

JANUARY:

January 1st -

Counting Crows – Daylight Fading

And so a new year begins; on a windswept beach with wine and a camera, capturing nature's flagrant disregard for the onward march of time. I'm not big on New Year's Resolutions these days, but following the realisation that I spent 2005 walking round in clumsy circles, I swear not to repeat that pattern this year. That promise and other pledges whispered into the rolling surf and carried away on the tide to crash on some other shore, some other time...

Come and waste another year: all the anger and the eloquence....

January 2nd -

Manic Street Preachers - Yes

An advert on TV encourages me to say 'yes'. I start to wonder what my world would be like if I did. So I try it; for one day only I answer yes to every question. Consequently I've done many things today I wasn't planning on doing: eating breakfast, getting cashback, seeing King Kong at the cinema (disappointing: big animals fighting, marginally redeemed by a scene with Adrien Brody in a towel), having dessert.

It's been liberating in a way (and has reminded me of Luke Rhinehart's 'The Diceman' in as much as there's a certain comfort to be found in the removal of one's own freedom to make decisions), but I feel the arrangement has the potential to get me into a lot of trouble. So here endeth the experiment; who pays attention to TV ads anyway...?

Nothing turns out like you want it to...

January 3rd -

Elbow - Leaders of the Free World

I'm not scared. I haven't been scared since I was small. It's not exactly a pleasure, but I can think of worse ways to spend an hour. I'm at the dentist. I've conceded defeat to a molar and today is its day of reckoning; after months of stabbing, shooting sensitivity, I get to wreak revenge.

There's a moment of amusement where I realise the whining drill sounds like Sweep (Sooty and...) and then I retreat into the corners of my mind while my jaw is wrenched and mutilated. I do however find myself sending waves of positive, liberating energy to the tooth in question: *It's OK, I forgive you, you can go now, be at peace.* I had intended to bring the extracted villain home with me and take a hammer to it in recompense for the trouble it gave me, but having seen how little was left of it after the drilling, chiseling, splintering and shovelling, I concluded that revenge had already been exacted. So I'm left to chew a wad of cotton wool and dribble like a rabid animal for days. But at least my coffee won't bite back anymore...

...the sickest little pleasures keep me going in between pulling teeth.

January 4th -

Snow Patrol - Spitting Games

A night spent upright, spitting blood like vitriol into a Kleenex, trying to staunch the flow and trying to get some sleep. After a few fitful hours, dawn breaks and, despite a raging thirst, I choke on every sip of water, desperate not to start the bleeding again. My words, muted, clumsy and thick, threaten to tear the fragile skin. So I keep quiet.

By dusk, after a still, silent day I can swallow without fear and speak without bleeding: the tender pace of progress.

I struggle for the words and then give up

January 5th -

Radiohead - You Never Wash Up After Yourself

Today I took custody of my first dishwasher: the relief is enormous: no more wizened, dry Fairy Liquid fingers and no more piles of crockery where something more pressing has caught my attention.

After having sworn for years that the one household task I won't meddle with is the plumbing (well, OK I won't touch the electrics either; I'm scared I might cock it up and die), I am proud to announce that I have just plumbed in and installed the dishwasher. Not just the straightforward connecting to the water supply type plumbing either. This was the kind that involved poking about in B&Q with a scale drawing and a tape measure for the right pipes, connectors and attachments. An hour or so spent screwing, trimming, unscrewing and sealing, and I have an intricate looking set-up which empties all my household cleaning machines into the one drain, and... which doesn't leak!

I am impressed with this.

I am unimpressed that something as tedious as plumbing can prove to be the highlight of my day.

Yesterday's meal is hugging the plates...

January 6th -

Four Day Hombre - Jedi Blues

A distant memory, a glimpse of the future in a sound from years gone by. A sound at once familiar and comfortable, yet fresh as the winter air coursing through these streets. I am silenced. I am steadied. I listen.

I feel a jolt of recognition surge from within, and I fight the inevitable choke in my throat. This will stay close to me this year: a talisman, a reminder.

Something in me just inexplicably cannot let you go. Angel, why can't you see you'd be so much better off without me...

January 7th -

Easyworld - All I Can Remember

If only I could remember.

Something about sherbet fountains, about the feel of the fizz on my tongue maybe... All I know is it was important. In the half light I made a note to remember, but with the coming of the sun it had slipped my mind again.

This is all I can remember after all I had forgotten

January 8th -

De La Soul - The Magic Number

After thinking there was no risk of me getting involved with anything numerical, afar swearing I wouldn't and fighting all the predictable urges in someone so prone to fixing things, I confess I have finally succumbed to the lure of the Sudoku. I don't know how it happened, I will make no excuses, but I suspect a potent cocktail of boredom and curiosity was to blame. That, and the need to just see if I can, and then the need to not be beaten by anything, let alone a bloody silly little game.

And so here I am: conquering online puzzles and sniffing out the games page of the newspaper, casually discarding the previously beloved crossword (word puzzles are so passé). Only when I found myself seriously considering a bumper book stuffed full of them, fresh from the supermarket shelf, did I realise I have a problem. Therapy starts tomorrow with an avid and thorough read of the Oxford English and the shunning of all things numerical until this lunacy has passed me by.

Something that stimulates the music in my measure

January 9th -

Placebo - This Picture

It slipped from between crisp, empty pages: just an autumn leaf tumbling; a sycamore pirouetting; a feather in the breeze. I hadn't seen it for years, and yet somehow I knew it was nearby.

Sometimes it's faded, disintegrated

January 10th -

Christina Aguilera - Dirty

From the way I felt when I turned the stained pages, to the lewd and adolescent phrases he used to describe you. From the way we laughed and played around his intent, to the way I shuddered afterwards at what it was he really wanted from you. The way you somehow seemed too small for this world yet bold enough to joke along with us, unconcerned.

Whichever way you approach it, this is wrong.

Uh, oh, here we go...

January 11th -

Mother Hips - Sarah Bellum

He told it like it was your story, that desperate search for certainty. Every line like a leaf from your pages; an echo from the depths of your darkness. And I picture you there still - empty, uncertain, unaware. Will you have his fear? Will that pull you through? Will you recognise me afterwards?

If it's really you, you'll understand.

January 12th -

Athlete - Street Map

He was a fine example, as always. He had the patience and the conviction. And he waited. For as long as it took. He knew that, when the time eventually came, he would be counted among the chosen few. And that's the way it was. It's clearly not just me who loves him dearly.

One day, it's gonna happen...

January 13th -

Stevie Wonder - Superstition

I thought her words seemed strange. I almost questioned her, but stopped myself, knowing there was no room for more paranoia today. It was hours later when that afternoon voice on the radio enlightened me. And with that, many other things drifted delicately into place. Where is my head that I can't see round something as straightforward as the date?

... you believe in things that you don't understand...

January 14th -

Semisonic - Secret Smile

Judging by the cover, and I know you shouldn't, it's the kind of book I would have taken a chance on. But then I realised they'd told me the story scene by scene, line by line some weeks ago, on an evening when they were strangely animated by the TV adaptation. So unlike them to be drawn in to such a degree, and so unlike me to listen to any degree.

...you can save me from madness

January 15th -

R.E.M. - Perfect Circle

A carelessly placed coffee cup leaves the image of an eclipse burnt onto a crisp new page. Today is cyclic and slight; a shadow of its original intention.

...heaven assumed...

January 16th -

Fiona Apple - Sleep to Dream

I wake for the second time with a headache: dull, persistent, splitting through to my skull. I crack open my eyes with that inexplicable sense of dread welling inside me. A remnant of the dream? I dreamt of being helpless, of being far away, with a sick animal and people who didn't care. I want nothing more than to bury my leaden head and start again tomorrow. But I don't.

I got my own hell to raise.

January 17th -

James Blunt - Out of My Mind

According to an article in The Times last weekend I am abnormal. It appears our brain is programmed for self-deception. Prone to vanity, masking our inadequacies and inflating our ego, either as a protective mechanism or as a Darwinist relic of a bygone age, our brain, it seems, colours our world with optimism. Already I feel like a freak. I read on... I am told that such is the inherent vanity of the brain that we even consider the letters which appear in our names to be more attractive than those that don't. My fears are confirmed: I favour the spikier letters - K, L, M, and yet my name is littered with their rounder counterparts.

By the end of the passage I recognise myself (I acknowledge obstacles, I dwell on my failings, I blame myself...) as being in the category of people with a more balanced self-perception. But before I can breathe that sigh of relief I am told that these people, although more even-handed and realistic, are the clinically depressed.

Well, at least I'm in good company.

We all need a pantomime to remind us what is real.

January 18th -

Sarah McLachlan - Answer

Spotted today: enormous, and unexplained, sign on the side of a building in a tired seaside town: 'Do you...?'

This kind of thing intrigues me: Who put it there? Why there? What is the question? And what would my answer be?

Potential answers which cropped up during the course of my day:

- I'd love one, thanks.
- Not nearly enough.
- No, it's the first I've heard about it.
- That depends on what you're after.
- I haven't a clue; I've never been there.
- Only in the summertime.
- I can't, I've got something planned then

Although faced with a giant sign and an open-ended question, the answer would always be 'no.'

Cast me gently into morning, for the night has been unkind

January 19th -

Motion Picture Soundtrack - Everybody Wants to be Blonde

And the sky fell down again. With pieces gathering at my feet I couldn't see my way clear to a future of any kind. I'm sure tomorrow will be a day for thoughts and decisions, but today, resisting the seductive call of oblivion, I ran for cover to my one remaining conviction. And as I heard the might of the music take shape around me, it was all I needed to remind me why I started all this. Beneath the scorn and the bitterness there's a love for this thing, unmatched and unrivalled. I just need to find a new way to express it...

I want to feel...

January 20th -

The Clash - Should I Stay Or Should I Go?

And after a day of weighing up alternatives, I realise the decision really isn't that hard. What is difficult is having the conviction to stand by my decision.

If I go there will be trouble, and if I stay it will be double.

January 21st -

Rosie Thomas - I Play Music

For all those times you wished that you could get away with just doing this for evermore. For all those times when this has been the only thing to keep you here, to keep you going. For all those times when there is only one real answer, one way out, one true love. For all those times when music is all that matters. For all *those* times I have spent today bathing in the most beautiful songs and finding the light I need in a simple guitar and a perfect chord pattern.

My stubborn head will win through I know, but this time it is guided by my heart.

When I was young I did it my way, and I still do. Held my head up high...

January 22nd -

Elbow - Anyday Now

A feeling of calm descends. I barely recognise it; but for a burst of birdsong through the heavy afternoon sky it could have lain undetected amongst the smoky hedgerows of my garden. That sound, crisp...clear...bright..., heralds a new future. With an open heart and an open mind I open my arms to greet it... and step inside...

Got a lot of spare time. Some of my youth and all of my senses on overdrive.

January 23rd -

The Minus 5 - Dear Employer (The Reason I Quit)

I couldn't settle. That anxious gnawing at the pit of my stomach, eased by neither wine nor song. But then came the headline band; the powerhouse of my first love with a genius at the helm. And I just couldn't help but smile. There really is more to life, and it starts here

Please save the saintly words for saintly souls, 'cause I'll be long gone

January 24th -

Patty Griffin - Mary

The theme for the week is 'new'. And this was new for me; new yet so familiar, so 'old'. As always, I follow the trails, and find that those I love have been here before me: I'm on the right track. A song about having a strong, loving network behind you...

Everytime the snow drifts, everytime the sand shifts... she's always there

January 25th -

Belle and Sebastian - Funny Little Frog

On the benefits or otherwise of rhyming lyrics:

Don't. You can spoil a lovely little song with a crap rhyme, even if that wasn't your intention.

You are my girl, and you don't even know it, I am livin' out the life of a poet

I am the jester in the ancient court you're the funny little frog in my throat

**January 26th -
R.E.M. - Tongue**

It hurts. Since the tooth extraction I've found myself absent-mindedly chewing it, exploring the new contours of my mouth. It seems to force itself of its own accord into the gap, wedged between molars and squashed against sharp enamel. It is getting sore.

And then as further punishment today I burnt it on a slug of too hot coffee.

I want to tell you how much I hate this

**January 27th -
Feeder - Swim**

It feels like water here, as I push off from the edge and glide gloriously through the calm stillness. Melodies ripple around me; circles expanding into infinity, carrying their song outward into the ether. The chorus, the current, washes over me in a wave of elation. I could drown in this song, but I'm buoyed onward by its strength.

Footnote: wanting so much to step inside the song and be covered by it entirely, I finally blew up the speakers in my car. I am strangely pleased; it was either the speakers or my eardrums.

I lose myself

**January 28th -
Depeche Mode - Shame**

Today I have been sewing. All day. Small cotton pouches in black to protect the songs they made.

...stitch and stitch and stitch and stitch...

**January 29th -
Kraftwerk - Computer Love**

A day spent searching for a new religion, for a new deity to sit before each day. I don't understand the language it uses or the demands it makes of me, but I need to fill the void.

I don't know what to do

**January 30th -
Low - Step**

I tasked him with a drawing, as even I know where my limitations lie.

You are the chorus sweet thing

**January 31st -
Idlewild - Listen to What You've Got**

He tried to dissuade me and I'm not sure why. Perhaps he saw something in me I'd left abandoned years ago. I never noticed before how small his hands are. He clasps a coffee cup and talks of the future as I gaze past him at the man in the window behind.

You might as well be talking to yourself...

FEBRUARY:

**February 1st -
Oasis - She's Electric**

It's the way she spins phrases into silk that makes my words seem like cobwebs.

Time is the root of this: time to sit still, time to tuck ideas away safely for the day, time to note each thought instead of casting it adrift in the winds of my mind and hoping it finds its way home.

I need more time

February 2nd -

The Smiths - Frankly, Mr Shankly

We are nearing the end of this book. The story, for the most part, has been an entertaining read, a little thin on plot and some of the characters clearly need developing, but a fun diversion nevertheless. Now the pages are coming unstuck and the bindings are working loose.

Thankfully this life is a library, stuffed full of adventure, romance, thrills and introspection. Which book will you choose to read next?

*...this position I've held, it pays my way and it corrodes my soul
I want to leave, you will not miss me*

February 3rd -

Bauhaus - Kick in the Eye

On a day when we were sending happy thoughts; clear, light thoughts to keep her stable, something crawled unexpected from the darkness. Ranks of the undead watching in amazement, swearing ghostly allegiance to the man in the velvet cloak below.

She was nothing more to me than a name, a story... But when the sun goes in, I think of her always.

...every care is taken with my rejection...

February 4th -

David Gray - Please Forgive Me

Storm clouds gathered at noon and fear covered the sky: fear of loss... fear of reprisal... But the sun, like open hearts and open minds, always shines through. And by teatime, clarity was on the horizon again.

....If I act a little strange... I know not what I do

February 5th -

Jimmy Cliff - I Can See Clearly Now

Strange how something billed as a 'signal booster' can have been hampering the reception for such a long time. In despair we tugged at wires and jiggled cables until, quite by accident a perfect picture arrived. The signal booster lay redundant on the floor, and with relief, normal service was resumed. It feels like our eyes have been opened anew.

It's gonna be a bright, bright sunshiny day

February 6th -

Manic Street Preachers - Faster

I don't want to speed, but I do want to drive to the speed limit where conditions allow. Today I have been stuck behind the ignorant of Sussex who think driving at 40 miles an hour everywhere is acceptable, no matter what the speed limit - you are wrong and you are in my way.

I know I believe in nothing but it is my nothing.

February 7th -

Alex Lloyd - Everybody's Laughing.

I suggested it: contorted skin, distorted features and a camera flash. I laughed so hard I cried.

Sweet music in the back of my mind

February 8th -

John Farnham - You're the Voice

Tom Baker phoned me this evening to say he was very angry and would be coming round presently to sort me out. Apparently he also called my mother to say he would be home late and not to do too many potatoes.

Oh, the fun you can have with BT voicetext. Send a text message to a landline, and Tom rings up to deliver the message!

We're not gonna sit in silence

February 9th -

Martina McBride - Blessed

Count your blessings it says, there in black and white like there could be no argument. So I did: one, two, three...they were sat beside me, eyes wide, whiskers twitching approval.

To be here with the ones that love me, to love them so much it hurts

February 10th -

Bill Wyman - Je Suis Un Rock Star (Si Si)

Just because it made me smile, on a day when I was too tired to do much more.

Come away with me à la South of France

February 11th -

The Rolling Stones - Get Off of My Cloud

We are eleven. We are pointy, all of us: elfin features in all sizes. Do we migrate to those we identify with physically at such a base level? There are exceptions I know, but I will be looking more closely now...

Don't you people ever wanna go to bed?

February 12th -

The Beatles - A Day in the Life

I knew once I'd had that first fix I wouldn't be able to turn away. I knew my mind would race with expectation until I'd sated my thirst in full. I knew I would not be able to put this down. And I wasn't disappointed.

I just had to look

February 13th -

Dandy Warhols - We Used to Be Friends

So you think with a concerned tone and a few tentative questions you can put this right? You're wrong: you changed into someone I barely recognise and I have nothing left to say to you.

If ever again a greeting I send to you, short and sweet to the soul I intend

February 14th -

KLF - What Time is Love?

I didn't think I'd ever feel anything for them, until they played this. It was an inspired stroke of genius and I was compelled to listen. And in those four minutes my mind was irrevocably changed.

The final chapter -- prophetic, poetic

February 15th -

The Hollies - He Ain't Heavy (He's My Brother)

I watched him in the mirror: uncharacteristically small and seemingly delicate with my fragile shell around him. I love him dearly, and I'm not sure he knows.

The road is long with many a winding turn

February 16th -

Led Zeppelin - Thank You

The resonance of his echo swept past me again today. I steadied myself, and smiled...

If the sun refused to shine, I would still be loving you

February 17th -

Madonna - Sorry

A full turn of the year, and here we are with nothing but resentment and a hollow goodbye.

You're not half the man you think you are, save your words because you've gone too far

February 18th -

Placebo - Black Eyed

The air here is filled with chemicals and teenage games; I catch my breath. The man with the blackest eyes turns to leave, but the depth of the sound in this room keeps me anchored.

I was never loyal, except to my own pleasure zone

February 19th -

Eels - I Like Birds

A premature panic and a morning of online research. I concoct scenarios destined for downfall: by the coast here the risks seem so large. I will keep my loved ones close until the crisis passes.

Look at all the people like cows in a herd

February 20th -

Billy Joel - Piano Man

I ponder on the solitude of a man I passed today. His final journey, unmarked and alone, tracing paths through the quiet lanes where I imagine he chased as a boy. Loneliness is a hearse without flowers; no weeping, no witnesses, just a life-sized hole in the sodden ground to mark your passing.

They're sharing a drink they call loneliness, but it's better than drinkin' alone

February 21st -

Trash Can Sinatras - All the Dark Horses

It starts here, the saying goodbye. We'll shake a little harder when our backs are turned, but for now just smile, sip our coffee and forge futures from the little that is left.

New horizon: keep your eyes on those stars...

February 22nd -

Wilco - Promising

They promised her sunshine, but none came. She sat shivering on the hillside with tears falling into empty hands. Only a blanket of memories and a pocketful of stones. It wasn't enough.

Cross your fingers behind your back...

February 23rd -

Deana Carter - Angels Working Overtime

This is the last time I sit here at this hour, spine cracking in protest, filtering through the little that is left. I catch glimpses of the good times we had, and I read how we pulled together in the face of adversity. Exactly how it should be, although so far from how it should be.

But morning always comes around.

...counting down the days...

February 24th -

Jeff Buckley - Last Goodbye

I will walk away from those I love knowing I am bound to them now. I will turn away from those who brought us here with a deserved contempt. The future beckons now... I step inside.

...it's over.

February 25th -

Garbage - Stupid Girl

Right from the start I realise I was not made for this: the notions of possession, of giving up self. I am too much me to be part of we. And by the end I doubt if I even know what this means to them, but I want it all the same.

What drives you on can drive you mad... I don't believe in love...

February 26th -

Jet - Look What You've Done

Sometimes I love the drama; the nausea and the fatalistic imaginings. It serves to remind me that all this is cyclic. There will be a down to every up, and an up for every down, what burns is the wait in between.

...there's nothing there for you to prove

February 27th -

Pink Floyd - Dogs

Not one, but two: ambling with abandon through my garden, through my neighbour's garden, through his neighbour's garden. The cats leap for high places, the rabbits cower in corners, and me: I chase after them Benny Hill style to the doubtless amusement of anyone watching. They're not mine, they don't belong here and they smell appalling. Be warned: the hound pound will be getting a call if they show up again.

I gotta admit that I'm a little bit confused

February 28th -

Neil Young - Rockin' in the Free World

Because no matter how many times you hear it, it still sounds phenomenal.

Picking my way through leaf-strewn lanes in the rain, a different harmony for each chorus. Even winter can feel good with the right song.

We got a thousand points of light

MARCH:

March 1st -

All American Rejects - Move Along

For someone who has had so little time for such a long time, it's a travesty that I should waste an entire afternoon playing on the internet. But I have discovered the combined delights of iTunes and a media player phone. So after having had a mobile a caveman would find outdated (kindly provided by my erstwhile employer), I have been mesmerised by my new toy and have spent way too much time downloading tracks and organising them methodically: some things are not swayed by technological development.

Go ahead as you waste your days with thinking

March 2nd -

Natalie Imbruglia - Smoke

I'd been here so long I hadn't noticed. It was only when I left and then returned that it hit me. How can we breathe like this? I close the door and let the fire die down.

Hiding underneath the smoke in the room.

March 3rd -

Chemical Brothers - Galvanize

Time to speak the unspoken, to put right the wrongs that have happened here. In a shuffle of pages the truth is out. I close the door behind me.

Don't hold back, 'cause you woke up in the morning with initiative to move

March 4th -

Bob Dylan - Long Time Gone

After all these years we find each other immediately: 'You look the same', she said. On the outside, maybe... It's the same for her. We talk for hours and are both surprised at how easy we are together.

Remember me how you wish to...

March 5th -

Muse - Plug in Baby

My new god has arrived. Once I learn how, I can now sit and worship in every room in the house. Prayer is so much easier this way - when it comes with a wireless modem and a very large hard drive, it almost seems like anything is possible.

The underneath is no big surprise; now it's time for changing.

March 6th -

R.E.M. - Try Not To Breathe

I've always done it. It's the petrol fumes and the morbid fear that the hillside will collapse in on me as I journey beneath. Today is no different: music on, foot down, deep breath, drive.

I will hold my breath until all these shivers subside

**March 7th -
Phish - Waste**

For the first couple of hours I was thorough and methodical, carefully picking over the bones of the old regime. As the afternoon wore on my patience wore thin, and by nightfall I was just about ready to break something. Spitting vitriol, I threw the disc in the fire and watched vengeful as it withered before my eyes. I felt the storm abating with each curl of plastic smoke; another day down, I will try again tomorrow.

I don't know when to stop

**March 8th -
Longpigs - Jesus Christ**

It's not even funny, yet every time I think about it, even now, I can feel myself starting to shake. I'd have been on the floor in stitches if it hadn't been for the serious discussion which followed.

And I been laughing almost too hard

**March 9th -
Pearl Jam - Rearviewmirror**

Count them... and keep both hands on the wheel.

You smile as he passes, he does the same. Your mind wanders, your fingers drift. I make it five.

Saw things so much clearer...

**March 10th -
Flaming Lips - Waitin' for A Superman**

Just when I'd put the day to bed with a smile and allowed myself a brief bask in the glow of a job well done, some idiot spoils it all. You are new to this game, and I am well versed in the art of doing things properly. You'd do better to learn from the thousands before you than judge everyone by your own shallow standards. Your time will come, lady... it always does.

...lift the sun into the sky...

**March 11th -
Corinne Bailey Rae - Put Your Records On**

So, a dictator lies slumped in a prison cell, and the ones I love urge respect.

For all the steps we take towards tolerance and understanding, we remain routinely hampered by our innate selfishness. We appropriate another man's cause through a sense of social inclusion, yet one man's justice is another man's downfall. Once more, it's all about taking sides; good vs. evil; a playground battle fought out on a global stage.

And after all the thinking and postulating is done, I'd rather just bury my head in music. At least there I can be certain my beliefs are strong, my love secure, and my convictions unshakeable.

The more things seem to change, the more they stay the same...

**March 12th -
Rolling Stones - Jumpin' Jack Flash**

Catastrophe lies in the flick of a switch. But for a keen nose and a steady hand, we'd have been chasing dust through the thick night air.

...gas gas gas... !

March 13th -

Suede - Daddy's Speeding

I chase the sun from room to room; recreating springtime in a shifting square of light. Not for the first time I question his name, finding reason where there is none. Through a salt and pepper curtain I can make out an image of him burnt onto the screen, and yet I barely remember.

...And daddy burned a million eyes

March 14th -

David Bowie - Changes

It might be the clothes, bundled up as I am against the biting cold. But it might be these days are taking their toll. I concentrate: one foot, then the other; aligned and upright. I hear familiar promises rattling through my insides as I crawl home.

So the days float through my eyes, but still the days seem the same.

March 15th -

Steeleye Span - All Around My Hat

Intrigued, amused, and moreover bored, I thought I'd try it on for size: his favoured shape, new and tailor-made. Conclusions: itchy, scratchy, nasty. He hasn't got a clue.

...ask me the reason why I'm wearing it

March 16th -

The Strokes - Heart in a Cage

She spins a twirling, whirling dance around us, casting sleepy spells and smiles as she goes. Gasps catch in her skirttails as she passes, leaving us mesmerised and wanting for more.

...i'm stuck in a city, but i belong in a field

March 17th -

Arcade Fire - Rebellion (Lies)

From dusk to dawn, round and round, it weaves a merry dance through the day, and never fades. She sings along, changing the words to fit their situation. They yawn lazily and bury their noses for another few hours.

Sleeping is giving in, no matter what the time is.

March 18th -

Temposhark - It's Better to Have...

One of those times when you follow a trail, keep your eyes open, and catch a glimpse of something familiar along the way.

That music is both a daily voyage of discovery and a lifelong comfort will never cease to amaze me.

...I hope I have the option to rewind

March 19th -

Heavy Trash - Mr KIA

Style. These people have it in abundance; from the swirling skirts which kick as they dance, to the blunt fringes and skinny boots setting off their clothes with an arrogant ease. It's not my scene, it's not my thing, but I convince myself I'd feel more comfortable if I looked the part. I stand here plotting another reinvention.

... since I turned my heart off... I knew my brain would never be enough.

March 20th -

Pulp - Party Hard

And we did.

Before you enter the palace of wisdom you have to decide: are you ready to rock?

March 21st -

Lifehouse - Sick Cycle Carousel

Once the floodgates were open, there was no holding back. I lay for hours in pools of self-loathing and self-pity, unable to face the mirror, or the day ahead. Wine and a good time have a lot to answer for. But it was a good time: the police even said so the morning after!

...if shame had a face, I think it would kind of look like mine.

March 22nd -

Four Day Hombre - Single Room

Today's addiction: the Four Day Hombre album. Astonishingly good vocals, beautifully crafted tunes, and songs to lure the sun from the clouds. It was the first thing I played this morning and it set the tone for a productive, constructive day.

...get up, get up, get out of bed.

March 23rd -

Björk - Echo A Stain

Virgin cotton stained purple by wine, plunged into water, captured.

Chemicals push the stain outwards; a perfect circle to replace a solid shape.

Once again water to lift out the stain, and air for the fabric to breathe.

What remains is only the echo of a stain, silent and white, in the memory of the material alone.

...say nothing, free falling, complete.

March 24th -

Tom McRae - You Cut Her Hair

I play the game like I almost know the rules: I discuss my holiday plans and what I did at the weekend with perfect strangers, smiling over the coffee and the girlie magazines. I marvel at the array of lotions and potions, and at the selections of combs and brushes; she negotiates them all with ease. I show her the picture and sit back, fingers crossed behind my back. The result is a new look for a new chapter: at the cutting edge indeed!

Turn the page, start again.

March 25th -

Manic Street Preachers - Motorcycle Emptiness

He came through the rain, bright eyed and full of adventure. His hands turned blue and he could barely speak for shivering. So we warmed him at the fire, found him dry clothes to wear and sent him back with a warm wish and a prayer.

...this wonderful world of purchase power

March 26th -

Counting Crows - Round Here

He looked so small, stood at the door, tears blurred with rain. And although I don't understand, I hold him close, as if a soft touch could brush aside the clouds. There is a time for wisdoms and lessons and life. That time is not now.

...in the air between the rain, through myself and back again.

March 27th -

Iron and Wine (with Calexico) - Dead Man's Will

She shows me beautiful things. We walk by the water and dream about the paths we chose. We laugh and we listen, and this stops me in my tracks.

... May my love reach you all; I lost it in myself and buried it too long

March 28th -

Keith Urban - Days Go By

Strange to see her home from the inside. Strange to sleep in his bed all these years on. Strange to drive these streets without you. Strange to breathe in, contented, at last.

... We think about tomorrow then it slips away

March 29th -

The Levellers - The Boatman

From the moment we pass through the gates I am captivated. The smell of cut grass and engine grease draws me onward, past the ducks nesting on the deck of the barge, past the lame goose waiting for supper to be served, past the sprawling ivy and the rustic walls. They seem so whole here, part of the scene, amongst friends. This is exactly how I'd like it to be.

We push out downstream, picking out wildlife along the banks, listening to the whispering breeze in the reeds. We wend and wind and wander with the ebb of the tide, feeling part of this land, tied to it somehow. We stop to walk through bracken, and collect feathers and catkins to show the others when we return. We watch a flock of swans flying low over the treeline, heading inland to roost. We make our way back to the mooring as the sun dips low over the fields, dancing with grace across the water in our wake. This feels like forever.

My only law is the river breeze

March 30th -

Lamb - Little Things

She is so small. Laying in my arms, laying in his. But she is not for me; she is not mine.

He is so small. He watches in wonder as spirals dance across the screen. He waits for my return with wide-eyed love, and is by my side always. He is for me, he is mine.

...we're so busy hustling bustling chasing faraway dreams, we forget the little things

March 31st -

Rolf Harris - Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport

We were there for two hours, and it just kept going. Round and round endlessly. He thought it sounded like The Doors, but it was clearly Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport played on a sitar.

The stuff of nightmares!

... altogether now!

APRIL:

April 1st -

Status Quo - Down Down

I had been warned several times so it shouldn't have come as a great surprise. It wasn't so much the jumpy moments, or the disintegrating group dynamics, or even the mutant albino cannibals. Just that age old fear of being deep underground. Now *that* is the stuff of nightmares.

... I have all the ways you see to keep you guessing

April 2nd -

Hands - Jewel

I dreamt of frostbite; itching, scratching and broken. Fingers swollen, weeping and sore. And at dawn it wasn't all a dream.

... I am never broken

April 3rd -

Slave to the Wage - Placebo

She told me it would be a carousel, but it felt more like the ghost train. And even the ice cream at the end of the ride had melted before we got there.

... it's a maze for rats to try

April 4th -

Gravenhurst - Fog Around the Figurehead

A flash of silver across a darkening sky, a shady tree in the height of summer, a driftwood token of remembrance of the ebbing tide. This is a small moment of wonder in a familiar world.

... you'll find yourself painting your windows so you don't have to look at what's hammering outside your door

April 5th -

Natalie Merchant - Wonder

I always forget the date. I always plan to find out and then to remember, but I forgot to do both. Second, third... I'll wait.

... With love, with patience and with faith, she'll make her way

April 6th -

Daniel Powter - Lie to Me

It appears I'm beginning to enjoy the taste of hat.

... It all depends on you where would you rather be.

April 7th -

Neil Halstead - Hi-Lo and Inbetween

I know what she means; that sick feeling of dread when you're not in control. I went from euphoric to the edge in a matter of minutes, and all because of control.

... cut the ties and try to reach the moon

April 8th -

R.E.M. - Fall On Me

My heart flips into panic. He brings a feather... there are more, many more, in the grass. Is this a warning shot? I criticise those who wait for the State, like lambs to the slaughter, but right now I'd like for someone who cares to lead the way. All the reading and the platitudes just make it worse. All I can do is hold him and rain tears down into his fur, helpless.

... feathers hit the ground before their weight can leave the air.

April 9th -

Hard Fi - Living for the Weekend

Sleeping late, Sunday dread, bed by eleven. So this is what it's all about now.

... I've been working all week I'm tired

April 10th -

Eels - Climbing to the Moon

Does she know that when I look westwards I'm looking for you and not her? Does she know when I look to the sky it's you that blows past on the clouds? Will she understand that dreams have a mind of their own?

Got a sky that looks like heaven...

April 11th -

Placebo - Follow the Cops Back Home

You look like him, cigarette in hand, praying upwards to the gods below. It wasn't supposed to be this way, but most things seldom are.

...drum machines and landslides.

April 12th -

Elbow - Powder Blue

So you sit there, doe-eyed, lithe and sky high, the keeper of my secret. From between the black that surrounds you, you bring light.

... In despair or incoherent, nothing in between.

April 13th -

Pearl Jam - Daughter

I don't know where they've taken her. The time was right for her to be mine, and now I've lost her altogether. She's the loser in their game, whichever way you look at it. And we all had such high hopes for their dream.

Young girl, violence, centre of her own attention.

April 14th -

Counting Crows - Goodnight Elizabeth

I drift for hours, perfecting new ways to keep your face before me. In the half light you come to me with ease, but by dawn the edges have blurred once more.

I wish you were inside of me, I hope that you're OK.

April 15th -

Indigo Girls - Closer to Fine

The comfort of a home other than mine, the calm of being amongst allies, the dawning truth that to accept is not necessarily to give in. This is a day without edges, outside of time. We create our own landscapes here.

Darkness has a hunger that's insatiable and lightness has a call that's hard to hear.

April 16th -

Placebo - Infra-red

The passing of another year marked; one more notch on the bedpost of inadequacy. The usual pledges to make more, be more, do more... More sits well within me, but reconciling more and my control over more is less straightforward. So I file away another year, and move on...

An unhappy Birthday...

April 17th -

R.E.M. - Cuyahoga

I walk the length of this town, from end to end, following the lines of sea and sky. Images lay unbidden, to be sought out by the snap of the lens. Sunblind and smiling, I carry my quarry home.

...this is where we walked...take a picture here...

April 18th -

Electric Soft Parade - Silent to the Dark

Creeping out blinded, blinking with the strength of the sun, surprised that such a day could have happened behind our backs. We stand and blow smoke to the sky, biding our time, praying for rain, if only to justify being indoors.

...small talk it gets you nowhere, choose between a curtain or a star.

April 19th -

Delays - Valentine

Ignore what you know, file the previous world away, somewhere under 'something else'. As the background to our stuttering, stumbling attempts to understand each other, it works well.

...I thought I'd have you by now, but sentiment got in the way, dear.

April 20th -

R.E.M. - King of Birds

We started at the same time, both bleary eyed in the morning light. When the road finally widened I picked up speed, getting closer all the time. I saw his approach, steady and determined, wide of wing.

He crossed fields and trees before he met me, soaring over the field animals below, heading for home, and sleep. Did he marvel at the view for the last time? Did he even see me there, see me shout a warning?

I wipe away tears and feathers and hope it was as he'd planned.

...everybody hit the ground.

April 21st -

Primal Scream - Country Girl

It's just a great song: incendiary riff, blistering vocals and a mandolin solo!

We've been playing it daily, just to get our fix. Today however I'll need to hear it a few times more, mainly to exorcise the ghosts of an evening spent listening to dull, formulaic blues. How someone can make an entire set out of one rhythm is beyond me.

...stay out drinking 'til the morning comes.

April 22nd -

Easyworld - Lights Out

It's one of those things you ignore because you assume you have several already. But when it comes to needing it, you can never find one.

In its absence, I lit candles, gathered my family and watched for signs in the street. None came. Sirens buzzed past, fuelling the fire, but still nothing there but the night. As the minutes turned to hours they fell asleep around me. Armed with a book and a fast fading battery, I watched, and waited.

...For once in my life I think we're getting somewhere...

April 23rd -

Calexico - The Crystal Frontier

All upside down: the first last, and the last together. A visitor from warmer climes, static from the waist up, taps and bellows to a rapturous welcome. I watch in wonder as firecrackers leap in slow motion across the canvas, spitting light forward in jumps. And I'm almost thankful I didn't get what I came for: I wasn't ready to have my heart ripped apart in the London rain.

...that smile on her face is starting to crack.

April 24th -

Camera Obscura - Lloyd, I'm Ready to be Heartbroken

It just didn't add up - an unlikely meeting of likeminded minds around a sticky table at the end of a grey day in a dull seaside town.

We drank in the talk of intellectual property and algorithms in our own way - he with wide-eyed paranoia and me with characteristic regret. We are starting to realise how far from reconciling the contradictory parts of ourselves we really are.

...I've got my life of complication here to sort out...

April 25th

Dave Matthews Band - Too Much

How very me: stuffed stupid, half cut and still wanting more.

I have no self control and even less will power. Self-loathing is a specialty.

... I eat too much, I drink too much, I want too much

April 26th -

The Specials - Ghost Town

Twenty years. A lost and abandoned town, nature seeping in through the cracks. Silhouettes of missing children stencilled on the walls. Possessions left behind in a swathe of secrets and lies. A Pompeii of today, yet made by our hand.

Government leaving the youth on the shelf...

April 27th -

The Coral - Dreaming of You

Stop. Breathe. Deeper.

Dawn coming, fast through the sky.

Soft skin on skin, waits, spikes.

Head in hands. Still.

...What's up with my heart when it skips a beat?

April 28th -

Guns 'n' Roses - Sweet Child o' Mine

Chris Evans. I generally dislike you for being a noisy, abrasive blot on the Radio 2 landscape, apparently breathing life and laughter into places where there was plenty already. I dislike your silly banter with your sillier friends and your on-air inane games which do little other than make us wish there was an adult alternative to Radio 2.

But today you surpassed yourself. Now I completely fucking loathe you. Talking over the intro to Sweet Child o' Mine is NOT an option, even for you. Some things are pure genius and should be treated as such. Now shut the fuck up! What frequency is Radio 4?

...as fresh as the bright blue sky

April 29th -

Rolling Stones - Brown Sugar

Wisps of white drift by overhead. I shiver in turn, coated in sweet vanity, full of good intention.

...how come you taste so good?

April 30th -

Travis - Flowers in the Window

Plans dashed. What better way to salvage the day than succumb to routine. Sundays are planting, watering, tending, teasing life into spoiled soil. The carrots are starting to poke through, the strawberries are putting out feelers, reaching for the sun, the fruit trees are heavy with blossom. Spring is late, but the signs are staring to show. Maybe summer will be soon...

...plant new seeds and watch them grow

MAY:

May 1st -

Eurythmics - You Have Placed a Chill in My Heart

cold

down wind through draft sea breeze cold

skin shake bone shiver spine snap cold

sun bright warm light melts hearts not mine

shake shiver snap

cold

...I'll be the figure of your disgrace

May 2nd

Make Your Own Kind of Music - Mama Cass Elliot

Watching, waiting, killing time. Months go by with nothing, but then...

I never lost the faith, I never let it slide. And this evening I was nothing but excited all over again.

...the loneliest kind of lonely

May 3rd

The Upper Room - Black and White

I can deny it no longer, infectious and sublime. Song firmly under the skin, I will take it with me through the day. As I pass through these places touched by the sun, I think of you back in the darkness. And the melody lingers on...

...I'll miss you in a minute if you'll only feel the same.

May 4th -

Muse – Time is Running Out

While you were sleeping and I was dreaming, we reached a milestone.

At two minutes past three (and one second) this morning, the UK encountered 01:02:03 04-05-06.

I meant to wake and watch in wonder as the clock ticked over, but I had more pressing, and admittedly more frivolous, things on my mind.

Whether a leafy lane or a twelve lane highway, the passage of time is inevitable, irrepressible.

But whether we watch from the sidelines or take an active part, is the only decision left up to us.

...you're something beautiful, a contradiction. I wanna play the game, I want the friction

May 5th -

R.E.M. - So Fast, So Numb

Sorrow and sadness slide between the stones, taking reason away with the tide.

Tears become brine and blur on the wind.

All that's left is regret, and a long ride home.

You're movin' through rough waters...

May 6th -

Fruit Bats - Slipping Through the Sensors

It rained. I kept walking. Soaked to the core and sorry. I lost my hat; abandoned in the haste of retreat and regret. Focusing on brighter days, I ask questions. The beautiful people, dry and intact, eye me with suspicion and distaste. And who can blame them. Today I am a shadow.

...Maid of the mist in the abyss

May 7th -

Radiohead - Black Star

I am a shell, a fragment, washed up here until I crumble away. The sun warms my skin, but my spirit is cold, swallowed by the patterns I can't help but repeat. She shows me the shape I make, blotted onto brown paper. The words blur, the image unclear. Is that me? The source of such beauty? And while the urge to reclaim comes slowly, I'm so far back I can't see where to start. Maybe tomorrow I will read her words again, and understand.

...what am i coming to? I'm gonna melt down.

May 8th -

Bruce Springsteen - My City of Ruins

Unbelievable. Out of the blue comes an offer I could not refuse. And so I find myself in this place of soul and song, watching someone else's hero hold a crowd of thousands in absolute silence.

My breath caught in the fiddle strings, I take a step back, put things into perspective,

and emerge brighter, lighter... Never have I experienced anything like this before. Unbelievable.

...you took my heart when you left

May 9th -

Christy Moore - Motherland

Coincidences fell around our feet with disarming regularity. That we should be here at all is a strange, strange thing. But such proactive discussion leaves me empowered, so let's see how far we can run with this.

[A beautiful version of a beautiful song, original by Natalie Merchant, this

song has been with me through the night. It is most welcome to linger longer.]

...close my eyes, lullaby me to sleep. Keep me safe, lie with me, stay beside me don't go.

May 10th -

U2 - I Will Follow

It looked all wrong. And for the most part it sounded all wrong, apart from the soaring Rickenbackers. It was cleverly done, don't get me wrong - well constructed songs oozing contemporary cool, and catchy as you like. I would usually have kicked back at the inclusion of a cover, but even that didn't rile me. Despite things being not quite right, it would seem they were not quite wrong either.

...you said you needed me, I was looking at myself...

May 11th -

Gene – Where Are They Now?

Uncomfortable with his own honesty, he told of whiskey soaked regret. I know the stories, but told in his words they are bleaker than before. And as a song from a thousand years ago takes on a new hue, I blink in the sunlight, desperate to take his hand.

i know your sort but i just can't ignore you...

May 12th -

The Feeling - Fill My Little World

Inching through the day, abandoned by the telephone because you're the last one through the door. The sun has thrown in the towel by the time you make it outside, so you sit and shiver in the shadows, nursing coffee and vengeance. Later you will wish you'd been more assertive, as the jug of cocktails gets passed around again. In the social playground that is anonymity, you can be whoever you want to be, but the hangover in the morning will always reveal your true colours.

Show some love, you ain't so tough

May 13th -

Josh Rouse - Sad Eyes

I find them in a haze of smoke and sunshine, peering into the ashtray for answers, feet in the garden, head in the sky. I raise a smile at their slow progress, but chide them for their complacency all the same. Wrong of me to impose my sense of urgency on them, I know, but I see so much more than they do.

...so young, and so bored.

May 14th -

Lemonheads - I Am A Rabbit

Just the one; struggling and pale, but definitely there.

One survivor, and we sewed hundreds. Conditions are obviously not ideal here. We gather round, suggesting ways to keep it safe. I hope he appreciates this most precious of meals.

I'd like to share my carrot, with you

May 15th -

Dave Matthews - Gravedigger

Thankfully I am sitting down, because my knees are weak and I don't trust them to hold me upright tonight. Two songs in and the lights go off inside me: nine more and I could die right here. The oblivious crowd murmurs on, calling for favourites, when if they were only silent for a few minutes they'd understand that magic and wonder cannot be requested at any volume. Blinkered to their noise I focus forward. Some devil is this indeed who coaxes my tears with his song. Forget the nine more, I am ready to leave...

...so that I can feel the rain

May 16th -

Bush – Little Things

Accuracy is not to be sniffed at. Pedant I may be, but you can't just glide over such falsehoods as 'Damien Rice: the guy from Blur'. But I bit my tongue and saved the correction for later. He has enough to be concerned about right now, without me adding shame and embarrassment to the mix.

...loaded on wrong and further from right

May 17th -

The Automatic - Monster

Just a straightforward case of 'wow, this is fantastic!' I heard it once and was hooked. An old-school addiction in the making...

... *what's that coming over the hill, is it a monster?*

May 18th -

Gomez - Girlshapedlovedrug

Steady yourselves: Gomez in 'fabulous new album' shocker. I must have asked several times 'is this still Gomez?' It sounds like three or four records in one, each track bright and vibrant. And an addictive first single to boot. (Divine Comedy meets Travis...?)

... *She spends her days in a violent rage*

May 19th -

Scott Matthews - Elusive

A chance discovery. One that became apparent from the first few bars that I had stumbled onto a shard of something precious. Fragile, tear-stained vocals with the barest of accompaniment. A beautiful thing indeed. This year's Jose Gonzales: you heard it here first. Claim it as your own now, before the advertising execs get hold of it...

... *the coldest hands you're ever held.*

May 20th -

Longpigs - Lost Myself

And they question my desire to be a nicer person... It would seem the sum of my parts is little more than a pretty face and an acerbic tongue.

... *I have always found it easier to skirt around it.*

May 21st -

Morrissey - Everyday is Like Sunday

With a jar of special tricks under my arm, I take the scenic route home. Surf licking my shoes and sand in the wind, the beach is the bleakest, loveliest place today. I pull my hat down further and head for home.

... *trudging slowly over wet sand...*

May 22nd -

The Perishers - Weekends

It seems such a long way off when the morning is grey and the wind threatens to rip the sky apart at its fragile seams. Caffeine and reluctant optimism see me through...

*You look tired. Would it help to hear me say
Don't you worry, Friday's not that far away?*

May 23rd -

Marilyn Manson - Fight Song

It wasn't what I expected, although I'm not quite sure what that was. But it made me think, and that kind of stimulus is most welcome these days. 'Risking everything for a dream nobody can see but you.'

Nothing suffocates you more than the passion of everyday human events

May 24th -

Manic Street Preachers - This is Yesterday

Back to back: I could sneak him away in my pocket,
were it not for the too-eager crowds steaming slowly from the damp chill outside.
When he sings he shoots bolts through the night, piercing the fog and the rain
with shards of silver. He offers us one trinket from years before, a sacrifice:
I carry her heart inside me at moments like these. She holds his spirit close.
I smile to the sky for both of them.

...listen to what I can keep silent

May 25th -

Snow Patrol feat. Martha Wainwright – Set the Fire to the Third Bar

Simply beautiful. Bleak and grey like the day around me, full of futile hope.

I'm miles from where you are...

May 26th -

Tom McRae - You Only Disappear

If yesterday was for you, then tomorrow is all her's. Past my reflection, through wood and steel,
under a curtain of colours; you'll find him there, hidden from those who need him now more than
ever. I think of her with every line he sings, wishing she could live by the rules of his song. I am
moved to tears at every turn, but each one that falls is for her.

Baby, I'll call up a storm, keep you safe from harm

May 27th -

Radiohead - No Surprises

Just keep still, keep quiet.
Don't shake the air in this space around me.
Dark, calm, steady.
The humming in my head does not like interruptions.

No alarms and no surprises please.

May 28th -

The Levellers - Just the One

Mob-handed we tear through the narrow streets, one in every pub, and there are many of those.
The last of its kind, there are moments of looking backwards, but we are mainly just looking for
the next drink.

Make mine a short, I'm getting there, but where there is I couldn't care

May 29th -

Paul McCartney - We All Stand Together (The Frog Chorus)

Flash of silver above the dew. Blink awake and leap before the blades reach the grass.
There is water on the other side, and safety.

Side by side, hand in hand

May 30th -

Tori Amos - Waitress

Fists balling of their own accord whenever you are close.
I can't help this reaction; your face just invites violence.

I can't believe this violence in mind

May 31st -

Longpigs - All Hype

I wouldn't say I was beginning to like him, but Chris Evans was becoming less nauseating. That is until he claimed that Richard Hawley was the lead singer with the Longpigs. It's the blatant incompetence I can't bear; spewing erroneous information across the airwaves. Crispin Hunt is the name you want, Evans. Twat.

I still don't get the joke but nevermind

JUNE:

June 1st -

Keane – Is It Any Wonder

Love is all around, it fills this holy place, pious and stifling. Inside I'm singing from a different hymn sheet, reading a different prayer, celebrating for a different reason. I was not made for this, no matter how much I might desire it. For a start, the devil does have all the best tunes.

Love is just a lyric in a children's rhyme

June 2nd -

The Isley Brothers - Summer Breeze

I offer my skin to the god of the sun, burning bright in the blue sky above. I will lie here in green, beneath the birdsong and blossoms, until my bones are warm again. Let this be the end of the darkness; I have shivered long enough.

In the evening on a Friday night, a little light shining through the window...

June 3rd -

Mother Hips - Emotional Gold

You are a hockey player, a comedian, a doctor of some kind (I suspect not medical). You are concerned with traffic and Tesco and saving goals. I can spot you among the red herrings and wild geese grazing these pages. You are everywhere, and nowhere; you are inside me and out. You are my definition of hope, of belief, of forever.

The gold is in the ground but we're not digging

June 4th -

Nelly Furtado – Maneater

A bullish slice of confidence infused with the fine aroma of a girl in charge. I could do with a few lessons at the Ms Furtado school of tenacity.

...when she asks for something she means it

June 5th -

Jeff Buckley - Hallelujah

Horrifyingly naïve and brainwashed beyond recognition, but at the same time eloquent, argumentative and well placed to unleash their evil on a nation of idiots: this is a terrifying combination. They live a caged existence, serving only to uphold the tenets of yesterday's society. They are a tool, and they don't see it. They say they, feel, they know, they believe, but the reason for their deception is in the cadence: music is what is firing their soul, no higher power. But then, there is no higher power. I foresee a future of conflict, moreso than now, when those who think for themselves and who recognise the danger have a voice loud enough to be heard. But for now, I am aghast; grateful only that they are an ocean away.

The minor fall and the major lift, the baffled king composing hallelujah

June 6th -

Elbow – I've Got Your Number

Significant it may have been, but nothing much happened. Some were in fear, and some were inviting it in. I was the latter, but still nothing much happened. I live in hope.

Grow a fucking heart, love.

June 7th -

R.E.M. - Hairshirt

Perfect pauses in all the right places, shivers running down my spine despite the sun... like a favourite jumper, a trinket, a charm; this is all the love I need today.

And an afterthought: if god looks like Audrey Tautou then I *am* a believer!

I could walk into this room and the waves of conversation are enough

June 8th -

Muse – Supermassive Black Hole

He brings a small bag of the craziest noise; I am allowed to take it home. I can barely contain my delight. I spend the night in a whirl of brass and beats, echoes of Bohemian Rhapsody, hints of Mexico in a thunderstorm; I'm not sure whether I'm looking forward or back, I am turned upside down by the scale of this, and also a little scared.

...queen of the superficial...

June 9th -

Young Heart Attack - Starlite

We stumble across it lying low, shrouded in code. We wake it from its sleep, and are pinned to the wall by the ferocity of its attack. Its roar is astounding. We sing along, so thankful for Friday.

Got a song for you, it's on my stereo

June 10th -

Baddiel, Skinner & the Lightning Seeds - Three Lions

For a month they will talk of little else, so in the spirit of 'if you can't beat 'em, join 'em'

I am being enthusiastic in all the right places. And I'm actually enjoying it. I draw the line at flags.

...songs in the street...

June 11th -

Kristin Hersh – Clay Feet

Brittle skin, ripped and torn, eyes turn to liquid under a burning sky.

But the view is spectacular and the sea is a sparkling jewel at the edge of the world, welcoming tired toes at the end of the day.

Walking out the long way

June 12th -

ELO – Mr Blue Sky

there from the first clang of the alarm

there as I surf over the marshes

there while I bury my head in the toil of the day

there when I breathe fire into the sky

there as I lay amongst the scent and the green

there when I twist the blinds closed as the sun heads home

Sun is shinin' in the sky, there ain't a cloud in sight...

June 13th -

Autamata – Out of This

She blinds me; leaves me clutching at my eloquence like straws. As I fight to see my way forward, she rains heaven upon my eyes. She states the obvious with a new and dangerous slant, and I'm tied in knots by the complexity of her simplicity. She is what delivers me from this chaos.

*From the cradle, to the bottle, to the needle, to the bed
We all need something to deliver us from dread*

June 14th -

Neil Young – The Needle and the Damage Done

pain pigeon, pane pigeon: peering past puddles, pensive, patient...
rain pigeon, again pigeon: counting one, two, three and on...
inane pigeon, insane pigeon: glassy, glossy, dripping and dry...
think pigeon, thank pigeon: focus and fly.

A little part of it in everyone

June 15th -

Elliott Smith – Angeles

She is quiet: a whisper, and we are so loud in her aura. I don't notice if her laugh is quiet too. We adjust, as we always manage to do. We are the three sides of my new triangle: strong, quiet, eternal. And then a journey through cheers and chants and jeers. I am startled by one with a bloodied shirt; he is too close to their home, and they are too precious to be subjected to this kind of madness.

So glad to meet you

June 16th -

Eminem - Lose Yourself

It occurs to me this is the sequel to Mercury, addressing a different part of me. Put the two together and you have a large part of me mapped. But what a strange landscape.

So here I go is my shot: feet fail me not...

June 17th -

Procol Harem - Whiter Shade of Pale

Placing the next hour in someone else's hands, I pray for anything but orange.

...although my eyes were open, they might just as well have been closed.

June 18th -

Kinks - Sunny Afternoon

Apart from the slugs and the dogs and the other garden invaders, apart from the equipment malfunction and the slow slow burning of things not made to burn, apart from the shadows over tomorrow and the apologies over yesterday... Apart from these things, it is a perfect summer Sunday.

In the summertime...

June 19th -

Pete Murray - Feeler

He said there would be many, and he wasn't wrong. This was just the first of the many, but it's a great place to start.

You got inside my head today, I felt you.

June 20th -

Ryan Adams - Meadowlake Street

You'll ask, but it's a secret; buried deep in the weave, deep in the skin.

You'll talk but it's merely words thrown onto the breeze, drifting away...

You'll dream, but always without conviction, always asleep.

You'll turn away one day, some day, soon.

...If loving you's a dream that's not worth having

Then why do I dream of you?

June 21st -

The Cure - Pictures of You

Picture this... and it'll come on stronger. File it under denial and it'll fade.

Months pass and the picture is as clear as always, not dulled by daylight or despair.

Shining through sleep, with an eternal smile.

...hold for the last time then slip away quietly

June 22nd -

James Iha - Beauty

Through a haze of exhaustion I catch a familiar refrain. I gaze out at futures so real inside they could be outside too. A new furry friend tracks across my daydream, pulling me back to the task at hand. Sometimes, and only sometimes, the real world is more beautiful than the one in my head.

do you see beauty, do you see love, do you see anything at all?

June 23rd -

Sarah McLachlan - Buiding a Mystery

The trail starts here: with desire, with love, with an outpouring of suitable songs. I share songs with a selected few, over the years the few become many, and the many form a chain from east to west, north to south, bridging nations and stereotypes, telling their own stories of me and my moments. Follow the trail and you will see a pattern, read a history of me, trace my progress through life and love. The songs change with the years and the focus changes with mine.

But everytime my heart flutters this way I know how I will respond: with another link in the chain.

...you're a beautiful fucked-up man

June 24th -

Jay Z - Big Pimpin'

Out of chaos they bring the possibility of order. I am grateful and helpful and I love him dearly.

It wasn't always this way; I didn't used to like him much at all. But these days,

as he sleeps beside me and entrusts his monster wheels to my care, I realise there's more to this than they could ever have hoped for.

...get yo ass in and let's riiiiide...

June 25th -

Supergrass - Grace

Sunday's are lazy by nature. They are best helped along with a song and a smile. This works perfectly today. I defy you not to sing along.

...you sang your songs and you made us laugh

June 26th -

Van Halen - Jump

Frogs. Hundreds, no, thousands of frogs. The grass is alive with them, teeming through the trees, across the paths and onwards to water somewhere. These little leapers are so tiny, yet, en masse as they are, they make the girls squeal and shriek as only girls do. We tread carefully, eyes glued to the floor, alert to the dangers of birds and boots. I watch them through the day, the exodus over by nightfall. I wonder how many made it.

I get up, and nothing gets me down.

June 27th -

Tori Amos - Bells For Her

He hasn't said as much. It's a guess. But one I've been contemplating all day. I could be envious or horrified, wistful or relieved. When I decide which, I may even act on it.

Can't stop what's coming, can't stop what is on its way

June 28th -

Goo Goo Dolls - Name

Thank you for teasing his name back into the light, for making it a concrete concept again, part of someone else's reality. And thank you for being there from the start, for making moves as you did back then to still the storm rising up around me. Thank you for your hand in my story.

I think about you all the time...

June 29th -

Dave Matthews Band - The Space Between

Months, maybe a year. And the tears and the smiles and the turning, twirling heart came like the freshest rain: immediate; unrelenting; unapologetic. From the very start to the fading echo of his last breath this is perfect. It just doesn't get any better.

...I've got all the time for you love

June 30th -

Doves - The Cedar Room

There was no outward sign of anxiety, just a sunshine smile and the usual caustic wit. Age is simply another label, as irrelevant as the next. We break another barrier down and move on...

Stars leave the morning, sleep clouds my view

JULY:

July 1st -

Mother Hips - Mother Hips

There are clues everywhere: from the glare of the sunspot dancing across my rearview mirror, to the fortuitous turn of the music; one song to the next. I see them, I read them, and I believe.

...carrying your black bound book beyond the world of thrill

July 2nd -

The Pipettes - Pull Shapes

All 50s flicks and polka dots, this is so not me, but so very good I can't help but be hooked immediately. A genre-inspiring, genre-defining song, if ever I heard one, shot through with the effervescent sheen of summer. If Spector heralded the golden age of pop, we are about to embrace its renaissance. Hold tight!

...dance with me, pretty boy, tonight...

July 3rd -

Aberfeldy - Uptight

Searing heat seeps up through the concrete, melting footprints into the rubber soles of our shoes as we inch forward. Such a stifling day, and foremost this morning is Johnnie Walker emailing Scunthorpe. So out of sorts, and so funny.

...nobody owns me no matter what they say...

July 4th -

Billy Idol - Hot in the City

If heat is a beast, it moves with stealth through these streets, screaming silently on each corner and watching its prey wilt in defeat. We are saved by a downpour, sudden and slight. We climb to the roof and watch as lightning snakes across the spires, snapping around buildings we know by name yet know little about. This city and I are typically ambivalent toward each other, yet today even I will marvel at the majesty of the place.

I'm a ribbon in the heat now

July 5th -

The All Seeing I - The First Man in Space

Brilliant, brilliant riff. So simple, so straightforward, so infectious, so good.

On a completely separate note - something you take for granted as a child, but which becomes an absolute luxury in adulthood: buying oneself an ice-cream.

...it was rough but i kept it together...

July 6th -

Depeche Mode - Walking in My Shoes

Some days: nothing. And other days, days like today, there is a whole collection of somethings waiting to humour or hinder. Things like broken shoes in a downpour in the middle of the city, like a crazy dog being chased up the garden path by an indignant cat, like a handwritten menu from the new owners of the Chinese. Had I been any less tired or less inspired by the pace of the day, I would have been howling by now.

Morality would frown upon ...the scapegoat fate's made of me

July 7th -

Midlake - Balloon Maker

The perfect way to end an exhausting week, tarnished only by the pending closure of one of the most lovely venues in the South. The joy and fervour of the Hanbury Ballroom lives on in the soaring, glorious melody of all who've played there; epitomised, for me, by the elegant triumph of Midlake. Simply beautiful.

Come out to see the sun, you're all we've got.

July 8th -

Moist - Silver

Wakened from a sunbright slumber by a flurry of furry feet, flying through the hedge behind me, claws tearing through my skin, sights fixed firmly on the unwitting feathered prey ahead. Whether he was more concerned that his quarry had escaped or that he'd shredded my hand is uncertain.
Skin ripped and torn...

July 9th -

Bruce Springsteen - Local Hero

From hero to zero in seconds, respect fading with a nation's cheers.

Well I learned my job, I learned it well: fit myself with religion and a story to tell.

First they made me the king then they made me pope, then they brought the rope.

July 10th -

Wheat - Don't I Hold You

I'd carry you anywhere, you and your kind; I'd find you food on the darkest day. I'd carry you to safety, whisper you down from your fear, hold you gently in my hands until the crisis passes. But today I sensed you didn't need me, and the alarm was raised.

Don't I hold you like you want to be held?

July 11th -

Björk - Cover Me

Today's missive comes to you courtesy of bad covers versions. Particular gripe: artists who do straight takes of the original rather than creatively adding their personal stamp. There are two particularly 'good' examples currently gracing the airwaves: the usually flawless Matthew Sweet has teamed up with Suzannah Hoffs to violate the sanctity of 'Monday, Monday' while unlikely bedfellows Eddie Vedder, Josh Homme and The Strokes, a pleasing combination in theory I will agree, have chosen 'Mercy, Mercy Me' as their victim. Just another reason for me to turn the radio off.

this is really dangerous... but worth all the effort

July 12th -

Neil Diamond with Brian Wilson - Delirious Love

Sun sets on the sea, sun rises on the sand. Just sublime.

And I question what pulls me back here, binds me to this place.

Neither one of us stoppin' to figure out

What the roll and the rockin' was all about

July 13th -

Elbow - Puncture Repair

You are the current running through me; the silver thread knitting me together, yet unravelling slower than I'd choose. You are the ripple of piano meandering through this courtyard, brushing my skin with its haunting breeze. You are the square of bright night sky, directly above but unreachable all the same. You are the one he sings for, sings about, sings to. You are the one.

I regularly hurt but never say

July 14th -

Sarah McLachlan - Fallen

This is for you.

Like so many who bring smiles and light to other peoples' hearts, you're brimming with sadness for yourself. This is for you, because I want you to know, in the simplest terms possible, that you are special, that we love you, and that your future is brighter than you believe.

Heaven bent to take my hand and lead me through the fire...

July 15th -

Thom Yorke - Black Swan

A day of fury and frustration at a slew of technological malfunctions. I hate that I am so reliant on these machines, themselves so unreliable.

This is fucked up...

July 16th -

Howie Day - Collide

You are the space that makes its place between conviction and obsession. You are the dazzling contrast between the belief in love and the hot pursuit of gratification. You are the first flush and the final fire, you are what's left when I strip away every distraction, when the curve of the horizon screams clarity. You are nameless, shameless; you are always there, yet I seldom notice anymore.

Out of the doubt that fills my mind, I somehow find you and I collide

July 17th -

Aztec Camera - Somewhere In My Heart

Another slothslow day where you can feel your feet sink into molten tarmac. Don't stand still too long else you'll be rooted to this place, like the guy on the pedestal you thought you'd recognised.

Summer in the city where the air is still

July 18th -

R.E.M. - I Remember California

Senses bring a tide of memories rushing back, selective yet overwhelming. Today I catch the scent of Ambre Solaire tanning oil circa 1978 and I am back at my mother's feet as she bakes a deeper brown. I recall from nowhere that a clover flower's stem is square, and in the heat, if I allow myself, I am back at the beachfront bar, brushing sand from my toes under palm trees. Acute and attuned, I realise I can travel through my years remembering little moments of sensation, savouring textures and surfaces long buried under the bustle of life.

All those sweet conspiracies, I remember all these things

July 19th -

The Automatic - Raoul

If you are going to see a band in a beach venue on the hottest day in a hundred years, here are some hints:

- * Drink water: alcohol and sunstroke do not mix.
- * Stand at the back: you're nearer the door, and the air supply.
- * Observe sweaty teenage girls: they are liable to take their vest tops off and throw water over each other provocatively.
- * Avoid sweaty teenage boys: they smell.

...if you're not convinced, you'll get left behind: I lost interest.

July 20th -

Goo Goo Dolls - Iris

In a horrifying addendum to last week's missive about cover versions (July 11th), two more despicable examples have reared their evil heads in the space of as many days. Ronan Keating deserves a short sharp lobotomy for his schmaltzy, wispish rendition of one of the most beautiful songs ever penned (Iris, in case you haven't had the misfortune of hearing it yet...), and some hideous whining female named Abigail (it appears she prefers the anonymity of not revealing her surname - at least one wise choice then, lady) has selected Radiohead's 'Creep' as her unfortunate victim. If Radio 2 give this shite anymore airtime, I will be flicking the switch for good.
...everything's made to be broken

July 21st -

Nadiya - Tous Ces Mots

Beautiful French girl sings fab pop song! Sleek production and killer chorus. Think Britney only better. Much, much better...

Tous ces mots qui nous marquent n'ont de place pour personne
[All these words which mark us have no place for any

July 22nd -

Muse - Starlight

The possibility of 'for always' leaves me stunned. The feasibility of 'for ever' leaves me shunned.
I will be chasing the starlight until the end of my life
I don't know if it's worth it anymore

July 23rd -

Radiohead - No Surprises

Mysterious connections in the sky, air conductors bridging buildings, blocking breath. Invisible signals build walls around me, trapping me here, confining me. Unless I can muster the courage to roll downhill, lights and sirens ablaze... In this neighbourhood anything goes.
No alarms and no surprises please

July 24th -

Scott Matthews - Eyes Wider Than Before

An audience rapt; smiling in collective wonderment at the straight lines of beauty playing out ahead. Hot air rising, silent and still: there is magic here and we don't dare breathe for breaking the spell.

I'm heading your way with the traffic on my side

July 25th -

The Velvelettes - Needle in a Haystack

It's been brewing for a long while, but it finally all came out today: I absolutely LOVE northern soul. And I blame Stuart Maconie...

Findin' a good man, girls, is like findin' a needle in a haystack

July 26th -

Kelly Rowland - Train on a Track

A journey, or... the line less travelled.

The rails wind through towns abandoned on the edge of the water, on the edge of the land, on the edge. Misery stands in terraced rows, new estates, old estates, all of them full of self pity and delusion. Tower blocks stand like beacons of malevolence, enticing the empty and the naive into their destructive concrete folds. We flash past a dusty yard; dry, strangled and empty, but for the horses standing at the paint-flaked gate... the horses... ohchristno, tell me that's not a dead horse, tell me that's *not* a dead horse. The train rushes on; leaving images of evil burnt into the backs of my eyes. Hopeful gardens shelter desperation in every dirty corner, rubbish streaked verges; hedgerows jewelled with wrappers and packets: the abandoned detritus of human squalor. And all of it festering in this interminable heat. I will breathe my seaside air with gratitude tonight.

Explore uncharted places

July 27th -

R.E.M. - Fall On Me

Seventy miles an hour. Swooping, diving, taking chances with the traffic; a game of chance in the air and on the ground.

Seventy miles an hour. A sprint, a flurry, a little too late... a clip of wing and a freefall spiral, the earth closer than it should be. Black feathers scattered for miles. Seventy miles.

Feathers hit the ground before their weight can leave the air...

July 28th -

Roddy Woomble - Every Line of a Long Moment

Soaked to the skin, inside and out. I can't quite believe that I forgot the words you once told me: your words, just for me. I can't quite believe we sat together and talked about herbs and wine. And there it is: I can't quite believe. Ears turned one way, and eyes another; between you, you tie my tongue tight with effortless perfection.

... I become the only light that could ever reach you

July 29th -

The Beautiful South - One Last Love Song

Time clouds over, casting shadows over certainty. Nothing is changed, and yet everything feels different. Slow progress, yet progress all the same.

... farewell my sweet Northern rose

July 30th -

Dashboard Confessional - Rooftops and Invitations

His voice is a surge of nostalgia, a recollection, a jolt back to autumn days and long dark journeys, counting cat's eyes just to keep awake. Only a fanatic or a lunatic would buy an album on the strength of an intro alone. I'm wondering which of those is me.

She leads you up, points out skylines and stars.

July 31st -

Elbow - Red

On a whim: red.

Because brown wasn't working with white, and because it was too early for black.

So red it is. Although I can't help but suspect that red attracts the wrong kind of attention.

This can't go on too long: you're a tragedy starting to happen

AUGUST:

August 1st -

Sebastien Tellier - Ritournelle

Two things that left my heart in pieces today:

One; that he was everthere at the side of my screen, catching my eye, pleading, pleading. His story is overwhelming, pitiful, painful; and all I can do is condemn the evil that brought him to my attention, dry my eyes and fill in the form as suggested.

And two; this extraordinarily beautiful piece of music.

...

August 2nd -

Razorlight - America

A nothing special day, plagued by technological malfunction in the office (I am starting to worry that I am the carrier of a dangerous and contagious disease, striking at the heart of computerised equipment wherever I go). On second listen, this track seems like it may buck the trend as the Razorlight track that doesn't make me want to be violent. The lyrics are still rubbish though.

...nothing on the tv, nothing on the radio that means anything to me.

August 3rd -

Presidents of the United States of America - Peaches

In amongst the shit and the beyondsalvage; rolling velvet balls of sweet succulent sunshine, cast aside by yet another ignorant ingrate. It's one thing taking firewood from the community dump, but fruit...?

...Sun-soakin' bulges in the shade

August 4th -

Frank Sinatra - Don't Fence Me In

A surprise: a fence. To keep small feet out and small feet in. They will be curious, and they will try all the same. But only once.

...give me land, lots of land, and the starry skies above...

August 5th -

Queen - Headlong

Singing to a rabbit careening at high speed along the hallway, I was reminded that when I was small I though the words were: *got your Russian head on'*. [As said rabbit donned a fur hat and, swigging vodka and spouting communist rhetoric, joined in my little song.]

...and you're rushing headlong out of control

August 6th -

The Smiths - Stretch Out and Wait

Slow movements, squeezing and letting go. Stifling a giggle, a yawn.

And marvelling that my feet could still be cold despite actually doing some exercise.

...It's the Eskimo blood in my veins

August 7th -

Kubb - Grow

It's not a phobia, it's not being squeamish; it's pure, unbridled revulsion. And now I have to get through my lunch without thinking about it. Maybe I'll just go hungry today...

...in the garden of reason you can't change what you're given

August 8th -

Horslips - Green Star Liner

What began this morning as a musical journey of the Emerald Isle, turned slowly and regrettably into acute shamrock sickness by midday, and by home time I was practically insane; rocking slowly to the jigs and reels in my head. (Four hundred of the finest Irish would have done the same to anyone, I wager...) I did however discover some magnificent tunes along the way.

...I tried so hard to change my mind

August 9th -

Placebo - Nancy Boy

Songs are people... Songs are attached to the person who shared them with you for the first time. Sometimes you have to struggle long and hard to break those bonds and claim back a song for yourself, all the while knowing it's not yours to own. Songs are places... Songs have the power to transport you backwards; back where you and the song first met. Sometimes all you need is the intro, and you're back in a student bedsit, marvelling at a man in make-up on Top of the Pops, knowing you'd marvel for many years to come.

...got the muse in my head: she's universal

August 10th -

R.E.M. - I Don't Sleep, I Dream

Closing the door on a nameless anxiety; swearing to cross each bridge only when the current allows. But the rain keeps coming, the river swells and before too long you're dreaming of fire and broken wheels as the dam buckles under the weight of water.

I'll settle for a cup of coffee but you know what I really need

August 11th -

Seth Lakeman - The Bold Knight

Gazing upward in wonder, like a child seeing the night sky for the first time. You could bottle the energy in this room and sell it as manna from heaven, such is its sweet intoxicating power. And outside a shooting star splits the night sky, as the man with all the right words weaves his colours between us.

If he could see that angel with her love

August 12th -

Buzzcocks - Ever Fallen in Love

With a flick of a wrist too used to having its own way, we are treated to punk as it should be. And I tick another one off the list.

I can't see much of a future

August 13th-

Jose Gonzalez - Teardrop

Mesmerising. And a ray of sunshine splits the grey. It wasn't my imagination.

...love is a verb, love is a doing word.

August 14th -

Rolling Stones - Hot Stuff

I hadn't envisaged being grateful for my heated car seats in August, but such is the glorious summer we're currently enjoying they were fired up today with much gratitude. How much more pleasant the mundane morning slog to work; with a warm arse.

...to keep my body always moving

August 15th -

Eurythmics - You Have Placed a Chill in my Heart

Overnight a cold appears. Self-inflicted no doubt, after standing in the rain for three days, but none the less despised. Armed with honey, lemon and a hefty helping of self-pity, I snuffle through the day.

A woman's just too tired to think...

August 16th -

The Cranberries - Dreams

We were told that films sell us the wrong notion of love; a fuzzy impossible kind, exclusive to celluloid and naïve dreams. But I still feel wistful and nostalgic when I wake on days like these. I wonder if, just sometimes, you do too. And I still feel the need to keep on believing. I wonder if, just sometimes, you do too.

...impossible to ignore

August 17th -

Blue - Guilty

It's not about you. It's not about the way you look at me, or the things you say as you catch your breath, or the clear difference you make between your way and mine.

And it's not about me. It's not about the denial of pleasures real or imagined, or the self-conscious, self-aware distractions buzzing in the air between us.

It's just that I'm not willing to have my life turned upside down, for anyone else.

I never want to play the games that people play

August 18th -

Scissor Sisters - I Don't Feel Like Dancing

Actually today I have felt like dancing, and that is very unlike me. It's amazing what a bright sky and a bright smile can do for your mood. This is just such a great record for a Friday, for any day in fact, I verily sashayed through the streets of London town today.

I don't feel like dancing, no sir - no dancing today.

August 19th -

Nerina Pallot - Sophia

Just a book, a blanket and a cat: Saturdays hold much promise, but sometimes they are just quietly perfect.

...his books, they breathe a reason and now i want to know

August 20th -

Feeder - Buck Rogers

You can't sit down and listen to this track live - you just have to leap about. But sitting down is where I'm at, because tonight £90 gets you a small blue plastic seat for four hours, from where to watch a hoard of burly men in fluorescent vests march about importantly in front of a distant stage. In the rain. Unless of course, with a beautiful slice of irony, one's erstwhile employer sends complimentary tickets to one's new employer which fortuitously land in one's lap! And thus the Bigger Bang Rolling Stones tour explodes into Twickenham - with a spotlight slicing the night sky, a flash of fireworks and a parade of pouting. For a bunch of old folk, this is top. And the audience manage to get up off their little blue seats after all.

...don't you try and fake it anymore

August 21st -

Van Morrison - Queen of the Slipstream

Take a step backwards, away from the edge. It's a habit. A rushing, pushing urgency then an explosion of air as we breathe a little deeper from behind. And tripping along in the wake of the machine is a sliver of white: a feather; lighter than air, lighter than the sun... for a moment or two, at least. Until she falls back to the ground to wait again for the next wave. Her journey is slow but exquisite: small steps forging a furrow between the early leaves and the dust of the day. She is our breath; caught in the slipstream, and dancing on.

There's a dream where the contents are visible...

August 22nd -

Ed Harcourt - Late Night Partner

A reminder, as if I needed one, that there is only one true love; there is only one thing with the power to tear me to pieces and the power to build me up again.

Music keeps on saving me...

August 23rd -

The Waterboys - World Party

I am a sailor on the broken sea, pushing against the tide and striving for land. I fear the rolling swell beneath me as it threatens to wash me away, yet I trust it finally to carry me home. I have braved the waves for many years; I know their nature well. Yet even now I seek reassurance from the whispers in the wind that the world is still round.

I've got a madman of my own to contend with, cursing in the cave of my skull.

August 24th -

The Killers - When You Were Young

It's always such a relief when something you've been looking forward to for a long time turns out not to be a disappointment. This has the distinct waft of the overblown and overconfident, but there's nothing wrong with that once in a while.

We're burning down the highway skyline on the back of a hurricane

August 25th -

KD Lang - The Consequences of Falling

How wide is the eye of the storm? How long do you wait, eyes shut tight, heart racing, panic rising, before you realise the clouds have passed you by, and there's nothing there but bright, white light?

One step towards you, two steps back.

August 26th -

Rosie Brown - Ocean

A day spent holding my head and wishing my hiding place was better concealed. There are wisps of answers somewhere here, fleeing with the clouds overhead, but I'm not high enough these days to pluck them down from the sky. But I will keep trying.

...it burns a hole into my head

August 27th -

Ed Harcourt - Rain on the Pretty Ones

This song plays out in the darkest, most despairing corner of my landscape. I don't visit here often as it's hard to leave with each piece of you intact, but every now and then it's worth the visit, if only to appreciate the heartbreakingly beautiful music.

You leave no footprints in the dust...

August 28th -

Howie Day - Perfect Time of Day

So swept up in the weekend, I forget I have an extra day to play with. Why then this disappointment that my plans (albeit ones to get up early, drive for an hour and put in a day's work) have been scuppered? Just because I don't like to be surprised.

Let your colours collide, the time is so right

August 29th -

Pink Floyd - Take It Back

Today's discovery. And I think now I'm beginning to realise what this means. A song goes round countless times, and the smiles and the learning keep coming.

All this temptation, it turned my faith to lie

August 30th -

Alex Lloyd - Everybody's Laughing

Everybody apart from me; I'm here to LISTEN TO THE MUSIC. So will you all please SHUT THE FUCK UP. You've paid good money to come and listen to a man with a guitar sing some beautiful songs, so why are you still chatting like you were in the pub? Apart from anything else, it's FUCKING RUDE.

Sweet music in the back of my mind...

August 31st -

Pink Floyd - Wish You Were Here

I don't, but I'm sure he thinks I do. How to explain that the past can be in the past and yet still have such a bearing on the future; if only because it serves to remind me that I've moved on very little in all those years. It's not anger; it's disappointment. At myself.

...did you exchange a walk on part in the war for a lead role in a cage?

SEPTEMBER:

September 1st -

Hope of the States - Left

Just as 'Anna Begins' was sounding so appropriate... fleeting realisations cut through the routine. I'm just not made for this, and it's time I stopped trying; the endless disappointment only gets more difficult to handle.

What you want you're never going to get, unless you are prepared to be alone

September 2nd -

Barenaked Ladies - One Week

I considered for just a moment there whether it was possible for me to be literally swept off my feet. I also considered staying indoors. Luckily neither happened, and we talked and laughed over wine and won ton with an ease I'd not thought possible.

...that Chinese chicken - you have a drumstick and your brain stops tickin'

September 3rd -

Rolling Stones - Paint it Black

I'm always impressed at how deep and flawless they emerge. Damp and freshly born into another reality: rejuvenated by crystals and salts and a touch of magic.

No colours anymore I want them to turn black

September 4th -

The Hollies - Words Don't Come Easy

Actually it was one of those rare days when everything fell into place in the allotted time. No stressing, no fluttering heart when you think you'll be late, you'll miss a deadline, you'll be working until midnight. No struggling for inspiration, no endless procrastination, no wishing you were anywhere else doing anything else. Just a swift, smooth flow of words and ideas resulting in a perfect piece of work. I savour times like these...

All we really need today is the sun in our life.

September 5th -

The Upper Room - All Over This Town

This place just breaks me sometimes - so much love, so many stories, so much waste, so much wrong. You can hear beautiful music behind so many of these doors, but there's always a stream of tears in the gutter these days.

...I'm hearing violins in the streets

September 6th -

Tracy Chapman - Fast Car

My car is a third the size of yours, and probably a tenth of the price. But I will burn you at the next opportunity because you're so fucking slow. What's the point of a turbo engine and all those horsepower if you don't use them. And in case you're wondering: the accelerator is the one on the right.

...you gotta make a decision

September 7th -

Neil Halstead - High Hopes

High hopes, broad shoulders, wise words, crossed fingers.

...you got high hopes for someone good and strong

September 8th -

Depeche Mode - Shake the Disease

Sometimes it's all you can do to hold your own head above the water. People will choose to struggle to shore whichever way they can, or not. This is about me and my story, no matter how much you and your's affects me. This is about letting go to keep myself from going under.

...it's misery and torture...

September 9th -

The Blood Arm - Suspicious Character

It's catchy, it's got balls and they'll be huge before too long.

Everything else that happened today was smaller than anticipated.

...i like all the girls, and all the girls like me.

September 10th -

Chris Rea - On The Beach

I am swallowed by the ocean: buoyed along by delicate waves, lapping the stones behind me. I am warmed by the sunshine, guarded by the sky, abandoning my senses to the sea. I am close enough to home to smell the fruit in my garden, and far enough away to see nothing but water. I am sorry I don't do this more often.

...upon a summer wind there's a certain melody

September 11th -

The Dears - We Can Have It

Looking forward, looking to rest, looking to recapture a fearlessness long since buried under responsibility and routine. The press of a button, keystrokes light, and the wheels are set in motion. Looking forward...

...things before are with us now

September 12th -

The Prodigy - Hotride

Look around, for miles around, marvel at the stretch of this land. Pick out places known by heart, by routine, by heart. And look down: a message left just for us; sewn into the green, sown into the scene.

...Up, up and away...skipping fast right around the moon

September 13th -

Goldfrapp - Fly Me Away

A place of rock and resistance, standing strong in the currents of the sea.

A place of sun and sun and more sun, scorching patterns into the rock, scorching history into the streets, scorching lines into the faces of the people passing through. A place of long days and tall glasses, light winds and welcome shadows. A quiet place, an open place; a place to rest, and be.

Miles and miles of sun, endless roads twist on

September 14th -

R.E.M. - Untitled

Grief is selfish, greedy, self-absorbed. But maybe just because I wasn't there.

And then there's guilt.

That I didn't listen carefully enough to your silent ways.

That I didn't take more time to watch you play, and really live in those moments.

That I gave you everything I thought you needed, but was never really sure.

And then, just that I wasn't there.

...I made a list of things to say

But all I really want to say is...keep him strong

While I'm away from here

September 15th -

Bush - Letting the Cables Sleep

I could lose myself here. Narrow streets, winding, winding... Yellow stone closing in, shadows crowding the doorways, darkness filling the cracks at the side of the street. A maze, a prison, a net of rock: no way out. I could lose myself here. Drifting on an open sea, at the mercy of the tide; ebbing into emptiness, flowing out to a vast swathe of nothing. I could lose myself inside myself, circling the carrion of my emotions, sliding into an internal abyss, madness spiralling, down...down... That I am thinking it possible, renders it improbable. But still, I could...

You in the sea on a decline,

Breaking the waves, watching the lights go down

September 16th -

David Usher - Joy In Small Places

A change in pace, a change in consideration. These are not mine, their needs are not the same.

Could mine learn not to need, not to need me? Could I learn not to assume the role of needed?

...just drowned in the beauty of all of you.

September 17th -

Depeche Mode - Personal Jesus

Trampled underfoot, reaching out. To me. I watch for messages every day, and I am rewarded often. But, after all this time, I still toy with their interpretation; setting my own rules, playing my own game. I am a master of my own fantasy, playing fate against god, good against evil.

But they are just messages, just carriers of fact. Their power is in my creation. So surely they themselves are meaningless and the game over before it's begun...?

...reach out and touch faith.

September 18th -

Chris Whitley - Hotel Vast Horizon

Just blue. Up, down, to each side, all around. Just blue.

A line of blue marks blue from blue, and blue is all that remains.

Blue so far it's right before me, blue so whole there's nothing there.

Blue to swallow all our questions, blue to carry signals home.

Blue to quench a thunderous soul and then just blue, to calm.

...the distances mirror the witnesses: gone.

September 19th -

Simon and Garfunkel - Homeward Bound

Gathering up the pieces of the week, neatly folding memories into the corners of the case. Browsing the pictures of the places I've seen, and slipping all the unanswered questions into the folds of the book. I long for my soft cotton sheets, for the calm quiet of the wood that holds my home together. I long for the touch of cool grass beneath my feet, but I can't bear to think of my home without him.

Home: where my thoughts escaping...

September 20th -

Dave Matthews - Gravedigger

There are flowers to mark the place where he lies; sweet smells of summer, and bright petals for tears to rain upon. My fingers twisting dirt, these colours start to blur, with soft memories replaced by thoughts of earth on fur. Just... breathe...

...make it shallow so that I can feel the rain

September 21st -

Magnet - Last Day of Summer

Savouring the last of the sun, breathing in deep, committing the scents of summer to memory. They lie at my feet, still shaky, but breathing deeply all the same. We will all wish for this day again when the winter takes hold.

...still trying to mine for memories

September 22nd -

Depeche Mode - In Your Room

Clearing spaces around your spirit, brushing your dust from the cracks and the corners. The walls seem wider without you here. The possibilities are endless, but I'm making somewhere bright and quiet, where I can read, and dream.

...souls disappear, only you exist here

September 23rd -

Robbie Williams - Rudebox

It's the same every year - round and round and round. I thought we'd got through untouched as we'd reached September, but no... Last year it was James Blunt, over and over; repeat until brain-dead. The first few times I sing along, but after about an hour I have to go inside. Some people really should not be allowed the use of a stereo.

...up yer jacksy, split yer kecks

September 24th -

The Prodigy - Firestarter

This town has an obsession with setting fire to things. Tonight it is a hologram of Medusa, strung up high above the beach. Spectres in white cavort across the stage, throwing shapes into the fire, while a choir sings of death and despair, drums pound, trumpets sound, and the tide rolls steadily inward. Ocean rafts of fire and light pass the shore; ghosts of funeral pyres from a far off story, floating downstream. A mechanical horse rides out of the surf, lit from behind by the moon. And then fireworks on parachutes, fading out to leave jellyfish shells drifting silently across the night sky. Let no-one say nothing happens in this place.

...fear addicted, danger illustrated

September 25th -

Rolling Stones - You Can't Always Get What You Want

I am struck by how what we think we want and what we need are entirely different. Yet we are here for a reason, here together for a reason. And here I'll stay, to help you fly a little higher on your own.

... But if you try sometimes, you might find you get what you need

September 26th -

Lenny Kravitz - It Ain't Over Til It's Over

I'm not ready for this to end. I hand over a little more time each week, creating scenarios, testing theories. I love that I am absorbed by this. But I hate that it leaves me empty for another six months at least.

... so much time wasted...

September 27th -

Van Halen - Jump

What a peculiar discovery: that the best way to get over being terrified is to pull faces and pretend it's not real. Even better then, to remember that it's just a film, and not real at all. Still fucking scary though.

... ain't the worst that you've seen

September 28th -

Crowded House - Chocolate Cake

We have a bizarre yet thoroughly pleasurable ritual at work of providing cakes and sugary treats for our colleagues on our Birthday. Given that there are quite a few of us this gives rise to the delightful potential of cakes every day. Today was cinnamon muffins - I love my job!

... it went by me sickly sentimental

September 29th -

Barenaked Ladies - Easy

This tune has nothing to do with the strange feeling of home I experienced on wandering the floors at Ikea this evening. I wanted to move in: to curl up in the sumptuous beds, to pad across the rugs barefoot, to nestle into the sofas coffee cup in hand. Like those films where slightly incapable people find themselves with no place else to go, I could live here easily. Which brings us back to the Barenaked Ladies. Why? It's just a lovely little song: sweet as treacle yet with a poisonous edge. I identify.

...it never fails: I just end up feeling bad for you

September 30th -

David Usher - How Are You

Another morning spend waiting, heart in hand, for word from you.

A flickering light across the screen, and I wonder. I wonder why, and I wonder how much longer. She was right to dismiss me; I can learn nothing from this.

...Another day in this fucked up life, another struggle just to get through

OCTOBER:

October 1st -

Aha - Hunting High and Low

Puddle jumping, bracken chopping, wood collecting, nature nurturing,
Somedays Sundays are just how they should be.

...there's no end to the lengths I'll go to

October 2nd -

KT Tunstall - Heal Over

Not again. Please no. No more of this. Just for a while. Just leave me enough space to breathe,
to focus my attention again, to find warmth in my surroundings.

...you're gonna be fine, but in the meantime...

October 3rd -

R.E.M. - Aftermath

A fierce bravery came over her, mustered from heaven knows where. And as she sat and shook
and shuddered to think of the past hour, I found still another reason why I love her.

...you close your eyes: he's not coming back

October 4th -

R.E.M. - Fretless

You: wishing you could say something meaningful. Me: wishing you'd just say nothing at all.
Like a prowling devil, it tempts me into the comfort of giving in, but like a stubborn unbeliever, I
won't. Not yet.

...they each come around when the other is gone

October 5th -

Stone Roses - She Bangs the Drum

Just like the old days: swamped in rhythm and smiles, her beside me, eyes bright and infectiously
enthusiastic. We lose ourselves in the moment, zoning in and out of perfect oblivion. I emerge
stronger, brighter, inspired and elated. Just like every time I see her, but a lot noisier!

...The way she plays there are no words...

October 6th -

Colin Vearncombe - Sleeper

Falling exhausted between cat-warmed sheets, with barely the twitch of a whisker that the night
shift has arrived. We lay like this 'til morning. Eight blissful hours of uninterrupted dreams: his of
sparrows in bare branches, long grass, and me; mine of long grass and long nights, and him.

There's not enough time, you'd better wake up soon...

October 7th -

Menswear - Daydreamer

I picture a family, a child beside me here, and him on the far side, all of us singing as we go. This
picture tugs at something deep within me; but I'm aware that, as ever, the fantasies my mind
concocts are so far removed from the reality of things. But in lieu of a fragile reality, daydreaming
works just fine for me.

...slowly shifting, gently drifting...

October 8th -

Lighthouse Family - Lifted

We are the mice in the mouse organ, heave-ing our slow path through the garden, twisting our quarry first backwards then forth, squeezing through spaces not made for this kind of work. I am the van-man, the labourer, the capable tradesman, I am the rubbish collector, the rag-and-bone man, bring out your dead, people... I can take it all away. And for the rest of you, be assured: I always deliver on time.

...lifted up today, lifted all the way

October 9th -

Deacon Blue - Real Gone Kid

We reach our respective ends in a stony silence. Wine deaf and lost for words, you trample the same ground, circles decreasing as the answers grow evermore elusive. And me: I'm just tired and resentful and hurt at being pushed and pulled and punished. This darkness is yours, these choices are yours. I made my peace a long time ago.

I've stood on your shadow and I've watched it grow, and it's shaken...me

October 10th -

Natalie Merchant - Carnival

Swirling words: a permanent testimony to the impermanence of contemporary communication. I sat in awe, adding words of my own to the mix, watching them mingle with the others and swarm across the screen. Next door, grainy and bleak, a tape whirrs in celebration of sepia. Ghosts, they say? Just the haunted corridors of our minds.

...hypnotised, mesmerised by what my eyes have seen

October 11th -

Grand Drive - I Believe In Love

It had something to do with an awareness of the earth, an acute sense of the solidity and profundity of the landscapes passing the window. Or maybe it was the autumn rain and the freedom of the road. You were everthere, in each flash of the sun between deep steel clouds, in each crash of silent lightning throwing shadows on puddles... I snuggled deeper into my coat collars, happy for once in the backseat, and offered a smile to the past and the future. Today, like many others, was full of you.

... feeling like you're here inside this skin of mine

October 12th -

Jamelia - Beware of the Dog

Ginger words of ginger wisdom: more engaging than I'd hoped, more salient than I'd expected. Beware of the Dog samples Depeche Mode, but played loudly, begs forgiveness, and wins.

... listen 'cos I know what I'm saying

October 13th -

Radiohead - Lucky

On any other day we wouldn't question these things.

On any other day we wouldn't even notice.

On any other day we wouldn't indulge rituals and talismans.

On any other day we just wouldn't care.

But today, everything shifts. Today they are with me: everything happens for a reason.

We are standing on the edge

October 14th -

Sinead O'Connor - Fire On Babylon

Then: no room for idle indulgence. In the age before our warped social values cossetted the lazy and protected the wicked, battle and brutality were all the life education they needed to appreciate the good things.

Now: cordite and broken glass split the sky. Innocents are broken by their protectors who know no self respect or responsibility. Young lives are ruined before they are barely begun. Lessons unlearned through generations perpetuate malfunction and malaise. If only these people realised they too have something to fight for, rather than just fighting.

Life's backwards, people turn around...

October 15th -

James Dean Bradfield - Still A Long Way to Go

Another case of nearly not bothered. Another case of glad I was.

Winter takes so much motivation: I'm not sure I'm up to the task

...there's some things I just can't show.

October 16th -

The Cardigans - My Favourite Game

It's become a real problem: an obsession verging on addiction. My waking world is like the Sony Bravia advert, without the calming influence of Jose Gonzales. Much the same happens at night: coloured balls sail past brightly, teasing, luring me in relentlessly. I am tempted to tamper with my software: I cannot be this preoccupied - I have things to do.

...losing your mind again

October 17th -

Ash - Low Ebb

An observation: I always get cold talking about troublesome matters. And try as I might, I can't seem to work out why. It's like being under a spotlight of ice, stammering fractured thoughts into the frosty air. Teeth chattering, mind racing, heart: cold.

...Shiver in the cold light and in your troubled mind

October 18th -

Coldplay - Talk

Finally a chance to share. We talk comfortably, each revelation like a sigh of relief. Elsewhere, familiar pathways lead in a different direction, as the internet offers up secrets, and I offer up a curse. It's a question of trust and respect. The same question the world over. But the answers, like our standards, couldn't be more different.

...I've been trying hard to reach you 'cause I don't know what to do

October 19th -

Ben Lee - Catch My Disease

Sadness. From right to left in even measures.

Songs raise a rueful smile, and reinforce a conviction. But sadness follows. Like sweetness.

My head is a box full of nothing...

October 20th -

Incubus - Sick Sad Little World

So wrong. So very wrong.

So sick, so savage and so wrong. I watched from behind my cushion, and I didn't watch from behind my hands. If only I could be certain these depths of death and depravity were confined to celluloid.

... I have an open door policy when it comes to blame

October 21st -

Oasis - Stop Crying Your Heart Out

They hate going. I hate taking them. How to explain to a sobbing shaking cat that this really is what's best for them. They cower into my sleeve and tremble, as vaccinations are administered. And then it's all over until next year.

... don't be scared...

October 22nd -

Foo Fighters - Breakout

A breathtaking tattoo and the secrets within. As they scheme and strive in the face of ego and corruption, I am drawn ever deeper into their world: my new obsession. And so I watch until my eyes ache and my mind can't take it anymore.

You make me dizzy running circles in my head

October 23rd -

Bic Runga - Birds

For an hour this morning, we stepped into a scene from a film: an autumn landscape, gold and orange, with flashes of blue as leaves gave way to the sky. We stood in the crisp air, wondering if we were still where we started, as the air became thick with green. A thousand wings beat a rhythm through the still of the morning. And a thousand more replied from the cover of the trees. With wonder catching in our throats we soaked up the scene, our thoughts dancing to their music. And after a while, we watched again in rapt silence as our visitors took to the sky, as thrilling a sight in retreat as they were in arrival. We were given a gift this morning, a gift of inspiration and illumination, the chance to look up and feel part of something much bigger.

Don't leave me hanging all the while, a shadow underneath the trees

October 24th -

Maria Lawson - Sleepwalking

What disappoints me is not so much the inner city pronunciation, but that I actually find this quite clever. (And if you're still confused, it's easier if you pretend not to know the difference between 'f's and 'th's...)

*One by one the dreams are gone, today you're the lonely one,
free from all you've wished yourself: thought you'd left you on the shelf.*

October 25th -

Union of Knives - Operated On

The best news in weeks: the best new band of the year playing in MY HOME TOWN! Fitting then that this provided my soundtrack to medical research and learning, and that he was typically complacent.

...seemed separate together

October 26th -

George Michael - Older

Five months. How much can change. And how much stays the same. I find you amongst the music and the memories, five months older, but still with that sparkle in your eye. I miss you these days, although they've flown past without me noticing. I won't leave it so long next time. I swear.

...change is a stranger who never seems to show

October 27th -

Sparks - This Town Ain't Big Enough for the Both of Us

Back from lunch. But what's this? A letter. They are cutting staff, 'letting people go', like we were captives here in the first place. But I am happy to be bound by these chains, and enjoy the terms of my confinement. My heart kicks over and my feet fail me. Not me, not now. Not like this. Not again. But no: it's just a letter confirming my pension. Don't they realise it's wrong to leave letters around in this climate?

...heartbeat, increasing heartbeat

October 28th -

Hot Chip - Over and Over

Like a child in a sweet shop, knowing when I've spent all my pennies and eaten all my sweets that really will be it: all over. But doing it all the same, and loving every nail-biting, hand-wringing moment. Only four months to wait until season two.

...the thrill of repetition really is in me.

October 29th -

The Used - Pieces Mended

It should be quite straightforward: a new light to replace the faded one. But as I stand here with my little car in pieces at my feet, I soon realise this is not a job for the faint-hearted. So tool in hand, and deciphering the clueless directions on the screen, logic and stubborn determination prevail. The light is replaced, the car is remade. And that's when I understand why I do this: because the satisfaction of achievement, and the acquisition of a little more knowledge, is so much more palatable than admitting defeat.

...I've got a feeling in my gut now fills me with so much hope

October 30th -

The Devlins - Big Decision

He likes to trip across the dew drenched lawn, poke paws through the sparkling spiders' webs and check the contents of the hedge each morning. He loves this time of day; so fresh and full of possibility. He's swept away with curious excitement, oblivious to the calling and the imploring, and the eventual closing of the door and reversing of the car. He'll return after a while, hungry and chilled, longing for a soft place to sleep and dream. And while he waits and hopes not to have been abandoned, I will worry the day away, and drive home a little more urgently than before.

...on the outside looking in: wait...

October 31st

Idlewild - If It Takes You Home

As heinous a crime as not picking out your mother's face in a crowd; two minutes in and you finally realise what you're listening to. And thus begins a furious retrospective evaluation, a chastising of self for not paying more attention, and a hunt through those wild geese online for some answers. And there you have it, what little there is of it; it's yours.

... ..

NOVEMBER:

November 1st -

The Pixies - Where Is My Mind?

A strange series of events today left me fearing early onset Alzheimers. First there was a string of memory lapses: everything from things I was supposed to buy, to songs I was supposed to take note of, to general 'what was it I was going to do / say / think about next?'. Then I threw cat food into my handbag and left home without my shoes. Now is clearly the time for some brain stimulation.

Your head will collapse if there's nothing in it

November 2nd -

Nelly - Hot in Herre

It all changed yesterday; a first of the month, white rabbit bug weaving crazy magic in the hot pipes. My nights are now iced through: no water, no warmth. Typical for these bricks I live in. While my days are a dry, tropical haze: sunlight magnified through glass before me and artificial iron heat from behind. My body can't cope with this two-tier existence, and after just two days I am sniffing, shivering and sorry for myself. Only another five months until Spring...

Whoa, sweatin' it's hot up in this joint

November 3rd -

Jack Johnson - Sitting Waiting Wishing

Today I have either been sitting (at my desk, in my car, in a meeting room, on the floor of a grubby club), waiting (for midday so I can book Killers tickets, for the traffic to get moving, for doors to open at 8 o'clock, for the meeting to be over so I can see if all the Killers have gone, for the headline band to come on so I can hurry up and get home to my honey and lemon, and my bed) or wishing (that my boss hadn't called a meeting at midday, that I didn't feel like crap when there's a band on I really want to see, that I didn't still have an hour's drive home). Just one of those days...

Just wait a minute...

November 4th -

The Flaming Lips - Ego Tripping At The Gates Of Hell

Today, finally, I am warm.

Tonight I will travel west and stand in a room filled with strangers and notice not for the first time that my clothes don't fit me right, and I'm to blame. Confetti will rain down amid the sparkle and the cheer but I'll sniff into my sleeve and cling to the walls, eager to melt away. This over-conscious conscience will be the ruin of me one day. But not today. Today I am at least warm.

...I was waiting on a moment but the moment never came

November 5th -

Lou Rhodes - Tremble

Excited. Proud. Jubilant. Playful. Oblivious.
Watchful. Curious. Anxious. Horrified. Inconsolable.
Tiny. Vulnerable. Unaware. Shocked. Terrified.
We three are bound by a terrible triangle of pain,
suffering and guilt. Only he feels none of these.
This is true unconditional love.

...pity me though...

November 6th -

The Feeling - Love It When You Call

A long time coming, a long time going. But you kept faith with your dreams while mine slide around, liquid to my grasp. Tonight you are bright, with that same silver tongue, and it warms me to be near you, like seldom before. Somehow I get the sense now that you really might make it after all.

...you could chose a friend but you don't seem to have the time

November 7th -

Dave Matthews Band - Sleep to Dream Her

Waking thought: please god, let this be real... But it wasn't, of course. It seldom is. These places I inhabit at night seem more real to me than my waking world. The tenderness of dreamtime shattered by the harsh light of day. And reality becomes more distant, retreating into its own peculiar shade of grey.

*The stars fell from her hair then I bent down to collect them
And then she was gone*

November 8th -

The Cardigans - You're the Storm

Two things today:

One, that seeing it explained in glorious technicolour by a sweet-faced young boy made it all make sense. If only she could hold my attention that way.

Two, that she is sat there now within a mile of him, sipping coffee in the winter sunshine, breathing his air, in his city. And I don't know whether I'm jealous, or wistfully pleased that there's another connection forming under my fingertips.

I like the sweet life and the silence but it's the storm that I believe in.

November 9th -

Pearl Jam - Rearviewmirror

Generally, when you're reversing, things come from behind. In these situations, your rear view mirror comes in particularly handy. (Your rear view mirror is the shiny rectangle in the centre of your windscreen, just above your eyes). (Your eyes are the two vacuous orbs in the front of your face which, had you been using them at seven o'clock this morning, you would have noticed my small, but present-all-the-same, car behind yours, and - see how this works now - getting closer as you hurtled backwards. And now it seems you won't even pay for your mistake. I'm sure you'll be sat at home questioning why young people are so intolerant of the old. The answer to that question is right in front of your eyes. If you can see that far.

...forced to endure what i could not forgive

November 10th -

Genesis - Against All Odds

It's been a month of catch-up; reaffirming old friendships and cementing new ones. And there's no catalyst for either like a good gig. You two are opposing sides of my sun, despite being cut from the same cloth. Three wide smiles at the choice of intro music, confirms it. I was meant to be here tonight. And so were you.

Take a look at me...

November 11th -

Scissor Sisters - Paul McCartney

Quite simply: fuck yes!

Straight to the top of the leader board, despite some stiff competition.

Just how they like it, I'm sure.

Is it the music that connects me to you?

November 12th -

INXS - Suicide Blonde

It's all in my mind: this wild imagination has a lot to answer for. But when he plays that song, my heart just melts a little. I wonder if he knows he can turn a girl's soul to water with just the flick of a button.

...a cheap distraction for a new affair...

November 13th -

The Flaming Lips - Yeah Yeah Yeah Song

The price of a two hour smile tonight is fifteen pounds. Fifteen pounds to stand in the swirling current, beneath the lines of sparkle and belief, and consider what it is to escalate. Tonight they sing for Steve, and it seems his spirit is with us, urging us all to act. Act now.

Between these walls which have seen so many of my smiles, I feel a certain peace. And yet I am certain that with the coming of the new age, I will miss this smell of smoke about you.

It's a very dangerous thing to do exactly what you want.

November 14th -

Damien Rice - Rootless Tree

These things come in waves: sorrow, longing, need. You can feel them surge through you at times like these, drowning you from the outside in. And then slowly they release you, ebbing away gradually as you squeeze your eyes closed and catch your breath again. Today I draw your name in the dust around me, to remind me why it has to be this way; and I cloak myself in these fragile songs, to heal myself. From the outside in.

... we do what we need to be free...

November 15th -

The Cardigans - I Need Some Fine Wine & You, You Need to Be Nice

Circles closing in from all sides. One side. Once circle. Full. As I step into the night with my conviction by my side, I wonder if you'll ever really understand. It seems the things you turn to for comfort are the very things which will destroy you in the end.

... it's been a long slow collision

November 16th -

Dirty Vegas - Days Go By

Muddled. They're running into one. One and none. I get the order wrong, I get the events wrong. Only the characters in my stories are in the right place. It's easy to find excuses, but hard to believe them. I'm just too tired.

You are still a whisper on my lips

November 17th -

Aerosmith - I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing

It was only three minutes. Three minutes to the soundtrack of a malfunctioning fire alarm and a blanket of rock favourites to muffle the bleeping. But in those three minutes I missed my chance to say no, and found myself reciting someone else's words in someone else's voice. Lesson learned.

... I don't wanna close my eyes, I don't wanna fall asleep...

November 18th -

Akon feat Eminem - Smack That

Today was filthy. With the three of us slapping (plaster on walls), smacking (light fittings into tight little holes in the ceiling) and spanking (money up the walls of B&Q) our way through the weekend. And later, a trip into town to wow the girls with our wide wheels and big sounds. I step into a parallel reality whenever he's around. And for a couple of days it's enormous fun!

... wanna jump up in my Lamborghini Gallardo?

November 19th -

Led Zeppelin - Out on the Tiles

More spending, more mess, more wishing I'd paid someone else to do this, more junk-food-on-the-go as there's no time for anything better. And then finally dusk, a frantic hunt for scared animals, and a chance for us all to be horizontal. For a few hours.

As I walk down the highway all I do is sing this song...

November 20th -

Soul II Soul - Keep on Movin'

Going nowhere. At all.

Despite leaving under the cover of darkness, I was still an hour late. This is breaking me.

...why do people choose to live their life this way?

November 21st -

Men At Work - Down Under

I'm sick of it already. As usual, the only way to remain sane is to join in. But this year I don't exactly have the motivation; it's just an annoying departure from my routine. And I don't like it.

You better run, you better take cover

November 22nd -

Joe Purdy – The City

I think I might have broken it. Six months on and I think it's finally happened. And all the instructions and help screens and troubleshooters don't allay my fears that this time I really think it might be beyond salvation. At least the soundtrack to its demise is sublime. That's about all I ask for myself when the time comes.

...we just keep on rolling

November 23rd -

Muse – Time Is Running Out

When the man you found your dreams upon shows up in a tracksuit, all that's left is to perpetuate the fantasy knowing there's perfection behind the man-made fibre. And if you close your eyes it's oh, so easy – you can't disguise genius with a flash of red polyester.

...you're something beautiful

November 24th-

Queen – Hammer to Fall

There's nothing between these walls – an empty shell of a room which even the echoes have deserted. Tomorrow we will rebuild, but tonight I'll just stand here with my weapon of choice and marvel at how I can touch all four sides.

...Lady Mercy won't be home tonight

November 25th -

Union of Knives – Opposite Direction

I just knew this would happen. So instead of hanging with my favourite new band, we're sat in the local, yawning into our warm pints of cider. Not the rock and roll weekend I'd hoped for.

...get ready...

November 26th -

Ben Folds – The Ascent of Stan

It's not his fault; he's scared and cold and mistrustful of everything at this point. Just give him time to hear my voice, soft and low in the darkness. We've been here before.

...pangs of silence from the room upstairs

November 27th -

The Smiths - Please Please Please, Let Me Get What I Want

Maybe it just seems that everything is conspiring against me. But the last few days have been a constant stream of hurdles. And as I fight against the rising tide I can feel coping mechanisms dropping by the wayside. This week's mantra: one...step...at...a...time

Good times for a change, see the luck I've had can make a good man turn bad

November 28th –

Aqualung - Easier to Lie

A surprise, in a night full of surprises. This sparkled like the crisp night sky over London, as I made my way back to a donated pillow and a three hour nightcap. I woke with a smile from warm dreams; glowing and happy, and most of all surprised.

Learning how to live and bear the weight...

November 29th –

Cliff Richard - Wired For Sound

For no reason - it was just there. And it stayed there all day. Yet despite being indeed wired for sound from dawn til dusk, I at no point exuded anything approaching ecstasy. Merely a desire to get by without being drawn by this petty squabblery. If you've something to say, let's have it. If not, close the door on your way out, I have some tunes to listen to.

...A.M-- F.M. I feel so ecstatic

November 30th –

Canned Heat – On the Road Again

Three hundred pounds lighter, but at least we are free. We both head south for a well deserved rest. Apprehension and anxiety are exhausting.

...I'm so tired...

DECEMBER:

December 1st -

The Las - There She Goes

For better or for worse, we are now one less. She leaves a legacy of hopeful discontent. The rest is up to us. And so we prepare to fill her void. One thing is for certain: it will be quieter here without her.

...I just can't contain this feeling that remains

December 2nd -

Tom McRae - You Cut Her Hair

My dark feathers fall to the floor around me. They are replaced by spikes and points; I am angular this week. My tired bones try to keep pace, yet ache under the strain. We pause for coffee and she tells me about her week on the dark side. She's still shining.

...turn the page, start again...

December 3rd -

Madonna - Rain

Driving sideways, rivulets through the garden. I fear I am light enough to be washed away this time. I am losing gravity fast. I will cling to the rafters here and look west to the fast fading sun.

...you are my sanctuary

December 4th -

Idlewild - Love Steals Us From Loneliness

Right there where I wanted you: in your own spotlight, twisting and turning like only you do. Just a couple of hours in your company and I see the world the right way up again. Yet after all these years you're still a mystery. Decadent? Arrogant? Shy? This wine stain I carry shares a secret: am I the only person in this room to know you despise parsley?

...I'd rather have hope than sadness...

December 5th -

Damien Rice - Dogs

Finally the chance to stretch and breathe, to climb high in my mind and focus on the smallest of things. They wind around my legs, desperate to show me their moves. And together we breathe relief

...the girl that does yoga...

December 6th -

Indigo Girls - Closer to Fine

I sit at the end of this line and rattle off some rusty French to a jaded suit. But after a time, wine and the false endings leave me tongue-tied and teary. I am losing myself, not in the bottle, but in the tide of double standards and second guesses. They are in turn concerned and confused. And so it is that I find myself wading through the sodden streets staring at the nothingness at the end of another line.

...seek solace in a bottle or possibly a friend

December 7th -

Ultravox - Dancing With Tears in My Eyes

The most beautiful man in the room has ears like a cat. It's a costume, I know, but it has me spellbound. I know I only noticed him because he looks like you. I hate that I will remember all this in the morning. Moreover, I hate that they will.

...we drink to forget the coming storm

December 8th -

Radiohead - We Suck Young Blood

I don't remember how you left, only that you did. And darkness swallowed me again.

...are you sweet? are you fresh?

December 9th -

Dream Warriors - Wash Your Face in My Sink

Round three (I think we are that far in).

And with an aching head and a faintly flickering pulse I pass the appropriate tools and take measurements where required. I am not helpful today.

Today you are wondering if I am really yours, such is the distance between us now. But I am. And I can come back from this.

...into the hands of incompetence...

December 10th -

R.E.M. - Shaking Through

Those walls she mentioned at the start of the year are nearly as high as she feared. But they don't keep her out, apart from me. They keep me inside: dangerous and destructive.

I can tear myself to pieces here and no-one will see. Except... I. Just. Don't. Feel. Anymore.

...one small voice doesn't count

December 11th -

Belly - Sweet Ride

Today I work on the principle that if it's broken already, there's no harm in smashing it into the tiniest fragments and leaving the dust to blow in everyone's eyes. London is at its worst in the rain. Even this end of town. But I push on through, dripping and miserable, and try to hold it all together when it counts. He says it's goth chic. I say it's a mess.

...we stumble around... soaked to the bone

December 12th -

Union of Knives - Infant Eyes

A nothing day. Of feeling on the outside. And even night brings no relief as I fight to breathe, watching the minutes turn to hours and the gathering light herald a repeat of that same nothingness. I would close my door behind me, but that only adds to the isolation.

...I am a trail of lies...

December 13th -

Rainbow - Since You've Been Gone

I'm constructing a nightworld where I can lose myself in your ghost.

Sleep comes easily these days, yet is still a stranger to my shores.

but when the time comes, I know the storm inside will subside.

...I get the same old dreams same time everynight...

December 14th -

Infadels - Murder That Sound

A strange little man in skin tight trousers ("*a few more pounds and those are going to be useless*") bounces enthusiastically across the stage to the pounding bass. "Make some *noise*" he shouts, thrusting his hands into the air. Make some noise. No, please. This is all really good, except I can't hear it. I know I have a head full of Beechams and my ears feel like they're packed with concrete, but the bass is coming through fine; I think someone needs to tweak a knob or two. Good as these songs are, I'd rather stand under the lights of London with my headphones up full. So I do.

...I found a way to make you free...

December 15th -

Suede - Indian Strings

Spices fill the air as we sit in a circle and flash false smiles across the tinsel-strewn table; a sparkling no-mans-land of paranoia and mistrust. Outside the frost cracks across the window, fragmenting our reflection into a thousand icy pieces. Winter suggests we will not last the night.

Images of violence fill up my mind

December 16th -

Editors - Bullets

I realised when I heard it, that I really had no idea. Yet somehow it was inside me all the time, waiting for the right moment. Words and feet in easy unison, I commit it to memory, take it home with me to research and remember. Its time is now.

If something has to change, then it always does

December 17th -

Tom Baxter - The Whole of the Moon

Note to self when buying singles: find time to listen to them. How many other inspired cover versions are lying undiscovered within the folds of my record collection? The warm and wonderful high point of an otherwise grey day.

I spoke about wings, you just flew

December 18th -

Billy Joel - Goodnight Saigon

In what was a room full of friends three years ago, I find myself amongst strangers. Some have travelled for miles to be here. A flash of recognition breaks through with eyeliner and a shy smile, but this is not meant for here. He sits at the piano and treats us to hand-picked gems from a well-thumbed book. But somehow the magic is gone. Until now.

...we held the day in the palm of our hand

December 19th -

Snow Patrol - Chocolate

What a difference a day makes. My apathy beaten by the promise of poetry; and so we travel through the fog to the place with no soul, to find I'm a day late, and all that's here is toe-tapping banality and someone else's ghosts.

...it's too late for that

December 20th -

Mumm-Ra - Out of the Question

A freezing night at the dark end of town. We step into the newness and the white and let the huge bass amps blow the fog from our hair. Straight ahead he throws poses like he was made for the stage, and afterwards climbs to the highest place here and smiles with coy satisfaction.

Widescreen brilliance daubed onto a local canvas: we are lucky.

...you can't be the reason

December 21st -

Kiss - Crazy, Crazy Nights

This reminds me of those two; the pair of them laughing uncontrollably at the silliest of things.

They are infectious, they are eternal, they are pillars of light in the recesses of history.

...these are my people

December 22nd -

Chris Rea - Driving Home for Christmas

I leave them behind with their fake smiles and suitcases, happy to be the first out the door for once. When I get there he greets me with a sad smile. We both know this is for the last time.

...top to toe in tailbacks

December 23rd -

Tony Bennett - The Christmas Song

With bags of logs under each arm, and wrapped against the wind, he makes slow progress to the door. Later we wrap presents by the fireside and talk warmly about the day. But nothing lasts, not even the season of goodwill.

...chestnuts roasting on an open fire

December 24th -

The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl - Fairytale of New York

An easy day: warm, quiet and comfortable. These words still catch in my throat every time, but I wouldn't have it any other way. A poignant reminder that the obsessive nature of love is borne of the best of intentions.

...the boys of the NYPD choir were singing 'Galway Bay'

December 25th -

James Brown - Christmas in Heaven

A day of eating too much, playing games, exchanging gifts and spending time with loved ones.

For most of us. A shame then that the godfather of soul missed out on a final funky Christmas.

...yes it's Christmas and I'm in heaven

December 26th -

The Prodigy - Smack My Bitch Up

She was only reading a question on a board game, but it had us howling for hours. I'd forgotten that my family laughs so much!

...change my pitch up

December 27th -

Findlay Brown - Come Home

In only four days I'd forgotten about early starts and sallow skin, sunken eyes and sinking hearts. But today I have a new selection of songs to pull me through, and some bright lights in the sky outside my window. He takes me away at lunchtime and we play catch in the woods, and watch squirrels skip through the leaves. It's not so bad to be back here, although it's always good to get home.

...how do i feel? Glorified refugee.

December 28th -

The Who – Guitar and Pen

I make tea for one and spend a leisurely day writing and listening. Work is perfect without all the people. So much more productive.

...stick it together and start writing again

December 29th -

Bat For Lashes – Sad Eyes

Winter melancholy. Much as I hate that resigned feeling of icy despair, I can't help but encourage it by giving these songs chance to shine in the gloom of the afternoon. There's a tremendous beauty at work in music that just about holds you together while it shatters you from within.

...keep my heart breaking in the dark; come and spend the night

December 30th -

Manic Street Preachers – Of Walking Abortion

Another dictator down. Yet without wanting to side with the bad guy, there are a fair few arseholes on our side of the fence who could use a noose.

... the massacred innocent blood stains us all

December 31st -

Counting Crows – A Long December

From under this brim I consider my next move. It's always the same at this time of year. And mostly I ask myself why. For now I'll blame habit, and a need to keep moving, however slowly. There are lists to be made and boxed to be relabeled. I sweep through both houses with my metaphoric broom, dustily shifting clutter from one room to the next. But there will be no resolutions. Only resolve.

Maybe this year will be better than the last

a song a day, 2006

SUMMARY OF TRACKS

Aberfeldy	Uptight	July
Aerosmith	Don't Wanna Miss a Thing	November
A-ha	Hunting High & Low	October
Akon feat. Eminem	Smack That	November
Alex Lloyd	Everybody's Laughing	August
Alex Lloyd	Everybody's Laughing.	February
All American Rejects	Move Along	March
Aqualung	Easier to Lie	November
Arcade Fire	Rebellion (Lies)	March
Ash	Low Ebb	October
Athlete	Street Map	January
Autamata	Out of This	June
Aztec Camera	Somewhere in my Heart	July
Baddiel, Skinner & the Lightning Seeds	3 Lions	June
Barenaked Ladies	Easy	September
Barenaked Ladies	One Week	September
Bat For Lashes	Sad Eyes	December
Bauhaus	Kick in the Eye	February
Beautiful South	One Last Love Song	July
Belle and Sebastian	Funny Little Frog	January
Belly	Sweet Ride	December
Ben Folds	The Ascent of Stan	November
Ben Lee	Catch My Disease	October
Bic Runga	Birds	October
Bill Wyman	Je Suis Un Rock Star (Si Si)	February
Billy Idol	Hot in the City	July
Billy Joel	Goodnight Saigon	December
Billy Joel	Piano Man	February
Bjork	Cover Me	July
Bjork	Echo a Stain	March
Blue	Guilty	August
Bob Dylan	Long Time Gone	March
Bruce Springsteen	Local Hero	July
Bruce Springsteen	My City Of Ruins	May
Bush	Little Things	May
Bush	Letting the Cables Sleep	September
Buzzcocks	Ever Fallen in Love...	August
Calexico	The Crystal Frontier	April
Camera Obscura	Lloyd, I'm Ready to be Heartbroken	April
Canned Heat	On the Road Again	November
Cardigans	I Need Some Fine Wine, and You, You Need to Be Nice	November
Cardigans	You're the Storm	November
Chemical Brothers	Galvanize	March
Chris Rea	Driving Home for Christmas	December
Chris Whitley	Hotel Vast Horizon	September
Christina Aguilera	Dirrty	January
Christy Moore	Motherland	May
Cliff Richard	Wired For Sound	November
Coldplay	Talk	October

a song a day, 2006

Colin Vearncombe	Sleeper	October
Corinne Bailey Rae	Put Your Records On	March
Counting Crows	A Long December	December
Counting Crows	Goodnight Elizabeth	April
Counting Crows	Daylight Fading	January
Counting Crows	Round Here	March
Crowded House	Chocolate Cake	September
Damien Rice	Dogs	December
Damien Rice	Rootless Tree	November
Dandy Warhols	We Used to Be Friends	February
Daniel Powter	Lie To Me	April
Dashboard Confessional	Rooftops and Invitations	July
Dave Matthews	Gravedigger	May
Dave Matthews	Gravedigger	September
Dave Matthews Band	Too Much	April
Dave Matthews Band	The Space Between	June
Dave Matthews Band	Sleep to Dream Her	November
David Bowie	Changes	March
David Gray	Please Forgive Me	February
David Usher	How Are You	September
David Usher	Joy In Small Places	September
De La Soul	The Magic Number	January
Deacon Blue	Real Gone Kid	October
Deana Carter	Angles Working Overtime	February
Dears	We Can Have It	September
Delays	Valentine	April
Depeche Mode	Shame	January
Depeche Mode	Walking in My Shoes	July
Depeche Mode	In Your Room	September
Depeche Mode	Personal Jesus	September
Depeche Mode	Shake the Disease	September
Dirty Vegas	Days Go By	November
Doves	Cedar Room	June
Dream Warriors	Wash Your Face In My Sink	December
Easyworld	Lights Out	April
Easyworld	All I Can Remember	January
Ed Harcourt	Late Night Partner	August
Ed Harcourt	Rain on the Pretty Ones	August
Editors	Bullets	December
Eels	Climbing to the Moon	April
Eels	I Like Birds	February
Elbow	Powder Blue	April
Elbow	Anyday Now	January
Elbow	Leaders of the Free World	January
Elbow	Puncture Repair	July
Elbow	Red	July
Elbow	I've Got Your Number	June
Electric Soft Parade	Silent to the Dark	April
Elliott Smith	Angeles	June
ELO	Mr Blue Sky	June
Eminem	Lose Yourself	June
Eurythmics	You Placed a Chill in My Heart	August
Eurythmics	You Placed a Chill in my Heart	May

a song a day, 2006

Feeder	Buck Rogers	August
Feeder	Swim	January
Findlay Brown	Come Home	December
Fiona Apple	Sleep to Dream	January
Foo Fighters	Breakout	October
Four Day Hombre	Jedi Blues	January
Four Day Hombre	Single Room	March
Frank Sinatra	Don't Fence Me In	August
Fruit Bats	Slipping Through the Sensors	May
Garbage	Stupid Girl	February
Gene	Where Are They Now?	May
Genesis	Against All Odds	November
George Michael	Older	October
Goldfrapp	Fly Me Away	September
Gomez	Girlshapedlovedrug	May
Goo Goo Dolls	Iris	July
Goo Goo Dolls	Name	June
Grand Drive	I Believe In Love	October
Gravenhurst	Fog Round the Figurehead	April
Guns 'n' Roses	Sweet Child o' Mine	April
Hard Fi	Living for the Weekend	April
Heavy Trash	Mr KIA	March
Hope of the States	Left	September
Horslips	Green Star Liner	August
Hot Chip	Over and Over	October
Howie Day	Perfect Time of Day	August
Howie Day	Collide	July
Idlewild	Love Steals Us From Loneliness	December
Idlewild	Listen to What You've Got	January
Idlewild	If It Takes You Home	October
Incubus	Sick Sad Little World	October
Indigo Girls	Closer to Fine	April
Indigo Girls	Closer to Fine	December
Infadels	Murder That Sound	December
INXS	Suicide Blonde	November
Iron and Wine (with Calexico)	Dead Man's Will	March
Jack Johnson	Sitting Waiting Wishing	November
Jamelia	Beware of the Dog	October
James Blunt	Out of My Mind	January
James Brown	Christmas In Heaven	December
James Dean Bradfield	Still A Long Way To Go	October
James Iha	Beauty	June
Jay Z	Big Pimpin'	June
Jeff Buckley	Last Goodbye	February
Jeff Buckley	Hallelujah	June
Jet	Look What You've Done	February
Jewel	Hands	April
Jimmy Cliff	I Can See Clearly Now	February
Joe Purdy	The City	November
John Farnham	You're the Voice	February
Jose Gonzalez	Teardrop	August
Josh Rouse	Sad Eyes	May
KD Lang	The Consequences of Falling	August

a song a day, 2006

Keane	Is It Any Wonder	June
Keith Urban	Days Go By	March
Kelly Rowland	Train on a Track	July
Kiss	Crazy, Crazy Nights	December
KLF	What Time is Love?	February
Kraftwerk	Computer Love	January
Kristin Hersh	Clay Feet	June
KT Tunstall	Heal Over	October
Kubb	Grow	August
Lamb	Little Things	March
Led Zeppelin	Thank You	February
Led Zeppelin	Out on the Tiles	November
Lemonheads	I Am a Rabbit	May
Lenny Kravitz	It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over	September
Levellers	Just the One	May
Lifehouse	Sick Cycle Carousel	March
Lighthouse Family	Lifted	October
Longpigs	Jesus Christ	March
Longpigs	All Hype	May
Longpigs	Lost Myself	May
Lou Rhodes	Tremble	November
Low	Step	January
Madonna	Rain	December
Madonna	Sorry	February
Magnet	Last Day of Summer	September
Mama Cass Elliot	Make Your Own Kind of Music	May
Manic Street Preachers	Of Walking Abortion	December
Manic Street Preachers	Faster	February
Manic Street Preachers	Yes	January
Manic Street Preachers	Motorcycle Emptiness	March
Manic Street Preachers	This is Yesterday	May
Maria Lawson	Sleepwalking	October
Marilyn Manson	Fight Song	May
Martina McBride	Blessed	February
Men at Work	Down Under	November
Menswear	Daydreamer	October
Midlake	Balloon Maker	July
Moist	Silver	July
Morrissey	Everyday is Like Sunday	May
Mother Hips	Sarah Bellum	January
Mother Hips	Mother Hips	July
Mother Hips	Emotional Gold	June
Motion Picture Soundtrack	Everybody Wants to be Blonde	January
Mumm-Ra	Out of the Question	December
Muse	Starlight	July
Muse	Supermassive Black Hole	June
Muse	Plug in Baby	March
Muse	Time is Running Out	May
Muse	Time is Running Out	November
Nadiya	Tous Ces Mots	July
Natalie Imbruglia	Smoke	March
Natalie Merchant	Wonder	April
Natalie Merchant	Carnival	October

a song a day, 2006

Neil Diamond & Brian Wilson	Delirious Love	July
Neil Halstead	Hi Lo and In Between	April
Neil Halstead	High Hopes	September
Neil Young	Rockin' in the Real World	February
Neil Young	The Needle and the Damage Done	June
Nelly	Hot in Herre	November
Nelly Furtado	Maneater	June
Nerina Pallot	Sophia	August
Oasis	She's Electric	February
Oasis	Stop Crying Your Heart Out	October
Patty Griffin	Mary	January
Paul McCartney	Frog Chorus	May
Pearl Jam	Daughter	April
Pearl Jam	Rearviewmirror	March
Pearl Jam	Rearviewmirror	November
Pete Murray	Feeler	June
Phish	Waste	March
Pink Floyd	Take it Back	August
Pink Floyd	Wish You Were Here	August
Pink Floyd	Dogs	February
Placebo	Follow the Cops Back Home	April
Placebo	Infra-Red	April
Placebo	Slave to the Wage	April
Placebo	Nancy Boy	August
Placebo	Black Eyed	February
Placebo	This Picture	January
President of the USA	Peaches	August
Primal Scream	Country Girl	April
Procol Harum	Whiter Shade of Pale	June
Pulp	Party Hard	March
Queen	Headlong	August
Queen	Hammer to Fall	November
R.E.M.	Cuyahoga	April
R.E.M.	Fall On Me	April
R.E.M.	King of Birds	April
R.E.M.	I Don't Sleep I Dream	August
R.E.M.	Shaking Through	December
R.E.M.	Perfect Circle	January
R.E.M.	Tongue	January
R.E.M.	Fall on Me	July
R.E.M.	I Remember California	July
R.E.M.	Hairshirt	June
R.E.M.	Try Not to Breathe	March
R.E.M.	So Fast So Numb	May
R.E.M.	Aftermath	October
R.E.M.	Fretless	October
R.E.M.	Untitled	September
Radiohead	We Suck Young Blood	December
Radiohead	You Never Wash Up After Yourself	January
Radiohead	No Surprises	July
Radiohead	Black Star	May
Radiohead	No Surprises	May
Radiohead	Lucky	October

a song a day, 2006

Rainbow	Since You've Been Gone	December
Razorlight	America	August
Robbie Williams	Rudebox	September
Roddy Woomble	Every Line of a Long Moment	July
Rolf Harris	Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport	March
Rolling Stones	Brown Sugar	April
Rolling Stones	Hot Stuff	August
Rolling Stones	Jumpin' Jack Flash	March
Rolling Stones	Paint it Black	September
Rosie Brown	Ocean	August
Rosie Thomas	I Play Music	January
Ryan Adams	Meadowlake Street	June
Sarah McLachlan	Answer	January
Sarah McLachlan	Fallen	July
Sarah McLachlan	Building a Mystery	June
Scissor Sisters	I Don't Feel Like Dancing	August
Scissor Sisters	Paul McCartney	November
Scott Matthews	Eyes Wider than Before	July
Scott Matthews	Elusive	May
Sebastien Tellier	Ritournelle	August
Semisonic	Secret Smile	January
Seth Lakeman	The Bold Knight	August
Simon and Garfunkel	Homeward Bound	September
Sinead O'Connor	Fire On Babylon	October
Snow Patrol	Chocolate	December
Snow Patrol	Spitting Games	January
Snow Patrol & M Wainwright	Set the Fire to the Third Bar	May
Soul II Soul	Keep on Movin'	November
Sparks	This Town Ain't Big Enough...	October
Status Quo	Down Down	April
Steeleye Span	All Around My Hat	March
Stevie Wonder	Superstitious	January
Stone Roses	She Bangs the Drum	October
Suede	Indian Strings	December
Suede	Daddy's Speeding	March
Supergrass	Grace	June
Temposhark	It's Better to Have...	March
The All Seeing I	First Man in Space	July
The Automatic	Raoul	July
The Automatic	Monster	May
The Beatles	A Day in the Life	February
The Blood Arm	Suspicious Character	September
The Cardigans	My Favourite Game	October
The Clash	Should I Stay or Should I Go?	January
The Coral	Dreaming of You	April
The Cranberries	Dreams	August
The Cure	Pictures of You	June
The Dears	We Can Have It	September
The Devlins	Big Decision	October
The Feeling	Fill My Little World	May
The Feeling	Love It When You Call	November
The Flaming Lips	Waitin' for a Superman	March
The Flaming Lips	Ego Tripping at the Gates of Hell	November

a song a day, 2006

The Flaming Lips	Yeah Yeah Yeah Song	November
The Hollies	He Ain't Heavy (He's My Brother)	February
The Hollies	Words Don't Come Easy	September
The Isley Brothers	Summer Breeze	June
The Killers	When You Were Young	August
The Kinks	Sunny Afternoon	June
The Las	There She Goes	December
The Levellers	The Boatman	March
The Minus 5	Dear Employer (The Reason Why I Quit)	January
The Perishers	Weekends	May
The Pipettes	Pull Shapes	July
The Pixies	Where is my Mind?	November
The Pogues & Kirsty MacColl	Fairytale of New York	December
The Prodigy	Smack My Bitch Up	December
The Prodigy	Firestarter	September
The Prodigy	Hotride	September
The Rolling Stones	Get Off of My Cloud	February
The Rolling Stones	You Can't Always Get What You Want	September
The Smiths	Stretch Out & Wait	August
The Smiths	Frankly, Mr Shankly	February
The Smiths	Please, Please, Please, Let Me Get What I Want	November
The Specials	Ghost Town	April
The Strokes	Heart in a Cage	March
The Upper Room	Black and White	May
The Upper Room	All Over This Town	September
The Used	Pieces Mended	October
The Velvelettes	Needle in a Haystack	July
The Waterboys	World Party	August
The Who	Guitar and Pen	December
Thom Yorke	Black Swan	July
Tom Baxter	The Whole of the Moon	December
Tom McRae	You Cut Her Hair	December
Tom McRae	You Cut Her Hair	March
Tom McRae	You Only Disappear	May
Tony Bennett	The Christmas Song	December
Tori Amos	Bells for Her	June
Tori Amos	Waitress	May
Tracy Chapman	Fast Car	September
Trash Can Sinatras	All the Dark Horses	February
Travis	Flowers in the Window	April
U2	I Will Follow	May
Ultravox	Dancing With Tears in my Eyes	December
Union of Knives	Infant Eyes	December
Union of Knives	Opposite Direction	November
Union of Knives	Operated On	October
Van Halen	Jump	June
Van Halen	Jump	September
Van Morrison	Queen of the Slipstream	August
Wheat	Don't I Hold You	July
Wilco	Promising	February
Young Heart Attack	Starlight	June