

THE
SANDUSKY
REVIEW

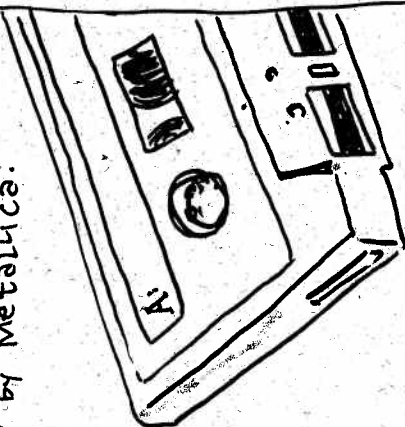


SHE DOESN'T KNOW IT'S NEW YEAR'S

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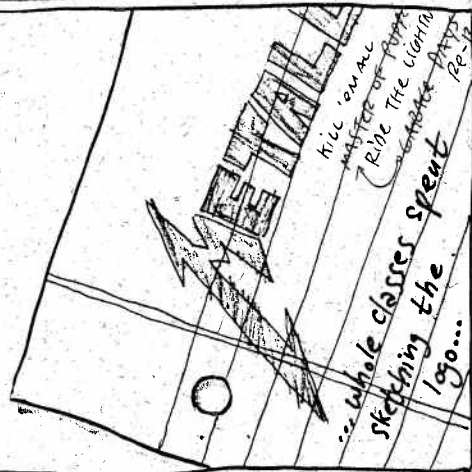
FALSE METAL

IN 1989 my best friend made me a copy of ...And Justice For All by Metallica.



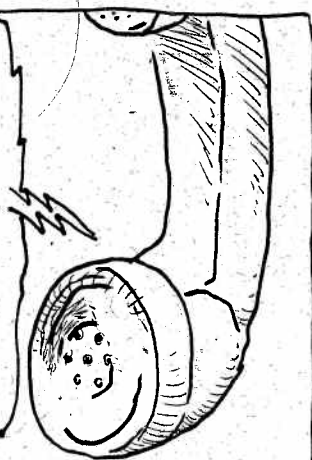
It was kept, unlabeled, underneath my mattress.

CUE four years of studying lyrics & pushhead drawings...



...hours calling I-95 and requesting our favorite.

I SAID we'll NEVER PLAY "ONE," YOU METALHEAD PUNKS!!



FALSE METAL REDUX

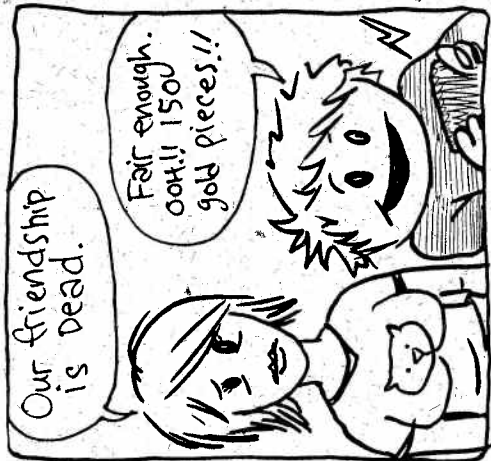
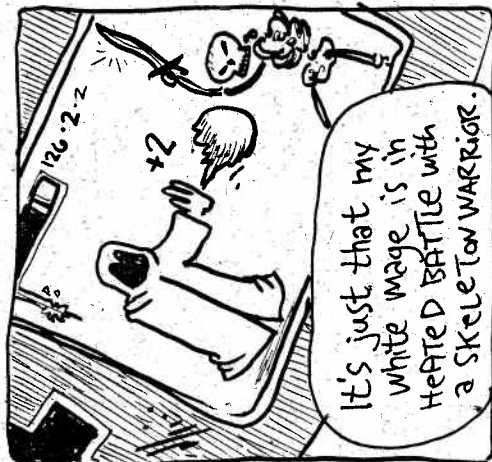
Remember that time when you were in high school and music occupied whole epochs of your life? Did you ever fall in love with a band, unfurl the lyric sheet from its case (that sweet chemical smell of plastic grapes), chanting the words until they tumbled out faithfully on demand? I don't want to lie to you: a major goal in my life as a teenager was to be able to name every recorded Led Zeppelin album and song. In chronological order.

In 1993 my favorite band was no longer Metallica but they still had a warm place in my heart. In the three years since I fell for them a lot had changed: I got a girlfriend, got a car, got my ear pierced (only to recant later once I saw that diamond sliver glitter in the fluorescent light of a truck-stop bathroom), wrecked the car and got dumped (that's what I got for our song being "What It Takes" by Aerosmith).

I loved Metallica, but after the commercial splash of the "black album" in '92, our relationship had grown a bit strained. They were even on Mtv, for God's sake—and so I had to look elsewhere for truth. (This is the eternal quest, the same one shared by the punk fan who stops listening when her band stops showing up in the back pages of *MRR* and leaves Lookout! or Epitaph; the same one felt deeply by the hippie when his band stops allowing their shows to be taped by the flip-flopped trust fund masses; the same echo in the soul of the Bowie fan when she sees a "Serious Moonlight" onesie for forty-five bucks at Macy's, that need to not only be a part of something but to also have an exclusive connection, especially exclusive of the people you hate the most).

The problem with trying to make myself a Megadeth fan is that we didn't really click. I loved the story—that Dave Mustaine was briefly a member of Metallica in the early days, but reveled in excess to the point even the self-styled "Alcoholica" kicked him out—and I liked the crunch of "Hanger 18" and "Peace Sells" but they didn't have the visceral snarl of anything from *Master of Puppets* or, hell, even the cold craft of the heavy ballads from the black album. It's like trying to date your ex-girlfriend's little sister. Seems like a great idea until about ten minutes before you actually try to kiss her.

WHITE MAGE



FIRE EMBLEM is still the only game I've ever played with awesome white mages. And La Cat got over it.

TWELVE HUNDRED BAUD

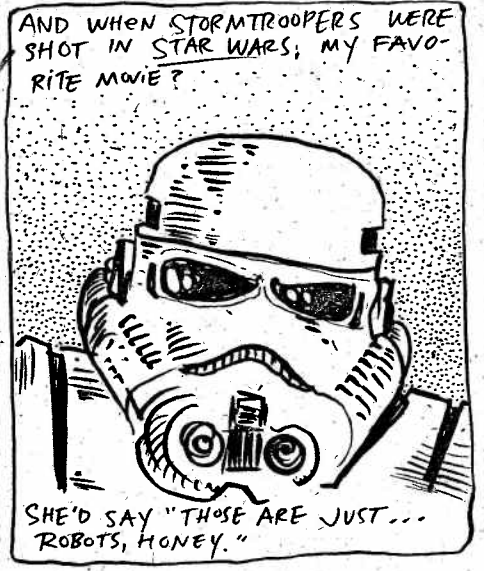
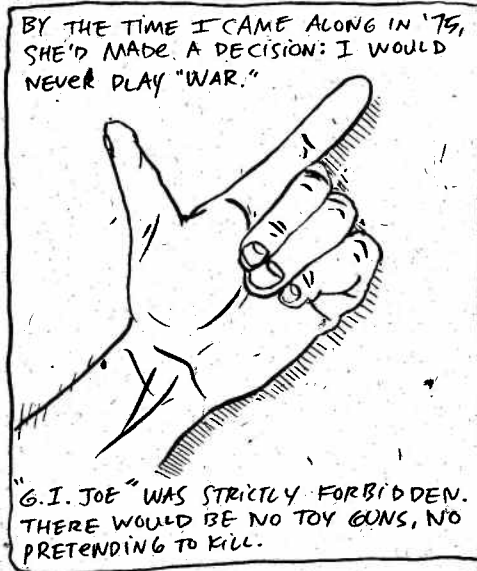
It's 1990 and there's a poster of Robert Johnson on the back of my bedroom door and one of Wolverine by Arthur Adams taped carefully to my closet, a dubbed cassette of Metallica's . . . *And Justice For All* stuffed under the mattress of my bed, made earlier in the year by my best friend. His dad played guitar growing up and rock and roll, even metal, is allowed in his house. I'm fifteen and things are starting to change but I don't know why and I've never heard a real punk song before and I just heard of Big Star—nestled deep in a *Rolling Stone* article about R.E.M., glittering like a ruby—and metal is all I think matters right now but that'll shatter soon enough, like a cheap wine glass at the end of a terrible dinner party.

The internet will do much of the smashing, along with college, and (bite your tongue, but you said it back then) grunge. But right now I'm astonished because I'm on a BBS and it's not quite the internet yet but do you remember the first time you got an e-mail? It's not JFK and maybe it's not even when you got your driver's license but looking back, did you even get it? I think I might have, sitting in my bedroom tapping away on my Commodore 64, wading around in the shallows of the new digital world.

What did we do? We talked, mostly; the early bits were forums and message boards that would be recognizable even today. And lo, piracy, she loomed full and luscious even then, the first uses of inter-telephonic communication in my life the attempts to lure delicious cracked games onto gigantic floppy disks, crawling over the phones lines a few K at a time.

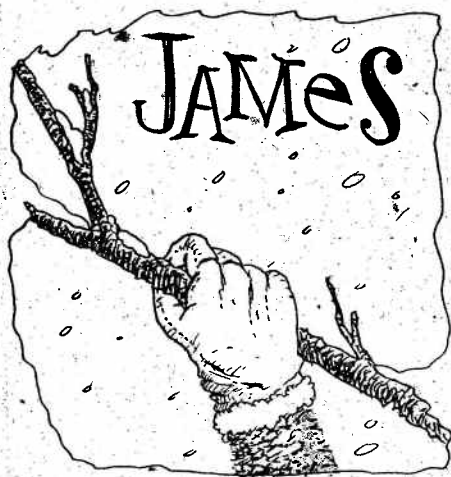
And we had names: long before blogspot or myspace or before everything got un-capitalized we had noms-de-Commodore; I shall not tell you mine, as it is astonishingly embarrassing, and I say that as a man who has publicly vomited on himself and then gone home to change in order to return to the bar. Within the last six months. But oh, those glittering teenage days: when for the first time, I could define myself not by my body, my voice, my eyes but my words.

EXODUS TWENTY THIRTEEN



If my mom had raised Dick Cheney the world would be a better place.

DREAMS OF RAREBIT MYTH



A "rarebit myth" is a visual transcription of a vivid dream pioneered by the cartoonist Winsor McKay. This one was a nightmare that got better.

