patched between the amp's output and the speaker, so whatever tone I had spitting out of the amp affected what was feeding the board from the DI. The only bad thing was that if the amp blew up, the DI signal disappeared as well. It happened one time in Philadelphia - my worst show ever. There was a blizzard outside when we loaded in, and I told my tech guy not to worry about bringing in my spare amp, and sure enough, my head blew up in the beginning of the set. We managed to rewire the bass into a stock DI, and that was fed into the monitors and the mains to get me through... ouch!

*What are you listening to at the moment?*

Mostly just the bands I've been working on... just checking mixes in the car and making mental notes. Other than that, I've gone through a funk phase over the past year. I saw Bootsy Collins perform after he received *Bass Player's* lifetime achievement award - it was incredible! I actually enrolled in his online Funk University and worked hard on that for a bit, but I've been slackin'... I got busy! It actually had a great effect on my playing - the last show I played with Goatsnake felt so good after focusing on the funk - not like popping and slapping or anything like that, but just the philosophy of making the downbeat of the one extra heavy.

*Do you think there's a signature Scott Reeder sound to music you've played on or produced?*

I hope not! I try to be as inconsistent as possible!

*What's your most rock and roll tour story?*

The first one that comes to mind... on my first U.S. Kyuss tour, pulling into a hotel in upstate New York and waiting in line behind some older guy carrying a guitar case. We started talking, and he said he was checking out, but if we wanted his room it was ours as long as we didn't ring up any room charges. Done. We asked him what band he's in, and it was none other than Lynyrd Skynyrd! That man was Gary Rossington!

*Metallica and Tool both seem to be bands that are very selective about who they allow in to their circles. What was it like being involved with those guys and do you feel you learned anything from seeing how they work?*

Well, for one thing - they both have a gazillion fans, so there's a lot more money available for getting a perfect recording made. They can afford to be very meticulous, and I've seen a lot of time spent in the studio working on little details that wouldn't be of any concern to someone on a budget. I started in a jingle studio where things needed to get done super-fast, so even now, I get antsy if stuff isn't moving along. And look - so far, I don't have a platinum record on my wall! : )



***Do you feel more at home on a stage or in a studio?***

I love both!

***You play Rickenbackers, Ibanez ATKs and also a defretted Gibson Thunderbird - all three are basses that people have very mixed opinions of, some people love them and others hate them. What is it that attracted you to use such gear and are your basses customised?***

They're all by accident, really. When I switched from drums to bass, I bought a Rickenbacker copy from our leaving bassist, so when I finally got a better bass, it was a real Rickenbacker. I was beating the hell out of the Ricky on the road, busting pickups, and it sounded a lot different every time I replaced the pick up. When Kyuss went into the studio for the last record, it really sounded pretty bad, and our engineer, Joe Barresi, knew the artist rep at Ibanez and had a few things dropped off. They were easy to play and sounded way better than the ailing Rickenbacker, so I just went with it. Ibanez ended up doing an endorsement deal with me, and made some great custom

stuff for me, and if I broke stuff on the road they'd send me whatever I needed... The Gibson was bought for a backup when I started touring with Kyuss. Josh and I were gonna both try working on some weird fretless stuff, so I had the frets on the Thunderbird ripped out, and he did the same with his Les Paul! He never got into it, but I used that bass on a few things, including 'One Inch Man', 'Catamaran', and 'Phototropic'.

***What do you think it was about Kyuss that made that band unique?***

I don't know, really. We tuned down to C, so there was a thicker, looser sound. During my time with them, I tried to bring the improvisational elements from my old band Across The River. There were several sections on ...***Sky Valley*** with jams that were different every time we played 'em. When you're playing the songs a hundred times, it really helped keep things fresh, not knowing if you were going to pull it off or fall flat on your face! It was just a standard band, with drums, bass, and guitar with a singer out front, but I think the chemistry went a long way with those guys.

***How do you feel about Kyuss Lives? I saw them in London and while it was an amazing show it seemed odd that the majority of them weren't in the band when most of the songs on the set list were written. Do you wish you were involved with it or do you feel like Kyuss is something you did a long time ago that would be an odd thing to revisit now?***

I go back and forth. It just feels weird that something that you helped build and protect is taken out for a spin, but I think it's great that it's being well-received. I turned down a few things over the years that would have only involved one original member, so I thought it was definitely a good thing that three guys were actually in there...

***Obviously the success of Queens of the Stone Age led a lot of people to Kyuss and because of this Kyuss are a lot better known now than before the split. Do you ever find it to be a frustration that your best known work is ...Sky Valley from 1994 or is it more a source of satisfaction knowing that something you did all that time ago is still so beloved by fans?***

Tool and Metallica turned a whole bunch of people on to Kyuss, too. It blows my mind that people still remember 16 years later - it's surprising! It's not frustrating at all - I'm very proud that something I helped conceive will be remembered for a little bit...



***Live in Germany with Kyuss in the 90s***

*You have for years been chatting to fans on the old StonerRock.com forum. Now Twitter has become popular and many musicians are on there but a lot of them very rarely reply to fans messages. What does it mean to you to be able to interact with fans daily on the internet on Facebook or Twitter or forums?*

It's unreal what's possible with technology today! I love interacting with people all over the world - the fact that I can do that these days will never cease to amaze me! I've actually done quite a bit of work through Facebook, too, sending files back and forth through the internet. I can send mixes or send individual tracks that I record for other people's recordings - it's amazing to be able to do that.


*You produced and played bass on the Sunn O))) album ØØ Void - in the ten years since its release Sunn O))) have enormously grown both their sound and their fanbase and ØØ Void is considered a classic record on the same level as Earth 2. What do you think is the key to their success, given that their music has such niche appeal? Was it a challenge to produce ØØ Void and get the huge sound of Sunn O))) on record?*

Stuart Dahlquist actually played bass on that - I had my hands full! The one sound that I "performed" on the record was part of a mix routed through a talkbox into a

tube going into my mouth and recorded back to tape! I was submerged into their sound for a few days - to stand in the center of the amps blaring was amazing. There were no drums and very little else besides the guitars and bass, so I could just go for the hugest sound without worrying about clearing space for balancing vocals. It takes low frequencies a lot of distance to build up, so I put a bass cabinet out in the parking garage with a mic about twenty feet away - it got pretty deep. There's a moment in one of the pieces where they twist their tuning pegs and drop the pitch way down, and that bass cabinet blew up - you can hear it struggling and dying - my favorite part of the record! We didn't know how the record would be received at all - I suggested they have a listening party with mats on the floor so people could lay down and just let the lows envelop them.

*What piece of advice would you give to young musicians hoping to achieve the kind of success you've had?*

Well... if you enjoy and believe in what you're doing, I think that's all that matters. Staying true to your heart.



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for your own dedicated ad  
in the next issue of  
**UG Amplified**



# Contests

## Calling All of the Pit's Musicians, v1.0



niejel

INTRO: Registrants will have until July 20 to learn a song, any song of your choice, with the instrument of your choice, and record it and upload it (to Youtube or any related site). This should prove some fun and a good time waster and all along you're becoming a better musician. After all entries have been made we will judge on cleanliness, accuracy, techniques (ex. good harmonics or vibrato), styles, speed, etc. and overall impression.

[Winners are in *italics*.]

### Drums:

*niejel* - In The Presence of Enemies, part 2 - Dream Theater

### Bass:

*niejel* - The Dance of Eternity - Dream Theater

### Guitars:

#### Easy

*Shinami* – Midnight – Red Hot Chili Peppers  
Gibson\_SG\_uZR - Anarchy In The UK – Sex Pistols  
BeefWellington - Breath – Breaking Benjamin

#### Intermediate

*Shinami* - Jet City Woman – Queensryche

#### Advanced

*Random3* - Viking Kong - Racer X  
*niejel* - As I Am - Dream Theater

### Vocals:

*Mother Flame* - I Miss You – Incubus  
*niejel* - In The Name of God - Dream Theater  
Gibson\_SG\_uZR55 - Kiss Me, I'm Contagious - From First To Last

### Bassist and Drummer of July 2011

Allen Pascual (a.k.a. *niejel*)

*Location:* Cavite, Philippines

*Influences:* BFMV, Trivium, Dream Theater

*Bass:* The Dance of Eternity – Dream Theater

<http://youtu.be/lRqw-1xl8qc>

*Drums:* In The Presence of Enemies, part 2 – Dream Theater

<http://youtu.be/lCEthzJns4w>

*NOTE:* Won by default

### Easy and Intermediate Guitarist of July 2011

Giedrius Cereska (a.k.a. *Shinami*)

*Location:* Lithuania

*Influences:* John Frusciante, John Petrucci, Joe Satriani

*Easy, Guitars:* Midnight - Red Hot Chili Peppers

<http://youtu.be/KY6-MoFkGiA>

*Intermediate, Guitars:* Jet City Woman – Queensryche

<http://youtu.be/Hg--kOFexHw>

### Advanced Guitarist of July 2011

Charlie Munro (a.k.a. *Random3*)

*Location:* Berkshire, UK

*Influences:* Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, John Petrucci, Paul Gilbert

*Advanced, Guitars:* Viking Kong – Racer X

<http://youtu.be/xmduskxQWno>

### Vocalist of July 2011

Max Doing (a.k.a. *Mother Flame*)

*Location:* Raleigh, NC, USA

*Influences:* Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Incubus, Bob Marley, Sublime, Slightly Stoopid, Mos Def, Talib Kweli

*Vocals:* I Miss You – Incubus

<http://youtu.be/utNI91btVgc>

# Short Story Competition, Round 11



captaincrunk

The UG Community has been hosting Short Story Competitions for over a year now, and the most recent contest has come to a close. The top three winners and their stories have earned a spot in this issue!

1<sup>st</sup>

## vintage x metal

I looked up at her. She tended her lips to stay perfectly red, like two cartoon leeches curled into a sinister smirk, despite all the cigarettes and lack of fucks to give about other matters.

'What are you thinking about?'

'I don't really know, Katie. Are you still living with Emily?'

'No, she's not the most tolerant person. Anyway, it's Kat, remember?'

'Is that what you go by now?'

'You're always so snide.'

'I don't mean to be.'

Her eyes flickered sadly. I really don't mean to be, Katie.

2<sup>nd</sup>

## ZanasCross Of the Fourth (Mechanism)

He stumbled forward,  
face alight with joy or starvation.  
Exhaustion, his name.

His hands he called, "macabre"  
his feet, grace...  
until he fell.

. . .

The sabbath matron asked his name,  
no answer, so she wiped his brow:  
"Lord, let him come back to me."

"Ke...Kenneettth."

His head rest in her lap,  
basting in the light of the lord,  
pounding.

"Where are you from, Kenneth?"

Muttering. "F...fourth mechanism."

"You devil!" the matron screamed, "Anti-Christ!"

Rugged mouth corners twitch,  
eyes wide,

This is not Kenneth.

Muscles bulge,

The fourth mechanism had come,  
the quake had arrived,  
the gears of hell were in motion.

3<sup>rd</sup>

## Martyr's Prayer Veda

The world seems to rotate all the beauty, the good  
things

away from me,

keeping it just past the horizon.

But she brings it all to me;

lays it in my arms like a warm basket,

wrapped in a gray hoodie

and blue jeans.

# Services Directory

*In future issues, this will be at the back of the issue for reference.*

**Register your ad here:**

<http://bit.ly/mOMAZ3>

## Armenia

Vendetta V  
facebook.com/VMSinc  
v.shred@yahoo.com  
since 2008  
Fret scalloping  
Guitar rewiring (incl. complex)  
Guitar hardware mods and setups  
Pedal builds and repairs

## Australia

South East Queensland

Doonan  
Send PM  
since 2010  
Guitar wiring and electronics  
mods  
Installing pickups  
Hardware mods

## Canada

Toronto, Ontario

Jason Jillard  
JillardGuitars.com  
since 2007  
Guitar repairs and builds

## UK

Leicester, East Midlands

haha5940  
Send PM  
since 2010  
Painting  
Jem-type swirls (*see below*)



Plymouth, South West

GABarrie  
Send PM or  
[blade@blade phoenix.com](mailto:blade@blade phoenix.com)  
since 2010  
Amp and pedal mods and repairs  
Pedal builds

## USA

Central

Invader Jim  
Send PM or  
[6stringsamurai7@gmail.com](mailto:6stringsamurai7@gmail.com)  
since 2000  
Pedal builds, mods, and repairs  
No delay, flanger, or chorus  
Guitar wiring (incl. complex)  
\$10/hr + cost of parts

Pasadena, CA

ECistheBest  
[ShotRodGuitarWorks.com](http://ShotRodGuitarWorks.com)  
since 2007  
Amp and pedal builds, mods, and repairs  
Builds kits and known amps to client's specs  
Repairs guitar electronics  
Free advice for amplifier design and builds

New Smyrna Beach, FL

Robbgnarly  
Send PM  
since 2006  
Guitar setup, builds, and mods  
Fret work (re-crown, level, re-fret)  
Guitar electronics  
Tube amp repairs

Southern Oklahoma

grungebaby  
Send PM or  
[rocknrolltilldeath@yahoo.com](mailto:rocknrolltilldeath@yahoo.com)  
since 2010  
Guitar mods, repairs, and setups  
Amp repairs and maintenance

Anderson, SC

XgamerGt04  
Send PM  
since 2001  
Amp and pedal builds, mods, and repairs  
Includes surface mount pedals if parts available

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# Riffs & Licks

## String Skipping



WyldChylde

This is a string skipping exercise I often include in my warm-ups and practices, but it has many more benefits than just that. This exercise also emphasizes finger dexterity, coordination from pick to fret hand, and makes great use of the pinky. The keys to getting this one down are to start slow with a metronome until you're comfortable with the pattern, loop them over and over, keep your thumb solidly on the back of the neck to accommodate the wide stretches (especially as you move the patterns further down the neck), and of course, alternate pick everything.

### Major



### Minor



### Diminished



\* \* \*

## Tapping



theogonia777

This is a quick little tapping riff in D Dorian in 6/4. You don't need your pick for this one, it's all taps, hammer-ons, and pull-offs. Use the tapped notes and pull-offs to open notes as a chance to change the position of your fretting hand. Be careful on the 3<sup>rd</sup> beat - you need to use two fingers to tap, and the index finger for the A and the middle finger for the F is your best bet. Repeat as many times as you want. At the end, there is a tapped harmonic on the D string. Good luck.

**Moderate** ♩ = 140

T T T T T T T T T T

TAB

12 0 5 12 0 10 3 7 14 15 10 12 9 7 0 12 0 12 0 7 0 12 8 7

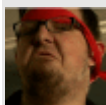
Ham.

\* \* \*

# Lessons

## Unorthodox Tonalities 01

### The Prometheus Scale



CPDmusic

Hello to all the *Amplified* readers out there! Today is a beautiful day, mainly because it is the first of a regular lesson column entitled Unorthodox Tonalities, where I teach you a strange and unusual scale that you may (but most likely won't) use in your magical musical methods. To kick off lesson numero uno, we will be looking at a hexatonic scale known as the Prometheus scale.

Before we look at the scale, it would be nice to know where it came from, wouldn't it? Well, the

Prometheus scale is named such due to its use in Alexander Scriabin's symphonic poem "Prometheus: The Poem of Fire", written in 1910. Although Scriabin referred to the chord he used, consisting of the pitches C F# Bb E A and D, as the "mystic chord", most also refer to it as the "Prometheus chord".

Now that history class is over, we can finally get to actually learning the scale. Basically, in relation to the major scale, the Prometheus scale follows this pattern:

1 2 3 4# 6 b7

First a brief analysis of what we know so far: it's a hexatonic scale (as I mentioned before) due to it having six tones, and in relation to the major scale, there is no fifth scale degree (as well as a sharpened fourth and flattened seventh).

Next, let's try actually putting some notes to this seemingly worthless arrangement of numbers and accidentals. We will work in a common key: the key of C. First of all, we are obviously going to start with the C major scale:

C D E F G A B

Now, as we know from the above series of numbers, we are going to sharpen the fourth note, flatten the seventh note, and completely remove the fifth note of the standard C major scale, in order to get the C Prometheus scale:

C D E F# A Bb

So there you have it, the C Prometheus scale! For anyone here who is a visual learner, here is the finally product, in both standard musical notation and tablature, covering the entire octave from C to C:

When you play it, you will notice the interesting tonal characteristic of this scale in its three semitone jump from F# to A, followed by a one semitone jump from A to Bb.

Now, obviously it wouldn't be fair to kick you to the curb with a scale and no chords to go with it (you need to tell the rhythm guitarist what to play when you're rippin' that solo!), so to save you the trouble of tinkering with scale degrees to get chords, I have

done it for you! You can thank me later. However, you should probably get your chord dictionaries ready, because with unorthodox scales come unorthodox chords... (note that these degrees are in relation to the Prometheus scale, and NOT the major scale)

I 6 (no 5)

II augmented

III sus4 (#5)

IV augmented

v

VI augmented

So, for example, if you wanted to build a progression to play with the C Prometheus scale, you could base it around the chords C6(no 5), D+, Esus4(#5), F#+, Am, and Bb+.

That's all for lesson one of Unorthodox Tonalities. Have fun with the Prometheus scale, and I will see you next month for lesson two!

# Intros

## Emo



due 07

The word harkens back to 2005 when 'emo' was still a thing. It was used - incorrectly - to describe pop rock bands with skintight jeans and whiny vocals, along with their legions of wrist-cutting fans that could be found at your local Hot Topic. In reality, emo is an established subgenre that came out of D.C. as hardcore punk lost its subcultural relevance. Emo bands took the aggressiveness and passion of hardcore, slowed the tempos down, and sang introspective lyrics with a touch of melody; furthermore, bands generally kept the DIY aesthetic and politically left ideals of the hardcore scene.

Emo music underwent constant evolution in its short life - these albums are essential listening for any new fan of the style.



**Rites Of Spring**  
**Rites Of Spring**  
(1985)

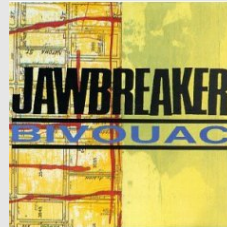
Rites Of Spring, from Washington D.C., started it all with this release. They kicked off what is known as "Revolution Summer" in 1985, spawning countless emotional hardcore bands. Rites Of Spring only played fifteen shows and released one full length album and one EP - later brought together on the 1991 compilation End On End - in their short, yet influential, career. "For Want Of" manages to synopsise the Revolution Summer movement in a single song.



**Moss Icon**  
**Lyburnum Wits End Liberation Fly**  
(1994)

Moss Icon was the first band to really establish emo as a genre to be reckoned with. They focused on the emotional demeanor of earlier 'emocore' bands and added a post-punk influence and their own quiet/loud dynamic. The crown jewel of this

release is the eleven-minute magnum opus "Lyburnum Wits End Liberation Fly", featuring quiet, spoken word bits eventually climaxing into loud guitars and shouted vocals.



**Jawbreaker**  
**Bivouac**  
(1992)

Playing a clever amalgamation of the raw emotion and aggressiveness a la Rites Of Spring and the East Bay pop punk of Crimpshrine, Jawbreaker was axiomatically important in the evolution of the genre. This album is a little slower than their others with a little rougher production, but the sheer quality of the record makes up for that. "Chesterfield King" is one of the all-time greatest punk songs, with heartbreakingly relatable lyrics croaked out by frontman Blake Schwarzenbach.



**Cap'n Jazz**  
**Shamp'n Shmazz**  
(1994)

Cap'n Jazz took emo even further away from its hardcore roots and closer to indie rock territory with Shamp'n Shmazz. They took the basic Moss Icon emo formula and made it playfully childish with nonsensical wordplay, off-key and cutesy vocals, and noodley guitar riffs. They almost single-handedly invented the 'twinkly emo' movement with this record. The song "Oh Messy Life" is an immaculate example of the angular riffs, dissonant hooks, and clever lyrics found throughout the album.



**Mineral**  
**The Power Of Failing**  
(1997)

In the mid-'90s a poppier, more accessible brand of emo emerged - often called 'Midwest emo'. Mineral was, in the minds of many, the archetypical Midwest emo band. They kept the quiet/loud facet and rough octave riffs of emo forefathers, but added more sparkling arpeggios and catchy hooks. The song of the record is "Gloria", with its sugary-sweet octaves and passionate lyrics.



# Reviews

## Completing the Journey

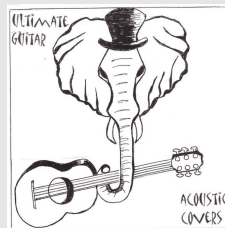
### A Recap of Recent Community Album Releases



Jon777

It's easy to forget that we're a community of fairly talented musicians, especially amidst the abundance of wacky threads the Pit is known for. But every once in a while, a group of UGers will join forces to create something truly magnificent (eh... well... most of the time, at least).

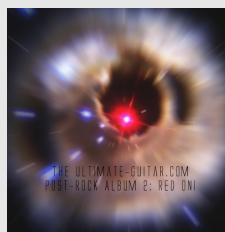
While many embark on the journey, few actually manage to complete it. The Concept Album met its death not too long ago, as well as a few albums intended to help natural disaster victims across the globe. The Radiohead Tribute Album seems to have lost all forward momentum, and the Rock Opera can only crawl towards its goal. Still, no matter how difficult the process of creating these albums may be, 3 have recently seen a release.



#### The UG Community Acoustic Covers Album

Nearly 5 months in the making, this album features acoustic renditions of songs by: Stone Temple Pilots, Blink 182, of Montreal, Staind, Porcupine Tree, The Stooges, Jerry Cantrell, Ben Folds Five, Tenacious D, The Wombats, Angles and Airwaves, The Killers, U2, The Cranberries.

<http://bit.ly/pnQ1pA>



#### Post-Rock Album 2: Red Oni and Blue Oni

Red Oni and Blue Oni are a pair of albums released under the "Post-Rock Album 2" title. However, the albums aren't limited to just post-rock; expect shoegaze, post-metal, some electronic stuff, and anything just plain atmospheric.

<http://bit.ly/p44AvY>

\* \* \*

## Megadeth Peace Sells... But Who's Buying? 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reissue



Spartan101400

#### *Peace Sells... But Who's Buying?*

is one of the landmark albums by Megadeth, a member of the Big Four of thrash metal which began in the 1980s in the US. It's been

almost 25 years since this album was released, and to celebrate, Dave Mustaine and company have put together a new remaster of the album. Now you may be asking yourself "Didn't Megadeth release something like this in 2004?" The answer is yes, there was a rerelease that year, but to most fans it was deemed lackluster due to strange mixing ideas by Mustaine. This 25th Anniversary edition finally does justice to this classic album and includes a bonus second disc with a show from their first world tour in 1987, which was recorded in Cleveland, Ohio at the Phantasy Theatre.

To explain what makes this pressing different from the 2004 version boils down to one major point: this edition uses the complete master tapes from the original recording from 1986. The 2004 edition suffered from not having these master tapes, and some vocal, drum, and guitar tracks were forced to be rerecorded. This remastering is great, and it's how it should have been done in the first place.

The second disc is where this set truly shines - the show was recorded back in the early days of Megadeth, and includes several live rarities that you won't hear

Megadeth play anymore due to Mustaine becoming a born again Christian. Some of these rare tracks include "The Conjuring", "Bad Omen", and a cover of "These Boots Were Made for Walkin'". In some places the sound quality, especially on vocals, is questionable, but it

doesn't hamper the experience of this live disc.

All in all, this is the definitive edition of a classic thrash metal album that doesn't disappoint in any way. This is how the album should have been remastered in the first place and it gives hope

\* \* \*

that perhaps when the 25th anniversary of *Rust in Peace* rolls around, we can do justice to its 2004 counterpart as well.

For a more in-depth review:

<http://youtu.be/-j-akj13LiQ>

## X-Men: First Class



DeaThrash

Hello *Amplified* readers! For this issue's movie review I'll be focusing on *X-Men: First Class*. This movie was directed by Matthew Vaughn (also known for *Snatch*, *Stardust* and *The Debt*), and it features James McAvoy (as Charles Xavier), Michael Fassbender (as Erik Lehnsherr/Magneto) and Jennifer Lawrence (as Raven/Mystique).

Before I even start writing about this movie at all, I just want to point out that this is a direct prequel to the previous X-Men movies. For most of the time it is done well except for 3 or 4 times it really twists itself up how they connect with each other; what is done well and what's done not so well is for you to watch and judge. Alright, X-Men! In my honest opinion this is by far the greatest X-men movie done to date. It felt big, the action was big, and the characters were big. When it reached to the climax you really feel that a lot was invested in making it. It felt really serious and not just the classic "ecstasy" kind of climax. Action was a big factor, but there were also a lot of emotional elements that really got

you into the movie. In movies made these days that is a rarity, so that's one of the big pluses here.

Despite this being a really well done movie, I have to admit that I have mixed feelings about it. The thing that annoys me is that they did such a good job with these characters and getting you invested and really putting a lot of effort into the whole thing, but it doesn't have my favorite X-men in it. It has all the boring X-men in it, such as Xavier, Banshee, and Magneto. Sure, a couple of them are important for the story, but as characters they are quite boring. It isn't the kind of characters that people would pay money to go see. To its credit, not all mutants are boring, some are likeable. To end on a good note, there are cameos of the cooler X-men (such as Wolverine, Rose, and Gambit) and the cameos are really well done. They're very brief, but they're very smart.

The villain of the story is Sebastian Shaw, played by Kevin Bacon, who does a really good job. He's the manipulative and stealthy kind of villain, he is mostly on the sideway so in the end he can reach the top. Personally for me I love that type of villain.

There are two things that didn't work in this movie. The first one being how the Mystique character

is treated by everyone; she's treated differently by everyone, but no one treats her appropriately. An example would be in a scene with Beast saying something along the lines of "we shouldn't have to look like this: this isn't right, we should look just like humans" (Beast and Mystique have a bond in the story). He has worked on a thing that keeps them as mutants but looking human, and every time they change to the blue form he's being negative. Also, the story had already made clear that Xavier and Mystique are step-siblings. Even Xavier is like that, Mystique asks him directly how he feels and he just neglects the question, again he's her brother. How is that morally right? What human, or rather what mutant would say that?

The second thing that bothered me is when Mystique is going over to Magneto's side. She explains to Xavier that she's leaving. And Xavier is completely alright with that, no stopping or having second thoughts about it. It's a short scene but it didn't make any sense.

To sum it up, if you're an X-men fan you'll most probably like this movie, as long as you don't connect it to the comics all the time. Let this movie shine for what it is. It's done really well and keeps its originality. That's my 2 cents for X-Men: First Class.

# frozencoin Fade

## 1337al Mountain Cat



MakinLattes

Does anyone remember Zork? Anyone living, I mean. Well, this isn't about Zork. I don't even know why I was thinking of Zork. Oh, because I was thinking of MMOs, then thinking about RPGs and then MUDs and yeah. Well, this isn't about any of those things. This is about llamas.

Yes, the llama, the most glorious of our camelids. You can channel the powers of the llama in Fade, made by frozencoin. According to the game, llamas see more colors the faster they run. The inaccuracy of this statement aside, it serves as a great motivator. You start off with the world and llama in black and white, ambling along and jumping gaps. The llama picks up speed, soon you're hammering the space bar, llamas everywhere. A line of pink appears in the background while your llama is careening out of

control at 50 miles per hour. Next thing you know the llama's corpse lies broken and torn asunder at the bottom of ravine. But seriously, it's really stunning if you manage to survive.

This game has no flaws, the llama compensates for any and all. Different levels would be awesome, as well as different difficulties.

If for some ungodly reason you don't like llamas, there is also a cute little game that came out today (today is the 21st, by the way) called Mountain Cat by 1337al (seriously?). It's about a cat, his table and a dream that will never come to fruition. It's really, really short and kinda meh. Small things like poor spelling, the cat floating backwards when he jumps up, the fact that I finished it under two minutes... I do however like what the creator has. It would be interesting to see the story expanded. It has that sort of quirky draw people like nowadays. All that quirk. Quirkin'.

Fade

<http://www.kongregate.com/games/frozencoin/fade>

Mountain Cat

<http://www.kongregate.com/games/1337al/mountain-cat>

\* \* \*

## Short Stories

### Dark Space: A science fiction detective story

Chapter II, act II  
A Few Questions



necrosis1193

Howling Hellcat nightclub 00:38

"Go ahead." Khama replied. "Just don't expect much."

"Right, well, you're Janice's husband, corre—" As I spoke, he cut in before I could finish.

"Look, I don't give a shit about whatever your procedure is." He said in a disgruntled tone. "I don't want to hear stupid questions we both know the answers to. It's already bad enough having to deal with a cop after all this, I don't want one pissing me off, too." I nodded, turning to DV.

"I like this guy already." I whispered to the machine, before turning back to our Torvin friend. "Alright, I assume you know how she died, can you think of anyone who was a regular customer at the shop who seemed suspicious? Anyone who knew her in an unfavourable light?" He paused for a second in thought.

"No, not really. There were these really terse guys who'd come in every few days, buying whatever engine parts we had that looked the nicest. Probably hotrodders or something. They liked her though, so I



don't think it'd be them." I nodded, making a mental note of the aforementioned group. A whirring sound from my side indicated DV was doing the equivalent for an android.

"Okay, business competitors? People who'd benefit from her going away?" I asked.

"I can't think of any." He answered. "Sure there are salvage shops all around the startups, but that's because crap is everywhere down there, it's an easy market. There weren't any others in the area though. The only shop I can think of would be the Terra Technology store. We were small though, and they only serve Humans and some of you Kan'dyn, we couldn't be hurting their business enough for that." Again I nodded, making another note of the store, though somewhat uneasily; Terra Technology was one of the companies who backed Albinyon Station in the first place. A Human company, and much as they deny it, pretty racist, so there was potential there for a motive.

"Are there going to be many more of these?" Khama asked, the disgruntled tone returning. "If I thought I knew who killed her, I'd have gone and killed them myself already."

"Civilian action involving lethal force: Unadvisable. In addition to legitimate risk of harm to innocents, both attacker and victim, would turn attacker into felon." I winced as DV chimed in. Even if it was supposed to understand interaction, it apparently had the understanding of an introvert.

"So now the trashcan's got an opinion, huh?" The 'attacker' said, anger now in his voice. "I haven't done a goddamn thing. You're not arresting me based on the 'thoughts' of some piece of crap that makes what I sell look good!" He got up out of his chair, which was more than it sounded like as far as intimidation went, given the relative size of his species.

"Easy, easy!" I said, trying to calm the situation down. "It's just a stupid machine. Got it a few days ago, haven't disabled its vocalizer. I'll wipe it when we get back, just ignore it for now."

"Bluff calling: You wouldn't." DV said, again hampering things.

"Keep it up and I'll pour my drink into your primary

power core." I replied. There was a tense moment of silence, before Khama sat back down, which allowed my heart to return to being audible only to me.

"Any more questions?" He asked. "I want to get away from that tincan."

"Normally I'd ask a few," I said back. "But as I can relate, I'll only ask one more. Was there any sort of racism you experienced, especially organized?"

"Of course there was." Khama answered flatly. "Mass migration of a fairly isolationist race into neighboring systems because of a war amongst our own people? It's a miracle we finally found somewhere here, most places weren't exactly somewhere you want to raise a kid."

"As far as organized groups, there were plenty of two or three-man groups who'd pester us and occasionally threaten us now and then. A few broken arms usually shut them up good. There were only two organized groups that practiced racism as far as I could tell. Terra Technology, and Rolling Thunder."

"Who?" I asked, as I'd never heard of the latter.

"Rolling Thunder." He said again. "A group of Humans who run around down here like they own the whole damn station. Smuggling, extortion, they run your generic organized criminal group activities, plus a few race riots and beatings now and then. Never killed anyone for it though, probably didn't want cops involved."

"I can relate." He added with a chuckle. "Actually, one of the dumber of the group's right over there." As he spoke, he gestured to a table across the room from us. A young Human around mid twenties was sitting at it, clearly enjoying the club's selection of drinks, though not completely incoherent, heckling one of the dancers.

"His name's Andy Warwick. He's an ass, but he may know something. Let's see how the cops here handle things, eh? Hell, if he gives you too much trouble for you to handle, I'll help you out – I may not like cops, but you're not Human, which is a plus, and I've wanted to beat some Rolling Thunders senseless for a while. And if they did kill my Janice, I'd love to crack some skulls."

I thought about it for a moment. He wasn't a

complete wreck, but had definitely had a few drinks, so it shouldn't have been too difficult if he got violent. Plus he might turn up a lead.

"Alright, it's a deal." I said, extending a talon to shake his hand. He took it, nodding as he did so. "DV, please stay quiet, the last thing we need is this guy knowing we're cops."

"Acknowledged." It replied. At that, we both got up, walking away from Khama, and towards Warwick. "Mind if we sit here?" I asked at his table. He turned his attention away from the dancer he'd been insulting, and towards us.

"Well hey, look at that." He said, slurring a little. Apparently he was more so intoxicated than I thought. "A chickenman and a tincan. Sure, why the hell not? Not my favourite kinds of...people, but hey, that's America, right?"

"Um...This isn't America." I said. "It's a space station." Yet another awkward moment of silence, before he shrugged.

"I'm American. It's America wherever I am, I guess...well, just sit down already, I may not be the nicest guy, but I guarantee you won't have a..." As he spoke, it was clear he was holding back a fit of laughter, biting his lip and hunching over as he spoke. "Fowl time!" At that, he fell onto the ground, breaking into laughter at his own awful pun.

"Right..." I said uneasily. The bird comments wouldn't annoy me from a friend, but they were starting to piss me off from a random stranger. Particularly one I was told was racist. I shrugged to DV, and we both sat down as Warwick pulled himself back up.

"So, whaddaya guys want? Or is the robot a girl? Whaddaya you two want then, I guess." He chuckled as he spoke, apparently still enjoying his joke.

"Well, we actually wanted to talk to you, Andy." I said. It seemed like he wasn't anywhere near as sober as I first thought, so I might be able to get straight to the point. "I heard you're with Rolling Thunder?" He nodded gleefully, a large grin on his face.

"It's awesome!" He said. "They don't mind me beating you aliens, and they even pay me to go out and tell people you guys suck! ...You don't mind,

right?"

"I...guess not." I replied, resisting an urge to punch him in the face. "Could you tell me a bit more about them?"

"I'll do more than that, my fine feathered friend!" He said, the joy still in his voice. "Just answer me something." As he spoke, he gestured to the dancer he had been heckling. "I don't get it. Sure there are some curves, but even the girls are bony and feathery with you Kan...Kan...whatever you guys are called. I don't get what you like. Is she pretty to you?" Once more resisting an urge to beat the crap out of Andy Warwick, I turned to the dancer.

"Actually, she's an ex of mine from when I lived in the Startups, so yeah, I think she looks nice." As I spoke, I waved to her, trying to muster a smile, though that was a challenge next to the man I was with. She waved and smiled back though, so I suppose I did well enough.

"I just don't get it." He said again. "Then again, I've never really wanted to bang a bird, I guess...anyway, deal's a deal. I'm not supposed to give you this if you're not human, but you're alright for a...whatever you are. You don't mind if I..." Another barely contained laugh. I prepared for the worst. "Ruffle your feathers!" And again, he fell out of his chair laughing.

"Actually, can you keep a secret?" Even a Human who thought I looked ridiculous would be getting sick of the bird cracks by now, and so was I. He climbed back up to the table, a beautifully silly kind of drunken wonder in his eyes.

"Yeah?" He asked.

"I'm actually human in disguise." I said. It was a huge stretch of a lie – Pretty much physically impossible too. But hey, he was pretty damn drunk. "Infiltrating the birds' organizations, stealing their secrets and all that. The bot's a recorder"

"Oh wow..." He said, a sense of wonder now in his voice. "That's...that's awesome. Alright then, here you go!" He tossed a small memory card across the table. "We're supposed to give that to new recruits. It has a bunch of recruiting information and locations and...and...stuff on it. You look really real man, you're gonna go places in Rolling Thunder." I

nodded, taking the card.

"Thanks. I should get going then, don't want my disguise to get too flimsy." At that, I got up, as did DV. Somehow I got a feeling even a machine would be happy to get away from this guy.

"You rock on man!" He shouted as I walked away.  
"Down with the...things!"

"No fight?" Khama said as I walked past the table.  
"I'm impressed."

"Thanks. We're done for now, but do me a favour." I said. "Watch that guy, and if he makes even the slightest infraction, kick his ass for me. Thoroughly." He laughed, nodding.

"In return, you let me know if these guys killed my Janice. I don't like cops, but I don't mind helping you with them if that's the case." I nodded, agreeing along with it, hoping DV wouldn't comment on it once we left.

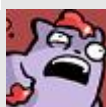
In the meantime though, with our time in the Hellcat up, and Andy Warwick diminishing my memories of it, we needed to act quickly, before the idiot recalled my lie to someone who wasn't plastered, or before he sobered up and realized just how stupid he was.

"DV, open this up and get us a lead." I handed it the memory card, which it took, inserting it into a slot on its chest.

"Acknowledged." It said, as always. A few moments later, with a ding, we had our next destination.

\* \* \*

## Saturday, August 24, 2002



MakinLattes

One day, one moment in a day. It's funny how that can color your life for years to come. How long has it been? Nine years, in exactly twenty-nine days, ten

hours and fifty-seven minutes. After all this time, still remembering the instant I saw you, trying to look cool and casual in an awkward 14-year-old frame at some stupid school orientation on a Saturday. I recall every detail, down to the garbage scented girl who talked to me and the blonde twins who were talking about you. I didn't think it was obvious that I was staring at you. I didn't think it was obvious how much I liked you. It's a shame you noticed both; maybe we would still be friends if you hadn't.

\* \* \*

## The Spaceman



jwizzle5786

I gazed up at the stars. If there was ever a concrete definition for beauty, this would be it. The sight of the night sky in a rural area was enough to bring a tear to my eye. This was my entertainment, not the luxury of the luminescent glow of a television. This is where my love for space came from. It was the watchful eye that my parents were not and the freedom I was not allowed. It would never change, not like the Earth which changed all too fast.

In 1969 I watched Neil Armstrong become the first person to walk on the moon. I watched wide-eyed and open-mouthed as he took that first step and uttered his famous lines, "that's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." That day cemented my destiny: I was going to be an astronaut. I remember the next day cutting enough room in the milk carton so it would fit my head. I was one small step from becoming an astronaut.

Neil Armstrong was the first person to physically touch space. How did Buzz Aldrin feel, knowing that he was the second person? He was there, he could have been first, but he wasn't. That opportunity vanished in front of his very eyes in a flash. The moon was just the beginning. I dreamed of touching the next frontier. I dreamed of being the first, of being the catalyst of a future.



The day they told me I'd be on the next mission to space was the happiest day of my life. And even better: I'd be going to Mars. It was the opportunity of a lifetime. Here, I could become the first man on Mars; I could step onto the red cloud of dust, and speak the words that would inspire the next generation. This wasn't just my dream: it was my destiny, my duty.

In an instant the Earth faded into outer space. A tear fell down my face as I saw the beauty of the thin line between space and the Earth. It wasn't space, but it wasn't Earth. It was an entirely different world, separate from the others. And then there was black. I saw the Earth for what it really was: nothing. It was tiny. Faint. A ball of blue. In the void that surrounds, the Earth was just a speck of dust on a slightly larger speck of dust.

As Mars came in to view I began to think about what I was going to say when I took that historic first step. My crew mates fought over who would be the first to walk on Mars. It didn't matter: it was going to be me. They knew it. I could see it when they talked to me (as little as they did). I had it in me. I had the ambition. The guys back in Houston had indirectly said that it was to be me. They said I "had a part of Neil in me". But then again, even if it wasn't me I wouldn't care. Still, I was going to say something, something that would rally a nation. Something that had no prior preparation. I would say something in the heat of moment. That's how I work best.

The ship landed with a soft thud. We put on our suits. The door opened. I took my position in the front. I would be the first. They had accepted it. I stood in the doorway, gazing at the red uncharted landscape that lay before me. This wasn't just a small step; this was a plunge into the unknown, into the future. I took a deep breath. I jumped down and landed onto the red planet. I could feel it: the world was watching me. Even though I could not see them, they could see me. They were waiting. Waiting for me to rally them. Waiting for me to offer insight into this world. "I can see the future," I said. "And the future is red." This is what I was going to be remembered by. These words. Were they lame? Would they inspire a generation, or laughter? I smiled. It did not matter anymore. I had made history, and whatever I said would go down in history as words of wisdom and insight. Textbooks would have my quote under a heroic portrait of me.

We took a few samples of rocks and some dust before it was time to go. Yes, the moment I had spent

an entire life to achieve was over in the blink of an eye. But I didn't care. I had done it. Dreams do come true. I took an extra-long look at my history before closing the door and ultimately blasting off back to Earth. My world grew smaller and smaller until it no longer existed. I longed for it like it was my home. It was a world without the error of humanity. It was a world untouched by impurity. Such is paradise. I wanted to go back.

The homecoming was more extravagant than I had imagined: we were heroes. I was the hero among heroes. I showered with heartening praise instead of warm water. This was the history that I knew I had created. But this praise was short lived. I could feel their stares. Looking right through me. And then it hit me: my words. Those words that should have inspired a generation for achievement now inspired a generation for ridicule. Everywhere I went, people would address me as "Mr. Astronaut" or "The Martian" or "The Spaceman", words of endearment laced with spite. They did not mean the praise they sang of. No, they were mocking me. What was once my home had now become a prison of misery. I didn't want this anymore.

The news stations were playing the video again and again. They were playing my words again and again. I could not turn on a television and not see my face or turn on a radio and not hear my voice anywhere. And they would play it with Neil Armstrong's moon landing. What should have been an honor was now disrespect to Neil, which sickened me. His history should not be blackened by mine. No, the two should have remained separate. I could not stand the comparisons to my hero. I wanted to be like Neil, but I knew that I was not on the same level. I knew that I would never be considered as great as he was. Yet, here they were saying that my feat was greater. That I was a bigger pioneer for future space exploration than he was. But he was first. How could they forget that? I was nothing, just the next step.

Then they asked me to come on their shows. And I did. I had an obligation to this country to do so, but that didn't mean I had to like it. The more the spotlight was shined on me the more I wanted to step out of it. The more the spotlight was shined on me the blinder I became. Not that it mattered. I did not want to see the fame monster I had become. It was too much. I realized now why people wanted to explore space so much: they wanted to escape from Earth. When people die they will roam the Earth because it is hell. I had found a world so pure, so innocent, and I wanted to go back. To escape the

taint that is the Earth and start anew on Mars. That was where I belonged, not here, constantly in the spotlight. There were more important people to worry about; I was just doing my job. I never wanted to be a celebrity, just a man of history. Mars. There, there was no gossip; there was no tabloids, no exploitation, no lies. I could live the rest of my days in peace. In escape from what I had become against my will. On Mars, I would have the freest of will. I was going to go back. I was going home.

I heard of another mission to Mars. I wanted to go, and with my repertoire they had no choice but to take me. In the time before the mission, I amassed a collection of food for my travels. And then we left. Surprisingly, no one questioned my insane amount of food. Maybe my previous crew mates had told stories of me. Or maybe they figured I was deranged or just simply weird from my interviews.

I was still left in wonderment as I entered space for the second time. I still felt the isolation of space. I knew I was going to be alone forever. But it made me happy. The happiest since I first heard the news that I was going to Mars. The resurgence of happiness was fitting for this moment. Then I saw Mars again. I saw it differently: it was no longer unknown. I knew it like I had been here before, like I had always been here, like I would be there forever. I recognized this feeling: it was the feeling only a home could provide.

Mars still had the warmth of a burning fire on a cold winter's night. I was home. As the second team prepared to return to Earth, I made my move. I stored all the food I had brought with me in one of the detachable pods. I determined it was enough to last me a few years; two or even three if I rationed correctly. I informed one of my co-pilots of my plan, and against his protests I went through with it. He wished me luck, and said that the next mission would bring me more food or bring me back. I appreciated the sentiment and told him I would look forward to the next visit.

I waved goodbye to my fellow men and gazed back at my new home. The home that had always been there for me. Sure, it was barren, but I would fill it with love and belonging. Things I never felt on Earth. The poison of that destroyed Earth would never be felt here. No, I would make sure that this place would remain pure. I would remain pure.

This was the dawn of a new life for me. I gazed at the void that surrounded me. My promising smile soon turned to a frown. The winking sky I once stared up at as a child was empty and soulless. Still, it beat the empty and soulless gazes of those judging liars. Here, I would be appreciated for what I truly was: I pioneer to the future. When the next group arrived, they would see the first colony on Mars. Not only was I the first man to walk on Mars, but I was also the first man to live on Mars.

I waited for what felt like eons for the next team to arrive. Yes, I actually missed the companionship of humanity. And then I saw them. The shuttle landed with a soft thump. I could feel it as they walked all over me. All over me with their malicious judgment and condescending views. They saw my trash in the hole which I had designated for it. They searched for something, I couldn't tell what. I called out to them, but they didn't hear me. But I could hear them. I could hear their cackles, mocking me.

"Do you think he left?"

"No. His ship is still here. And his trash. We could search for years and never find his body in this barren wasteland."

The ship left as soon as it came. Those bastards. They come and mock me and don't bring any food. I was hungry, and yet they just laugh at me. I'm glad I left those people behind on Earth. Those people don't know what home means. Here, I am home.

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