



RUSH TO JUDGEMENT

by Darcy Diamond

I was really mad at my sister. She borrowed my best pair of black pants, ripped them lamentably, and then refused to give them back. I've found only two methods to deal with capricious older sisters. The first way is physical force; when we had an argument as to the ownership of a certain purple umbrella, I simply broke it over her head.

The second way is to resort to bratty little sister tactics, at which I am an expert. For example, I will show you how the group Rush has twice smote angrily at my dear sister. She had slammed the phone down after stating that she had no intention of returning my black pants.

One way of punishing her, I thought, would be to lure her into a concert situation which she would *hate*. And she hates everything loud and hard. So

later in the week I lied and told her we were going to see a James Taylor show. Once I got her into my Volkswagen and locked the door, the car sped itself to the Starwood, a sleazy West Hollywood club.

Rush was headlining that night—and my sister did hate them and rushed from the club clutching her ears and shrieking. She didn't get far because she ran into some mean-looking thugs in the parking lot, and chose to suffer through Rush rather than be rushed to an emergency hospital.

The band was brutal that night. They'd just put out their fourth album, and a concept piece at that, titled *2112*. What is puzzling about this one is that the story is only half an album long. Just the one side is futuristic dribble and concave existentialism. Side two is short snappy cuts. Inside the album is a blow by blow account of the space

odyssey in verse lines. I'd left my libretto at home, so as the synthesized drama unfolded, I just made up my own obscene little story about "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." Was this supposed to be a rock opera or something?

Back at the Starwood my sister was working on her fifth brandy and Rush was on Phase IV of their New Deal as outlined in *2112*. Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart were showing us how the science fiction lending library had changed their lives. Triangular punch can be effective: you know, the Father, the Son, and the Drum Solo.

I'm enjoying this set a lot. My sister is in pain. When it's over, she gives me all her money so I won't take her to such a thing again.

Everything went fine for about six months, and then my sister (in one of her visits with her stockbroker boy-

friend) walked out of my apartment with two of my favorite drinking glasses. She took the vodka tonics right down the goddamned hall in my Pluto and Tinkerbell goddamned glasses. These she did not return, either, EVER.

So when I heard Rush was playing the Forum with Rex and Ted Nugent, I knew how to inflict torture on this hapless creature I laughingly refer to as my sister. Again, I went through a casual routine suggesting a barbecue at the beach, then Rushed her down to the 18,000 seat Forum before the chloroform wore off.

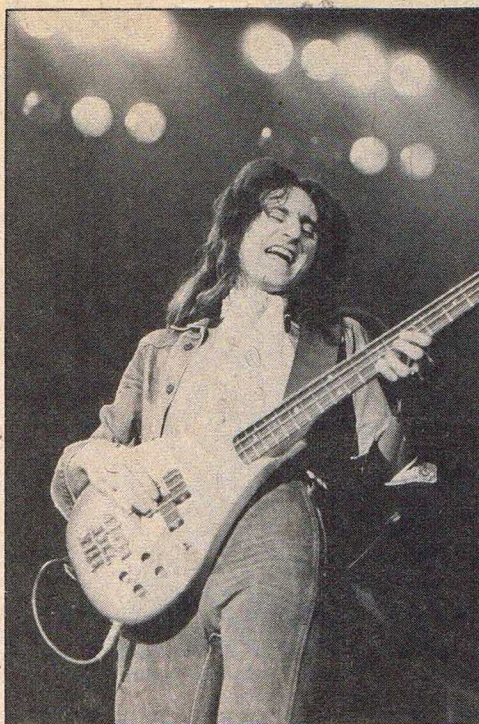
Rush looked tiny up there, just the three of them. But the music was tight—"Working Man," "Anthem" and "Something For Nothing" were whipped up like William Buckley debate retorts. I even understood parts of *2112* this time, coloring up the story with my caption from *Screw* magazine. In the liner notes, I see that they've thanked Ayn Rand for giving us our freedom. The Forum crowd, mostly assembled for mad dog Nugent, went for Rush carnivorously. My sister went temporarily insane, wildly rushing the exits, spilling popcorn in her wake, and trying to squeeze underneath her folding seat.

Rush showed a lot of class. Geddy sings in a Noddy Holder, high-pitched yadda yadda voice, and plays the bass, too. Alex is a blonde pretty boy, looking barely old enough to play the guitar with strife worthy of Alex Harvey. Neil goes into a great percussion solo which not only knocks the wax out of your ears, but sounds like the melodic bleatings of a foghorn. (No, we don't have foghorns in California! But people have told me about them.)

Rumor has it that Rush took themselves quite seriously and often didn't respond to writers at all, but would stare vacantly out of windows and sigh a lot. Several sources said that Geddy in particular would lie silent in the face of a reporter.

Only one Rush showed up at the post-concert party—Geddy. He looked moody behind his tortoise shell glasses. He didn't really mingle or jive like the Runaways did at this bash. The Runaways threw plates of food at Ted Nugent. Nugent got Jackie Fox in a bear hold, and poured beer down her blouse, and then—well. Everyone was having rowdy fun except Geddy! I introduced myself to him. His expression said something like "Oh you hopeless child. Why are you bothering Daddy at a time like this?"

The next morning I woke up in my garage with a hotel key to the Tropicana on the seat next to me. I Rushed to meet Rush. The meeting was akin to



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For Rush, it's the Father, the Son, and the Drum Solo, but for the average listener it's everything you never cared to know about heavy metal and wouldn't think of asking.

one of my more esoteric philosophy seminars in college. They are, after all, smart cookies. Things started off well. Geddy says, "Well, I don't believe anything I read in CREEM Magazine. It and the writers just say what they want to." (Ed., dear, can I say fuck here? Huh?) (Fuck yes—Ed.)

Rush made the big time by leaving Canada and touring the United States, beginning in 1974. Their first three albums (*Rush*, *Fly By Night*, and *Caress Of Steel*) had already established them as the second biggest group in Canada (BTO was bigger)—but it wasn't until the release of *2112* that things started happening in America. By the time their live double LP *All The World's A Stage* hit the record racks, Rush was headlining sell-outs in Canada, and hitting a widespread American audience, as well. But they had to do it outside of Canada. Although there's a Canadian scene, they explain, you can't make it on Canada alone.

"Look at a band like April Wine," says Geddy. "They're awfully big in Canada, but who's heard of them here? We have toured with the Canadian acts like Max Webster and the Ian Thomas Band, but you're not going to break 'til you break the States. Canada is a geographically larger area than the U.S., with a smaller population, and nothing but hockey arenas to play in. It's not very conducive to music. We just finished a 19-city run of Canada, and 17 dates were hockey stadiums."

The consensus then, is that there is a Canadian scene flourishing up there, but, as Alex explains, "There's only three major radio stations, as opposed to 193 stations here. And there can't be much cohesion with cities so scattered and culturally different."

Speaking of the lofty and literary effort, *2112*, Geddy comments, "We took a risk. *2112*, individualism, concepts of thought and morality are causes that we believe in. We all know that boogie is definitely the philosophy of the '70s. Everybody is out there for a fast buck. The Aerosmiths give birth to groups like Starz. It has become OK to say that you're only in rock 'n' roll for the money. We've tried to transcend that by having something for everyone. We don't ask that everyone believe in what we do. Let them take our stuff on any level they want."

Geddy does a fine live job of playing bass and singing at the same time ("Cause nobody else in the group could sing," he explains.) Recently, the band considered adding a fourth member.

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This isn't too unusual. Robin Trower added a guitarist to his three-piece so that James Dewar could spend more time on vocals.

Neil explains the decision, "It is time for a new phase of the band. We'd thought about a fourth member. But we have been together so long in a united fashion, that we voted on learning more instruments ourselves. We'll be experimenting with new toys, and even slide presentations and video, when time and money allows."

What about the new toys? "Alex uses double necks," Geddy responded, "16 and 12-string guitars. I am using a 4-string bass in conjunction with a bass pedal synthesizer which can simulate very low notes so I can play the rhythm on a 12-string and the bass will still be there. Neil is going into things like vibes, orchestra bells..."

So what do you expect from a group who's said they *like* Patrick Moraz, and that he is a very nice and intense man?

Rush has picked England for the recording of their next album. "Well," says Geddy, "we like the atmosphere. It has pink and grey atmosphere, like the dawn. And we would like a change. Our co-producer, Terry Brown, is an excellent guy. He's done all our work, and also produced a real high-secrecy Canadian super group called Klaatu. Give the Klaatu album a listen. It is superb!"

We continued babbling about Ayn Rand, feminism, socialism, and karma and Rush weren't the posturing bores I thought they'd be. I even like the music. Bidy, Ditty and Dottie have certainly kept my sister on her best behavior. Why, if it weren't for Rush, my sister would never have married the stockbroker and moved to Encino, away from rock 'n' roll. Thank you Winky, Blinky, and Noddy. 