

**LAST
CALL**

by

**ANDREW
LEWIS**

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A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a central oval containing a stylized 'C' or 'O' shape, with intricate scrollwork extending downwards and outwards.

Last Call

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For My Wife, Tennille
I Love You

In Memory of
Rick LaFerla
and
Dr. Hunter S. Thompson

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Acceleration (a) meters/second²,..... $a = \Delta v / t$

Acceleration is the rate at which the velocity vector changes.

af•ter•glow

1. The atmospheric glow that remains for a short time after sunset.
2. The light emitted after removal of a source of energy, especially:
 - a. The glow of an incandescent metal as it cools.
 - b. The emission of light from a phosphor after removal of excitation.
3. The comfortable feeling following a pleasant experience.
4. A lingering impression of past glory or success.

Acceleration Afterglow

I take a scrap from the table
and I feed it to the Muse
and she chews and she chokes
from the booze and the coke
she doesn't laugh at my jokes
and I'm tired.

See me in the waiting room
back to the wall
with a prophet in the hall
kicking at the stall
and I'm falling in love again.

The sun is coming up
going down
another day

I see your face
and I wonder who the hell you are.

Take me to the place
where the little children laugh
and the young men dance
and the old people sleep
in the comforts of nice little
home away from home.

Sitting in the cinema
a German expressionist
silent film festival

black and white images
shining forth on dry strained eyes.

Teacher calls me to the blackboard
talking about numbers
"What does 'X' equal?"

I say "Lady who the fuck really cares?"

Ghost of Keith Moon
drumming in the back room
running on the carpet
where I roll a seven-sided dice
and it isn't really nice

to throw rice at the wedding
when it makes the little birds explode,
or so I've been told.
Gypsy stole my baby
fed it to the dingo
today I was a no show
watching as the time flows south
like the last words spoken
by a death row inmate
maybe I was sorry
but only that I had to die.
Pain in my chest
as I clutch my breast
and I'm struggling for breath
but I know it's just a new nightmare.
Something I've not seen before
knocking at the door
where the wild dogs are barking
at the car with the headlights out.
Smoking in the break room
filling out a form,
time to sign your life away baby,
put it on the dotted line.
You're doing fine.
Remembering a number
on a bank card,
credit card,
I.D. card,
Medicaid,
Medicare,
asking "Where are my benefits
for not believing in a goddamn thing?"
Waiting for the telephone to ring,
waiting for a letter
that never seems to come,
writing on a run
and hiding from the sun
I just want to sit in my room

and be quiet and still
leaning on the window sill
just go away and leave me alone.
There's nobody home.
Acceleration in the way
my mind is breaking down the facts
from my neck into my back
and all the time
my blood is pumping neurotoxins
to my cells
and it's cold as hell
and it's times like this I can tell
that I'm slowly going sane.
Images of worlds
overlapping into ours
spilling out of time
and into mine
and I can see them
slipping in and out
like shadows cast
when you walk past
and shafts of light
from places out of dreams,
or so it seems.
Unreceptive to the words you speak
we had our time
and that's last week
if you know what's good for you
you're gonna keep your damn mouth closed.
I'm not a stooge
I'm not a fool
I'll not be spoken down to
by a creature such as you.
Relaxing in the afterglow
of feeling all my anger go
my atoms explode
with twenty-five years
of pent up fury

is an energy expenditure
and a drain upon my senses
so I've lost my rage
and nothing here remains
except the broken shell clean slate
of a frightened little boy.
And the world steps to the plate...

A Different Kind of Knowing

I feel new.
I've experienced an awakening to
a different kind of knowing.
I'm not alone in my disaffection
and I don't have to work to sell
you on anything.
You don't always know where
I'm coming from
but you never
tell me I'm wrong.
When my energy is divided you
help me to focus.
In this strange world where
darkness moves with us, old
words have new meaning.
Whatever Gods there are have let
us go our way and learn what
there is to know.

Painkiller

I'm a shadow out of nowhere,
forget what you've heard.
I creep around your back door
and ask forgiveness for things I didn't do.
I'll smile madly,
humming out of tune,
as the world moves and I am perfectly still.
I'll ask you why
and you'll have no answers to give me.
We'll talk of heartbreak and test monkeys,
somehow grasping at hope.
Feeding the warm anxiety that falls
like rain.

Lazy Sod

(lethargy)

Another conversation about how
you want to change the world.
You talk through the pills of the
blissful freedom of chaos, I try to get a word in.
Anarchy won't work, people are greedy.
You've nodded off again.
The record player skips and
Desmond Dekker says
"after every storm..."
eight times before I get up and
move the needle.
You say something about rejecting
mainstream media and you're
gone again.
Your revolution will never get
off the ground if you don't get
off the couch.

Quality of Life

A summer Sunday afternoon
looking out through my open windows
at the darkish clouds
creeping slowly across the big blue.
Duke Ellington's Mood Indigo
plays softly from my stereo
and the breeze smells like rain.
Different thoughts cross my mind,
like different lives and times.
My eyelids grow heavy.

Have you ever seen a perfect day;
a genuinely superior moment where it seems
like God has arranged a scene just for you
and you alone?

It's that one moment of perfection that
makes the rest of the day,
whatever it may be,
worth while.



Fortune Cookie

There's this Wiccan lady who runs a
curio shop down on the square.

She's got this vibe about her and
keeps telling me that there's a reason
for everything, that the universe isn't
random and empty.

I try hard to believe her.

I walk across the block to the Chinese
restaurant all the while asking myself,

“What can I do? What can I do to give it all meaning?”

When I finish my General Tso's
and the lovely waitress brings me my
fortune cookie, I get my answer.

Beneath the crumbs a slip of paper reads,
“always do what your heart says is right”.

Suddenly it's not so hard to believe
what the Wiccan lady said.

I fold the fortune into my pocket and
smile, and step out into the sun.

Same Shit Different Day

Wake up at 7am and out the door by 7:30.

Same shit different day.

At work by 8 for the same task as the day
before and the same inane discussions with
the people who've become your
second family.

"Did you hear what she said to..."

"I heard he's on drugs or..."

"I was watching this show on..."

"Is Colossus stronger than..."

All the while standing over a 400 degree
fryer and grill cooking greasy food to feed
the overstuffed blowholes of people you
can't even stomach looking at any more.
Service with a smile and I hope you choke.
Then out the door at 1pm; sweaty, greasy,
and grumpy for a dick tease of a break
where you have no time to do anything even
if there were anything to do in
small town Iowa.

Then back to work from 4 to 10 because
you're a double shift wage slave who can't
seem to get ahead.

I toil for the paymasters.

I flip your burgers.

I fry your hot wings.

I grill your steaks.

And I hate this.

Home by 10:30 for a shower and something
from the microwave and a few hours of
troubled restless sleep.

I dream of a mobile home and no
possessions to trap me.

I dream of odd jobs in Montana and Maine to
keep gas in the home and food on the plate.

I dream of a highway that never ends.

I dream of getting free.

7am, the alarm clock jars me awake to start
it all again, and again, and again until the
good Lord sees fit to let it end.

This has got to be some kind of a joke.



Take It Back

Murders in the streets
all the mothers crying.
Wars around the world
all the fathers dying.
Paining to forget,
what's the use in trying?
And the sun goes down again.

Poison in the air
from the factories.
Virus in the winds
and it's hard to breathe.
Tell us all a lie
and we will believe.
And the world's turning 'round again.

Sell our time away
watch the evening news
They want to take away
a woman's right to choose.
They want to take away my pot
and let me keep my booze.
And the leaves are falling down again.

They have a new tax break
for the upper 1%.
Before I get my paycheck
the money's all been spent.
Can I put food upon the table
and still afford to pay the rent?
And my time ticks by again.
We're cutting down our trees
so we can drill for oil.
Buried toxic waste
contaminates the soil.
Heating up our planet
'till the seas begin to boil.
And a people fade away again.

Stoned

I woke up this morning with noble
ambitions of cleaning my garage, but
a different plan set in.
My lids got heavy, and I ordered a pizza.
Locked door, phone off, a two-liter of
orange soda and Spinal Tap on DVD,
and so I downsize my life.
I think about convicts and concerts
and a nagging lower back pain.
Swaying mellow in a glider chair with
smooth sounds coming from the box.
In 1972 Lou Reed saved the world,
or so I'm told.
Lying on my floor like a flophouse
hobo reading a paperback about the
Vietnam War.
It's been another busy day.
Tomorrow doesn't matter.
I've made a choice to become utterly
useless for an entire day.
It's a modern meditation.

My Life A.D.

Thrift store Mona Lisa
taught me how to smile
as we played guitar on a forgotten
street corner and life was a good deal
more grand
when I looked into
those fractal eyes.

Yes, I was there too.

“I’ll do what is in my nature”, she
cried, “and worship no longer in
subservient robes”.

I’ll pick up the pieces for us both,
though you can keep your shame.
This youth is confusion and wonder,
innocence and despair.

Wherever a crowd was gathered we
saw hope and a free exchange of ideas.
Seeds of the future.

If Venus DeMilo had her arms, would
she point accusing fingers and shout
or hold us all in her warm embrace?
To believe is to be understood and to
be understood completely is to
whither on the vine of ultimate truth.

I have no answers.

This is what she taught me.

Lonesome City Days

Punk rock chic like
addiction is a fashion.
Try it on like a gown.
A prolonged journey into varying
degrees of nothingness.
Wallowing in excess
with your heroin eyes.
Talking trash with your friends
trying to act grown up
in your dime store disguises.
She didn't plan on Tuesday blues
and now you're always bored or sick.
It's a fifty-dollar lesson
and no one's ever around
and there's no place to go.
What have you found?
Have you ever felt displaced
as darkness blurs the edges of your world
like a cancer,
always moving in and overtaking
any sense of purity?
Cross your eyes and step outside
and the sun isn't as bright as it was
and it's not as warm as it should be.
You've seen your life
broken down in a spoon,
drawn up,
and flushed away.
Welcome to the disease.

One Step

The badgers and weasels
circle my ankles with vicious
hungry glints in their eyes.
Everybody wants a piece of me.
Fuck 'em.

At least two things went right today.
One step closer to having nothing.
One step closer to getting free.
One step closer to having it all.

Screaming

I've got nothing to say
that hasn't been said
by a million people
for a thousand years
and there's nothing to feel
that hasn't been felt
and dealt with better than I ever could
and everything that I think
are thoughts recycled
and my anger grows predictable
when I all I do
is in compliance
with the rules of all that came before.

Running out of ways
to express my rage
so I think I'm going to scream
It's all I have
it's all that's mine
Don't let it die like faith or love
A face looks back out of the dark
drained of creativity
Behind the curtain
there's a sound
like breaking glass or falling rain.

Everything we've ever been
was sold at once
for sitcom television.
We see our lives
sold back to us
After they're strained through a filter.
If Jesus Christ
were here today
his face would be on a cereal box.
So think the things they say to think
and feel the things they say to feel.
We are prefabricated lives.
Is it any wonder we're going mad
Is it any wonder I want to
scream.

It's Only Art

You've got your flat lined
elegance
and funeral dirges
and I wonder if you want to know.
You keep digging your own ditches
with your head held down
lost in the radio.

Relegated to the realm of
"never would have been anyway"
When's this dog gonna have his day?

Let it drop.
Take it back.
You try too hard
and your minds one track.
You suffer so
you gotta cut some slack
Its only art
I think you're gonna crack.

Muse

Walking out at dusk
with a special kind of eyes
looking for her inspiration
in a social vacuum.
Talking in rhyme about music and cats,
and New York City on five dollars a day.
Laundromats and fire escapes
and all of the details lost
beneath the burning sun.
Waiting for news,
for a package that never comes,
and your whole life grinds to a halt.
Where were you
during my time in perdition,
sitting on a bar stool perhaps,
sipping black & tans?
Nothing is the same as it was,
nothing but you.
A person out of time,
out of touch.
And then she smiled,
my flirtatious muse,
falling into the radiant,
sad Midwestern night.

Imagine-Nation
(for John Lennon)

I've been giving a lot of thought to us lately,
as a species and the things of which we're
capable. We as Human Beings hold within
us one of the greatest forces in the universe.

It has birthed evolution and shaped our
world, for better or worse. It charges us wit
the ability to think and dream. It is
imagination and it is practically limitless.
It was the initial spark in a primate mind that
awakened creativity and cried out for
change. Rocks don't have to just be rocks.

They can be tools to build
or weapons to destroy.

We imagined a language and so we spoke.

We imagined cities and so we built them.

We imagined Gods and so we became them.

It is an energy, a power, and like all power it can corrupt.

We burned our fossil fuels, split our atoms,
and engineered our genes; but not once did
we ever imagine the consequences.

We have imagined ourselves to the brink of extinction.

If another species were to evolve on this
planet tomorrow, do you think they'd want it
in the shape it's in? Who wants to inherit the
wind when there are man made viruses
blowing around in it? We owe it to ourselves
to do a little better than this.

Try to imagine a world where personal gain
is no longer the driving ambition in people's
lives. Think of it, a species doing things for
the benefit the species. Selflessness
replacing selfishness.

Think of all this could mean.

We could harness the sun and winds for
energy and let the dinosaurs rest.

There would be no more homeless poor,
neglected elderly, or abused young.

No more petty wars for lands or gods.

No crime or punishment.

No money or class system.

Imagine this, a world dismantling its
arsenals, healing its sick, feeding its
hungry, a world where equality is more than
a slogan on a job application or a campaign
ballot, a world where people learn because
they want to know.

Imagination is a two-way street.

If we can dream it, we can do it.

We just have to want to.

Walking With Sal Paradise

The skies are full of weeping angels
and dead-beat romantics dreaming proud dreams.

Their tears hit my face like stark inevitability.

There stands a b-movie poet spinning
words on this empty twilight crossroads.

We walk together countless miles
and speak of things that sane men dare not say.

We are lost in sad reverie as stars
shine down their infinite beauty on a
traveler who reflects back every bit of their power.

My eyes strain to see, my heart is
filled with longing for an answer; a
cure for my lost and lonesome world.

You can look for truth on any street
corner in any small town with the
western winds holding you aloft.

There were reasons to laugh and sing.

Disintegrating dreams of purity.

Soul, spirit, whatever.

We could find it anywhere.

Everywhere.

There were truck stops and train cars.

Little communities where prisoners
still wear stripes and cities where

buildings dwarf logic and wonderful
madness flowed in every direction.

Whatever there is to see,

I want to see.