

CHAPTER 9

Flash and Blood

SARGE! COME HERE!
QUICK! I'VE GOT AN
EMERGENCY!

SHOW
ID

COVER CHA
\$7

WHAT IS
IT, JOE?

TAKE
OVER!

SHOW
ID

COVER CHARGE
\$2

I'VE BEEN
CALLED OUT
ON URGENT
BUSINESS.

WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS
IS THAT, JOE?

UNDERWORLD
BUSINESS.

THAT'S ALL I CAN
TELL YOU, SARGE.
YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE
OVER HERE FOR ME.

WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE OVER?
WHY DO WE HAVE TO COLLECT
THE MONEY AT THE DOOR
OURSELVES? THE MANAGEMENT
OF THIS BAR SHOULD DO IT!

SHOW
ID

I DON'T TRUST THE MANAGER!
I WANT TO PROVE TO HIM
THAT THE BAR IS A DRAW AND
WORTH LOTS MORE MONEY!

I'VE BEEN KEEPING CLOSE
TRACK OF THE NUMBERS
OF PEOPLE COMING IN
HERE AND I THINK WE
CAN DRIVE OUR PRICE WAY
WAY UP!

THE IMPORTANT THING
TO REMEMBER IS
RIP PEOPLE OFF!
DOUBLE-CHARGE 'EM
AS OFTEN AS YOU
CAN! IT'S EASY! MOST
OF THEM ARE ON DRUGS!

THEN YOU CAN LOG IN TWO PEOPLE
INSTEAD OF ONE! AT THE END
OF THE NIGHT IT'LL LOOK GREAT
FOR US!

JOE, I DON'T WANT TO DO
THIS. I ALWAYS GET STUCK
WITH THE JOBS YOU DON'T
LIKE TO DO!

IT'S NOT THAT I
DON'T WANT TO DO IT,
SARGE! I'M JUST TOO
IMPORTANT FOR MY
OWN GOOD!

I'VE REALLY GOT TO GO OUT ON
A LITTLE JOB FOR MY BOSS!
IT SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG!

I SAW YOU TALKING TO THAT
GIRL, JOE! I KNOW WHAT KIND
OF "LITTLE JOB" YOU'RE GOING
TO GO ON!

YOU ONLY THINK YOU
DO! THAT'S OUR TOP
FEMALE ASSASSIN!

OH
YEARS

77

OH WOW! YOU MEAN THIS IS REALLY LIKE A REAL JOB, HUH? WOW! THAT'S REALLY SOMETHING!



CAN I GO WITH YOU JOE? LET ME GO ON YOUR LITTLE JOB WITH YOU! PLEASE!



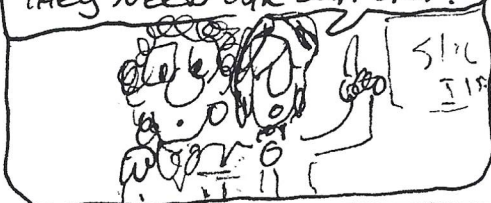
NO SARGE! THIS IS A VERY SERIOUS CAPEIR. IT'S NO PLACE FOR ANY AMATEURS. BESIDES, I NEED YOU HERE WITH THE BAND. SORRY.



BUT THEIR FIRST SET IS ALMOST OVER! MOST OF THE SEATS ARE FULL! EVERYTHING IS GOING FINE! LET ME GO, TOO, JOE!



THIS IS A PIVOTAL GIG FOR THE BAND. THEY'VE GOT A NEW GUITARIST AND A NEW DRUMMER! THIS IS A TIME WHEN THEY NEED OUR SUPPORT!



AND THE BEST WAY YOU CAN SUPPORT THEM IS TO BE HERE COLLECTING MONEY! YOU PEOPLE ARE VERY GOOD WITH MONEY!



WHAT KIND OF STEREOTYPICAL QUASI-ANTI-SEMITIC REMARK WAS THAT? I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THAT CRAP!



EVERY TIME I BRING UP GOING OUT ON A JOB WITH YOU I GET PUT OFF! IS IT BECAUSE I HAPPEN TO BE JEWISH? YOU DON'T WANT ME TO MIX WITH YOUR "FAMILY"?



WELL YOUR NAME IS NOT PARTICULARLY ITALIAN! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL SHITFITS IS, BUT IT AIN'T ITALIAN! I CAN TELL YOU THAT.



WHEN I TOLD YOU I'D LIKE TO WORK WITH YOU I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO BE IN ON ALL THE GLAMOUR AND EXCITEMENT, TAKING OUT SOME CONTRACTS ON PEOPLE, TAKING 'EM OUT ON "LITTLE RIDES"...



AND I'D BE GOOD AT IT, TOO, JOE! I'VE GOT A MEAN MIND! AND I'VE EVEN GOT MY OWN GUNS!



OKAY, SARGE I'LL TELL YOU WHAT: YOU STAY HERE TONIGHT AND MY NEXT "LITTLE JOB" IS YOURS.



WOW! YOU MEAN IT JOE? I'M GONNA HOLD YOU TO THAT!

YEAH YEAH, NO PROBLEM. OKAY?



I'LL BE A NATURAL, JOE! YOU'LL SEE! I'VE PRACTICED BEING A COMANNO FOR YEARS.



GOT ANY CONTRACTS COMING UP SOON?

I'LL BET YOU KNOW JUST LET ME KNOW, JOE.



OKAY I SHOULD BE BACK IN AN HOUR OR SO... KEEP AN EYE ON THE BAND...WATCH FOR GATECRASHERS.



EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING OKAY UP THERE...



WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

THANK YOU! "BOSTON QUEEN" YEAH!

TELL JOHN TO SHUT THE HELL UP WILL YA?



OKAY WE'RE GONNA PLAY A SONG CALLED "BRAT!" FOR YOU!



WHY? WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

NO PROBLEM, I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE PLAYING IT. THAT'S ALL!



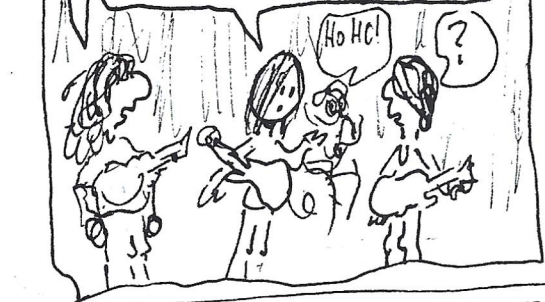
OH MY GOD! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

I'M SORRY, I'M JUST NOT IN THE MOOD, THAT'S ALL.

CHRIS! HELP ME!



YOU GUYS CAN GO AHEAD AND PLAY IT WITHOUT ME. HE WON'T PLAY "BRAT!"



MAYBE LATER, ALL RIGHT?



WELL IF JOHN DOESN'T WANT TO PLAY IT...

ON SECOND THOUGH WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A BREAK



LISTEN, JOHN, YOU'VE GOT TO PLAY THE SONGS WE CALL OUT. WE CAN'T BE HAVING ARGUMENTS ON STAGE LIKE THAT YOU KNOW.



I KNOW. BUT I DON'T TAKE ORDERS. I'M NOT A SHORT ORDER COOK.



IF YOU WANT TO SUGGEST SONGS THAT'S FINE.

OKAY. I'LL PLAY "BRAT" NEXT SET. AND I'LL EVEN PLAY A LEAD. ON ONE CONDITION.



YOU TRANSPOSE THE LEAD PART TO THE KEY OF "E" FOR ME.



BUT JOHN WE HAVE BEEN DOING THAT IN EVERY SONG FOR YOU.

SO WHAT? IT MAKES IT EASIER! I'M NOT GETTING PAID THAT MUCH FOR THIS GIG YOU KNOW.



AND ANOTHER THING SIMMONS BETTER NOT DO ANY MORE SOLOS! I AM THE SOLOIST!



NOW WAIT A MINUTE, JOHN. ALL HE DID WAS A SHORT DRUM BREAK. IT WASN'T A SOLO! IT WAS PRETTY FLASHY FOR A SHORT DRUM BREAK.



SO WHY CAN'T HE HAVE A BIT OF THE SPOTLIGHT? HE'S A SHOW-OFF! ALWAYS SMIRKING. HE WON'T LISTEN TO ME, EITHER.



I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH ALL THIS EGO YOU KNOW. YEAH YOU GOT ENOUGH OF YOUR OWN.



HEY JOHN DO YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU A NEW STRING FOUR THE ONE YOU BROKE?

YEAH. BUT COME HERE FIRST. I WANNA TALK TO YOU...



WHAT IS IT JOHN... DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?

NO, NO! IN FACT, JUST THE OPPOSITE...



YOU PLAYED A GREAT SET. THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT...



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING GUITAR, CHRIS?

I DUNNO. LONG TIME, I GUESS.



FIRST THING I REMEMBER AS VERY SMALL GREEK CHILD, MY DADDY GAVE ME GUITAR AND SAID TO ME, "YOU PLAY NOW!"



I TOOK GUITAR AND RIGHT AWAY I PLAYED A CHORD. PRETTY GOOD FOR NOT GETTING NO LESSONS.



WHAT CHORD WAS IT THAT YOU PLAYED FIRST?

"E" CHORD, OF COURSE!



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

THAT'S OKAY, JOHN. YOU WILL GET TO KNOW ME A LOT BETTER...



ANYHOW, I CAN TELL THAT YOU ARE A REAL NATURAL ON GUITAR.

I WORK HARD ON IT. MANY YEARS.



IT SHOWS. AND IT'S GOING TO PAY OFF FOR YOU...

SOMETIMES I USED TO GET FRUSTRATED. I WOULD GET SO UPSET, I WOULD SMASH MY GUITAR.



I STILL DO, SOMETIMES. I GO THROUGH MANY GUITARS THAT WAY.



JOE SAYS ITS OKAY. HE THINKS IT MIGHT BE COMMERCIAL.

I'LL TAKE IT INTO CONSIDERATION IF YOU EVER ASK TO PLAY MY GUITAR.



I MOSTLY SMASH UP MY OWN GUITARS. AND SOMETIMES I SMASH UP A CLUB... JOE SAYS IT'S A GOOD GIMMICK, BUT I JUST DO IT COZ I DO IT. I SMASH.



SO YOU DON'T LISTEN TO JOE TOO MUCH I TAKE IT.

AW HELL NO! ONLY SARGE PAYS MUCH ATTENTION TO JOE.



SO WHO DO YOU LISTEN TO, MUSICALLY SPEAKING?

MOSTLY OLD BLUES RECORDS AND THE STONES



HMM... THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT... BUT I HAPPEN TO HAVE ONE OF THE BEST BLUES RECORD COLLECTIONS AROUND.

OH YEAH?



YOU'LL HAVE TO COME OVER AND HEAR 'EM SOME TIME. I'LL LEND YOU A FEW IF YOU WANT.

REALLY? WOW!



BESIDES, IT WOULD GIVE US TIME TO TALK GUITARS AND STUFF, SINCE WE HAVE THAT IN COMMON.

SURE...



I THINK YOU COULD BE A GREAT GUITARIST WITH A LITTLE OF SOME PROPER GUIDANCE.

COMING FROM YOU, JOHN, THAT MEANS A LOT...



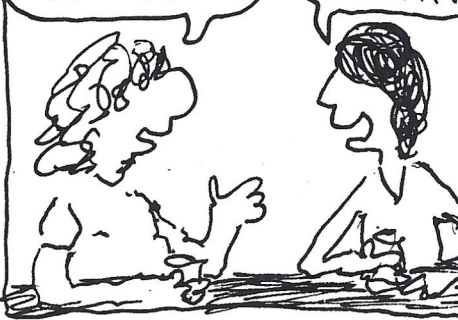
IT SHOULD. I'M GOING TO HELP YOU, CHRIS. I AM GOING TO MAKE YOU A BIG SUCCESS! YOU AND ME.

YEAH!



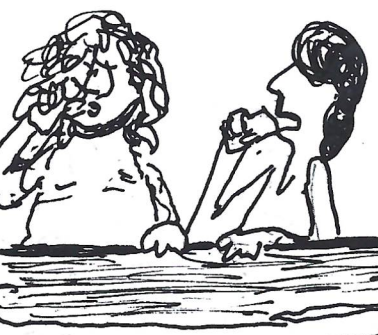
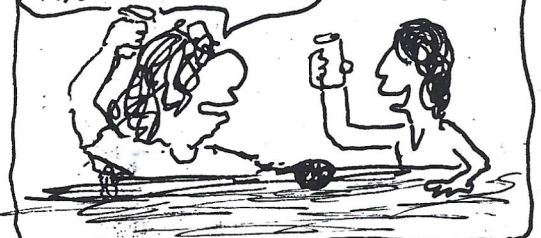
LET'S DRINK TO THAT.

ALL RIGHT.



TO ROCK N' ROLL SUCCESS!

AND A GUITAR PARTNERSHIP OF KIRCHNER AND BONTOS!



YOU KNOW, I WRITE MUSIC, TOO. MOST OF WHAT WE'VE BEEN PLAYING IS ORIGINAL. I GUESS. DID YOU WRITE IT?

YEAH. WITH BUTCH.



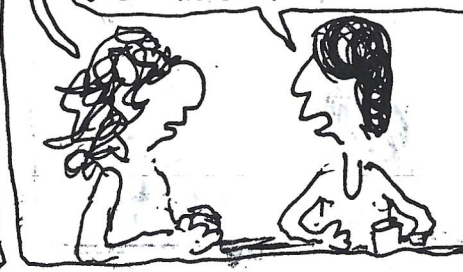
TOGETHER? DO YOU TWO WRITE SEPARATELY?

ALL TOGETHER. WE ALWAYS WRITE ALL OUR SONGS TOGETHER.



HE WRITES LYRICS AND YOU WRITE THE MUSIC?

NO, WE BOTH WRITE BOTH. WE'RE A TEAM. TOGETHER WE ADD UP TO GENIUS.



THAT'S A PRETTY FIRM TEAM IS IT?

OH YEAH. WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER A LONG TIME THROUGH MANY BANDS. NO ONE SPLITS US!

WE'LL SEE...



HEY HOW 'BOUT A DRINK HERE?

HEY BUTCH. YOU WANT TO HEAR SOMETHING?



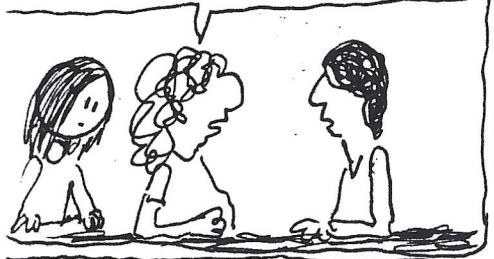
JOHN HAS ONE OF THE BEST BLUES COLLECTIONS AROUND. REALLY? I'D LOVE TO HEAR SOME!



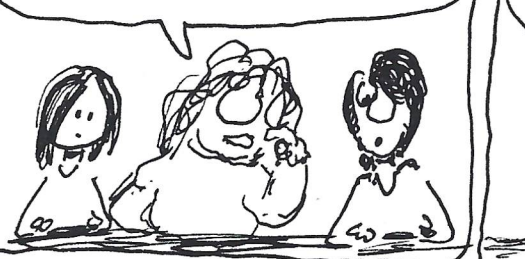
HE INVITED ME OVER. YOU COULD COME ALONG, RIGHT JOHN?



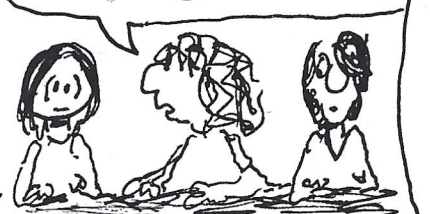
I SORT OF INTENDED IT TO BE JUST US GUITARISTS, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.



I THINK BUTCH MIGHT FIND IT BOREING, NOT BEING A GUITARIST, YOU KNOW.



WHY DON'T YOU AND YOUR FLASHY DRUMMER GO LISTEN TO SOME IRON BUTTERFLY RECORDS?



I THINK I BETTER GO CHANGE THAT STRING FOR YOU JOHN. YEAH GOOD IDEA.



I DON'T LISTEN TO IRON BUTTERFLY YOU KNOW, SO WHAT DO YOU LISTEN TO, ANYWAY?



LOTS OF MUSIC. BEATLES, PINK FLOYD...

DO YOU LISTEN TO MUSICIANS WHO KNOW BETTER THAN YOU DO?



I'M OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS...

WELL I GOT A FEW IDEAS ABOUT HOW THINGS ARE GONNA RUN FROM NOW ON...



SO STAY "OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS" IF YOU WANT TO GET ALONG, GET ME?

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA FOR ANY BAND...



AND ONE OF MY FIRST SUGGESTIONS IS TO GET RID OF OUR DAMN DRUMMER!



YOU COME ON A LITTLE STRONG, DON'T YOU? WHERE WERE YOU TWO WEEKS AGO?

IN ANOTHER PATHIC BAND OF LOSERS.



I'LL GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT. AFTER ALL, HE HATES YOU AS MUCH AS YOU HATE HIM.

I'M GOING OUT FOR AIR.



WELL... HERE'S TO... HERE'S TO THE FUTURE OF THE BAND.



WELL SARGIE BABY, HOW'S IT GOING? LOTS OF PEOPLE HERE? LOTS OF MONEY?



DON'T CALL ME "SARGIE BABY", JOE! WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN? IT'S BEEN OVER AN HOUR!



I'M SORRY, SARGIE. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT.

I'LL BET. YOU SON OF A BITCH.



HOW'S THE BAND DOING? WHERE ARE THEY? WHY AREN'T THEY PLAYING?



OH... ON BREAK HUM? HOW LONG THEY BEEN ON BREAK?



AN HOUR? HOLY SHIT THEY GOTTA GET BACK ON! WHERE ARE THEY?



I DUNNO... KIRCHNER JUST PASSED BY HERE A WHILE AGO. HE WENT OUTSIDE.

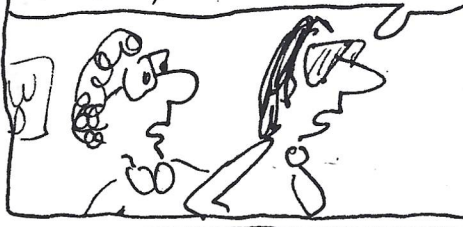


NO. I DON'T THINK SO.

GOOD! THEN HE WILL BE BACK. JESUS EVERYTHING FALLS APART WHEN I STEP OUT...



WHERE'S BUTCH? OH, I SAW HIM AT THE BAR WITH THAT DRUM PLAYER. SARGIE, I'LL BE BACK!



BUTCH! WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY AREN'T YOU GUYS UP ON STAGE PLAYING?



WE'LL GET UP THERE AND DO IT! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

THAT'S THE JOHN KIRCHNER BAND! GO FIND JOHN



JOHN'S STILL OUTSIDE! AND THIS IS YOUR BAND! PHILBERT DESANEX! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? ARE YOU DRUNK?



YOU GOTTA GET UP THERE AND FINISH OUT THIS NIGHT! RIGHT NOW...



SURE. I THINK IF YOU AND CHRIS GET ME STARTED I COULD GO FOR A LONG DRUM SOLO NOW



WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?

OH HI JOHN.

HOW WAS THE AIR?



CHILLY. THAT'S OKAY. IT WILL ALL COME BACK OUT HOT.



WHY IS SIMMONS PLAYING A SOLO?

WE GOT HIM STARTED ON A SONG * LET HIM GO.



OH GOD. HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN DOING THIS?

TEN MINUTES OR SO.



JESUS! HE'S POUNDING EVERYTHING IN SIGHT! HE'S NOT EVEN AT HIS SET!

VERY INVENTIVE.



HE'S A GODDAMN SHOW OFF! LET'S PUT A STOP TO THIS! GET OUT THERE AND PLAY!



WHAT A NUT CASE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO PLAY, JOHN?

I DON'T CARE. JUST MAKE IT IN THE KEY OF "E".



I'LL JUST PLAY LEAD ON THAT FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT.



IT'LL BE A REAL TREAT FOR THE AUDIENCE.

OKAY JOHN. IF YOU SAY SO...



SO HOW DID WE MAKE OUT AT THE DOOR SARGIE?

NOT BAD. NO THANKS TO YOU, JOE.



WHY DIDN'T YOU EVER COME OUT AND TAKE OVER FOR ME?

WELL IT'S ALL OVER NOW. THIS MUST BE THE BAND'S LAST NUMBER...



THEY'VE BEEN PLAYING IT FOR A HALF HOUR NOW.

I KNOW. AND IT'S ALL BEEN JOHN'S LEAD.



I'M REALLY PROUD OF THE BOYS. THEY MANAGED TO PULL THE BAND TOGETHER AND IT'S WORKING GREAT.

HERE THEY COME.



GOOD GIG GUYS. GREAT JOB. NOW COMES THE BEST PART - COLLECTING! GOOD JOB GUYS! GREAT! SEE YOU NEXT GIG!



I'M NEVER PLAYING WITH YOU AGAIN!



END OF CHAPTER NINE