

## Hold the Door, Please

For those of you who are familiar with this column, the dedicated readers, you may have noticed a similar trend in my attempt to convey our experiences as a traveling band. A recurring theme, so to speak. You will have noticed that on most occasions, our stories and mishaps usually occur in or around our main source of transportation. That being our beautiful 1989 Dodge Caravan. It's a quirky little vehicle, certainly inhabited by a mild demon. Not an evil one, mind you, but one with a sense of humor just twisted enough to enjoy setting a certain crisis or scene, so that he may sit back and watch 5 musicians make total asses of themselves. We spend most of our time in this haunted vessel, which may explain why most of our encounters happen here. And he certainly keeps himself busy, the demon I mean, because there certainly is never a lack of something to tell.....

....The temperature of the wind dropped about 20 degrees, as if sadistically foreseeing our ensuing catastrophe, as we headed from the rehearsal room towards the van. Our entry was routine, with the standard predictions of the gig du jour, a few swear words, along with harmonious unison as we screamed for Steve to get his ass out of the bathroom so we, so eloquently put, "could get the fuck out of here." Once inside, Spike behind the wheel started the cold engine, as John perched in the middle, his out stretched arm encased in suede, proceeded to slam the side sliding door shut. The loud, crashing sound of metal caused Spike and Tim's heads to whip around quickly from the front, their eyeballs not too far behind. There on the cold asphalt next to the van was that same sliding door, now completely unattached to the vehicle, lying lifelessly on the pavement.

"That'll slow us down" was Spike's facetious remark, as he was the first to speak.

"You gotta be shittin' me" added Tim, his face still crinkled and confused.

John's position remained unaltered; his chin on his belt and arm still extended, as if the door was still in his grasp.

"Way to go, Johnny!" Jimi barked from behind, with a scapegoat searching tone in his voice.

"Heeeyyyyy!" was John's lonely and sad reply.

The following dozens of minutes contained chaos and agony, filled with more swearing, a handful of "what are we gonna dos", and a bunch of great ideas, most of which helped us none whatsoever. The temperature continued to descend, as did the sun, casting darkness onto to our already perplexing problem. John and Steve struggled with the heavy, metal door from the outside, their heavy grunts and groans displaying their fondness for the situation, as Tim and Jimi tried to make a connection from within.

"Anyone gotta goddamn flashlight?" Jimi spewed to us, a small, glistening ball of snot now frozen to his nose.

"I got some matches" Steve replied, a cigarette dangling from his lips.

"Yeah, that'll work" Spike said sarcastically, holding down his hat in the now 80 mile an hour wind.

We chuckled silently from the imagery, and continued to battle a seemingly impossible task. Steve and John still on the outside, their grimacing faces now beginning to chaff, began to cause the vehicle to shake and rumble with attempts to slap the stubborn door back onto its track. Tim's hands were blue and bleeding, as Jimi intensely tried to produce light from a raisin he found on the floor.

"This really sucks" Spike broke the panting in a discouraged tone, sitting alone in the driver seat.

"No shit", Tim agreed, "what the hell we gonna do?"

"No, I dropped my sunflower seeds. That sucks."

Tim cast an immediate "you gotta be kidding me kind of glance" in Spike's direction.

"Actually, I dropped your sunflower seeds. Of course that's not the most important thing right now" Spike fibbed, still hungry.

A few murmurs and a half-hour later, we had the once disjointed door back into position. We had done a fine job, one that would make another duct tape and coat hanger repairman envious, and proceeded to drive slightly tardy towards our destination. The highway breeze whistled through the gaps, causing our purple lips to flutter rhythmically with the bumpy road.