



Margot & the Nuclear So And So's

PANIC ATTACKS (Low Level Bumner) (*Animal! / Not Animal* Rarities)

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Pirates

A Tangle of Blonde

Broadripple is Burning

I Git Even (demo)

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Moonshine Baby (demo)

B.

Cam's Piano Opus

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If Ya Wanna Go Out (demo)

Blue Collar, Red Letter

Cold, Kind & Lemon Eyes (demo)

No Vaseline

Richard Edwards: vocals, guitars, keys

Erik Kang: strings, slide

Tyler Watkins: bass vocals

Andy Fry: guitars, vocals

Chris Fry: drums

Casey Tennis: percussion

Emily Watkins: keys, vocals

Jon Rogers: (vocals on "Blue Collar")

Cameron McGill: piano

*All songs written by Richard Edwards
(Mice & Margot Music, ASCAP)

**All songs recorded by Tyler Watkins
at Queensize Twin Aire

Mastered for vinyl by Tyler Watkins at Postal Recording

Animal! / Not Animal

Jesus, do I love this band. I think Richard Edwards is without a doubt one of the most underrated artists making music today. It actually annoys me that Margot is not more celebrated, and that I often can't talk people into giving them a chance because they've never even heard of them. What the fuck? 10 years and five albums plus of consistent quality ought to be enough to get on even the late adopter's musical radar.

I still remember the very day I became a Margot fan. Winter of 2008. I had read on one of the blogs about the controversy the band was having with their label at the time. It seemed there was a disagreement between the two sides as to what songs were going to be on the band's new album. I'm sure those discussions happen all the time in tall buildings in New York and the public usually never hears about them but this one had spilled out.

I thought A.) good for you band-guy for sticking to your guns and not just picking the songs The Man wants us to hear – you probably know more about your band than they do and B.) who is this group that has so many songs that they are going to end up putting out two albums at once with just a few track overlapping?

The band's preferred version of that record was called *Animal!* and the one the label endorsed was named *Not Animal*. That's the one I found for sale at Everyday Music in Seattle, my favorite store for physical music then and now. I drove it home and broke the seal.

Side one, track one. "Sarah, settle down. Put your helmet on..." were the first words I heard Richard sing in that sweet clear voice on "A Children's Crusade on Acid." I was hooked instantly. There was so much emotion in his voice. So much yearning. It sounded like life or death. But about what?

"Satan, settle down! Keep your trousers on. You can warm the globe, but leave my wretched soul alone I don't know you! And I don't owe you a thing..."

No clue. I've heard that song hundreds of times since and still have no idea what's it's about. I listened on.

"Hello Vagina," "Broadripple is Burning," "Cold, Kind, And Lemon Eyes," Who writes songs like this? I studied the lyrics and came to the conclusion, possibly misguided, that none of the songs were literal. They gave me feelings but not understanding and that was fine. I was all in for the ride anyway. That's music's job, really, to make you feel things, right?

That was Thanksgiving week and I listened to the album almost every day through the holidays. While I was getting to know it back to front I was also tracking down a copy of the other version, *Animal!*, I don't remember where, either mail order or Ebay. Note to self: hang on to that vinyl as it's worth about a hundred buck now.

Animal! is every bit the equal of *Not Animal*. Now I had even more Margot to love. "Mariels' Brazen Overture" is stunning, like a little pocket musical. And "My Baby (Shoots Her Mouth Off)" just soars, with guitars, strings, and Richard singing a beautiful melody on top of it all.

Discovering Margot was like going down a wonderful rabbit hole for me. I quickly bought *The Dust Of Retreat*, the first album, and wondered how the hell I missed it first time around. It is a stunning debut. I tracked down a couple of EPs, a single here and there. Not a misstep among them.

As a now rabid fan, I tried to spread the word, wrote about them on my radio station's website, lobbied the music department to play them, but Margot stayed stubbornly unknown, except to the few and the faithful. On the *Buzzard* tour I finally got to see them in concert for the first time in Seattle at the Crocodile. The show was great and there was a lot of love in the room, going both ways from the stage and back.

Richard has been very generous with his fans. On social media he is very accessible and interactive. We know about his love of family, friends, old movies, analog recording equipment and the NBA. He frequently shares acoustic versions of his songs, demos, covers, jams and outtakes. It's been like playing whack-a-mole to keep up with them all and to be online at the right time to grab one when it is offered.

You can tell he loves making music and loves sharing it too. That's why this compilation exists. There's a lot in the vault and it needs to be set free! As I write this in June 2015, I have no idea what is in the box but I am pumped beyond belief to dive in.

Let's all listen and learn and love and spread the word about this treasure that is Margot & the Nuclear So And So's because they are awesome.

That is all.
Bean

Kevin & Bean Show, KROQ, Los Angeles

Painting (reverse side) by Stacy Novak | <http://stacynovakart.com>

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PANIC ATTACKS (Low Level Bummer) (*Animal! / Not Animal* Rarities)

Pirates

We toured the Dust record for a long time. Maybe a couple of years. We all moved into Andy's house so we could afford to stay on the road with only one rent to worry about. Three mini cubbies were built in the downstairs bedroom where three of us slept at night or during the day. I finally convinced Chris to give up his AV room upstairs for me when it became apparent that no writing, or anything else, was going to be accomplished in the cubbies. Andy, Emily, my high school friend turned full time Margot keyboardist, and Casey Tennis, who had joined on percussion, stayed down there, god bless 'em. At one point, early on after Dust we started a follow-up in a cabin while on a week long tour break, but got literally one drum track done. The rest of the time we played shuffle board and actually built a league. We interviewed each other after matches and recorded everything.

During the endless touring, I began having severe panic attacks. Full days panic attacks that never let up. We had been burning the rock and roll candle pretty hard for a group of sweater rockers and I began adjusting my lifestyle to try and rid myself of these horrible things. Was also becoming very dissatisfied with what I perceived to be a toothless, down-strummy, white kid sound. I started really hating the songs I had previously assumed would be on the next album. The Broadripples, The Cliffs, etc.. I started going onto the roof of our house at night with a six pack of Nat Ice and writing a batch of songs that I thought were scary, and certainly more musically complex/interesting. Think the first one was "At the Carnival". "Oh What a Nightmare" came next, then "Mariel," all the songs about orphans in mineshafts. I tore through multiple conceptual ideas, most involving kids roaming some post-apocalyptic hyper-religious alternate universe. One iteration was to be about "Last Temptation of Christ". I stayed up there all night, almost every night. We decided to go into our studio, Queensize Twin Aire, to start the follow up to Dust. This is the gang rehearsing the vocals for "Oh, What a Nightmare".

A Tangle of Blonde — Queensize sessions

Our label, V2, had gone under, leaving us "between labels". We went in to the studio the same late hours as we did on Dust, but this time we were pulling in all different directions. I was mangling the more Dust-y material to try and make it fit within this new sound I was dreaming of. We were experimenting a lot but it was very hit or miss. This one, though, was easy, and somehow did bridge the past and present much better than most of what we were doing. Here, for the first time, most of the material from these pre-Epic Animal sessions are collected.

Broadripple is Burning — Queensize sessions

I tried to murder this song and this is what happened. I think we were all sick of it by the time we got around to recording it. I'm thankful for it in a way now, but it pissed me off back then. Played it live this way a bunch.

I Git Even (demo)

Another one that came late in the game, with "Carnival" and all that lot. There were a lot of "interesting" poor white folk in Fountain Square, where we lived. I would listen to their arguments while I sat on the roof. This was a song about one of those arguments. We rehearsed it as a band but it didn't make the any real sessions. Remember Chris having a great drum thing worked out and the rest of it being a disaster.

As Tall As Cliffs (demo)

This is from the first post Dust demo session, which has been widely (for us) bootlegged. How unfortunate. My voice hadn't changed. I am less than sentimental about it.

Moonshine Baby (demo)

There were so many songs during this time and this is one I wish had made it into the studio. Written the same week as "Tangle of Blonde" and "Payphone," two others that got the axe. These industry people started taking me strip clubs all over NY because you could still smoke in them. The club would pay off the fire department. I was too lame and chicken to really indulge in it the way one should. The women would all end up telling me their real names and asking if I wanted to meet for coffee the next day and stuff. I wrote this, and another one called "Santa Claus is sitting in my lap," about my fond feelings for these strip club trips. Oh, and another one called "Two girls".

Cam's Piano Opus

Cameron being great

A Children's Crusade on Acid — Queensize sessions

Part of the "children in mines at the end of the world" story cycle. Another down-strummy one I felt self conscious about and tried to subvert. Some decent ideas that were carried over to the version we cut with Deck after we signed to Epic and restarted the album.

Whiskey Jingle

I was asked to write a possible jingle for a whiskey commercial and this is what I somehow thought would work. I thought, "whiskey gives you confidence" so the song should be telling everyone that the king is back in town and he is me. Andy Gershon, who we really respected at Epic, pushed us to do this for the Animal sessions. It was a bad move not to, but we recorded like 40 songs and eventually ran out of time.

If Ya Wanna Go Out (demo)

This was a personal one, written about a problem I had with girlfriends, and which I now have with my wife.

Blue Collar, Red Letter

Another one that probably serves as an example of our tendency to over cook a song in our pre-Deck days.

Cold, Kind, & Lemon Eyes (demo)

One I was real fond of. The version on the album is about 85% Queensize pre-Epic sessions, and 15% overdubs in Chicago during the official Deck sessions. Like "Tangle of Blonde," we seemed to have an okay feel for this one from the get-go. This demo is from one of the two or three acoustic demo sessions we did at Queensize before we started tracking.

No Vaseline

Eventually, all my dumb concept ideas for the album were ditched in favor of a more traditional record with no overtly overriding story or theme. But the mineshaft kids at the end of the world thing made it the furthest, and this one, recently re-discovered, was slated to close the A-side of something like that. Was supposed to be one of the mineshaft kids yelling at god. It sounds about as worn down as we'd be after the Animal!/Not Animal experience unceremoniously ended.