

# 'CHILLS' FROM PAGE 12

remities have turned blue. Bright blue. It's his cold. To try and keep warm his tortured throat, he's been wearing a bright blue balaclava and woollen gloves. Now he returns with Kate and he's wearing iridescent sky-coloured gym boots. Crazy.

The drive to Nijmegen, a university town, is not a particularly long one. Or shouldn't be. But a wrong turning adds considerably to the journey — Justin has the thankless task of navigator on this occasion. And now we're driving round and round Nijmegen in search of the venue.

"Are we hanging laps?" Lighting technician Lisa asks innocently. "Y'know — hanging laps around the town. We used to do that on Friday nights when I was young. Drive round and round ..."

We are hanging laps. And it's boring.

Eventually we find the Doornooisje, yet another nice little government-aided venue. It apparently used to be a schoolhouse and in the gallery and the cafe room the light coming in through the windows is of the marbly kind you associate with old classrooms in the afternoon. The high windows of education.

The backstage room is big and triangular with a long table and Kate Tattersfield sits and patiently tunes guitars, glad of a little company while the band is soundchecking next door. The Singer's Girlfriend figure is not a popular one in rock mythology but Kate has proved indispensable on this tour. She can change a string in the space of a song. Martin breaks a few strings and it's interesting to ponder who would have done it if she hadn't come along. She can lift things too.

Kate also acts as a kind of sanctuary for Martin. He takes only a sporadic part in the daily bustle of things and can otherwise often be found playing poker for small change with Kate. He insisted on her coming and is rarely apart from her. Which makes sense — if you have as fine and personal a world as MP has in his head and you manage to impart some of that to another person, that other person becomes important, more than other people. It's a matter of projection.

Dutch group the Night Blooms, support on about half the Dutch dates, roll up, this time with a few mates, who begin to make an impressive assault on the beer in the fridge. So impressive that it runs out.

Every now and then the last Chills used to have a gig where utterly everything that could went wrong — Chills 10 seems to be carrying on the tradition. Nijmegen is so bad it's actually funny. Martin's voice reaches its utter nadir, often diverting absurdly as he reaches for a note, and he snaps string after string. Songs stumble, stagger and crawl through their lengths. All this to the gentle and constant accompaniment of the sound of breaking waves through the PA, scattered with the odd sharp CRACK or loud BANG.



The Great Escape: Caroline Easter and Andrew Todd look for a new van.

Soundman Andrew Frengley later awards those "responsible" the accolade of "the worst, the very worst, PA company I have ever worked with."

The shame of it is the Nijmegen crowd is both good-humoured and enthusiastic and deserved a good gig. But they're smart enough to realise things are going seriously awry, and generous enough to laugh along with it. Maybe next time.

For now it's back at last to the hotel to sleep and, no doubt, to dream.

Oh. This was also the night the van door started falling off.

Someone's dream. The Numinous Paint. I had a can of numinous paint, once. I kept it under my bed and every night I'd roll it out, prise open the lid and dip my fingers in it. It turned my hands like the diffuse prism in a garden spray and I could draw with the paint on my fingers. On the air. I could draw on the air.

Smears and dots of paint would hang there like snail trails, even if you brushed against them, lightly. I'd build whole heaving architectural constructs that stretched from one end of my room to the other; shimmering webs, imaginary cities, six-legged wasp-waisted people to live in them. It glowed in the dark too.

Yes, and you could paint it on solid things too. Funny thing was it didn't make things look any different, except in a way you couldn't pin down. It just made things look GOOD, irresistibly good. You'd paint it on something everyday and plain and people would hold the thing in their hands and marvel at it. Not for being anything other than it had been before the paint, but simply for what it was.

It was a good way to really get to know your household objects; chuckle at the rich, red humour of an apple; weigh up the apparent contradictions of a wristwatch, feel the spirit in

your favourite coffee cup. I never bothered with body painting. I don't think people need it.

People used to say to me: "Do you ever think about painting the house?" I thought about painting the house all the time. But I didn't have enough.

## Feb 25

### Paard, Den Haag

Den Haag, or the Hague, should be an interesting place, we thought. International Court of Justice, European Parliament and so on ... but of course we didn't see any of that. A rock and roll tour is actually a very poor way of seeing a country. You get up late because you've gone to bed late because you didn't start playing till 11.30pm, you drive, load, soundcheck, eat, hang around, play, load out ... Den Haag is a good gig, rather loud, where the band pulls off a topping version of the tricky instrumental 'Balancing'; the meal is the best of the tour ... and that's it, basically.

## Feb 26

### Vera, Gronigen

Gronigen is the northernmost city in the Netherlands, it's noticeably colder and there are even more bicycles than in Amsterdam. Swarms of them. You wouldn't expect much of such a place, but take it from me, Gronigen is a fine little city.

The majority of its youth apparently live on student bursaries or the dole, both fairly generous in Holland. This gives them time for enterprises like the Vera. Many of the tour venues are run wholly or partly by volunteer labour, but none have the warmth and sense of community of the Vera. It's in an old building in the middle of town and doubles as a cheapo restaurant during the day, with an atmospheric little grotto of a bar downstairs. The people are helpful and the PA and lights are basic but of good quality.

Gronigen's youth are a hip lot too. The record shops are full of imports, including a good few Flying Nun releases (I personally rescued Children's Hour's 'Ya Ya Ya' from bargain bin ignominy). The youth know how to enjoy themselves at a gig too — none of this Dutch reserve, it's like a hot and heavy night at the Windsor used to be and people sway and dance and embrace and laugh and drink. Three encores, easy.

Afterwards, upstairs, the formidable Sil produces extra bottles of vodka and encourages us to stay. Andrew Todd and Justin get enticed off to a disco. Caroline and Kate are tired and go back to the horrible hotel and Martin won't stay

without Kate (she scolds him for it), Craig is somewhere, so it's Andrew Frengley, Lisa and me who represent New Zild through the small hours.

Andrew discovers the Vera is threatened with a cut in council funding and pens on the spot a letter encouraging the city council to do otherwise. He tells them that they should be grateful their city has something like this — where he comes from almost all the entertainment outlets are controlled by corporate interests. He is rewarded with a shower of kisses.

Andrew should know about NZ venues. Just before coming over he sold his small production company and he's been through them all, many times. But he's sick of working for bands that he hates, as he sometimes had to do, and now he's thrown his all in with something he loves. He's a Chill for a while. Lisa only began doing lights at the start of the NZ tour and is desperately conscious of wanting to be as good as possible. "I knew all the technical side of it when I started the tour," she explains. "It's just the artistry of it that I have to learn." She's coming along just fine.

## Feb 27

### Effenaar, Eindhoven

It was a very close thing, this day ... sooo close. An early rise, a trip around the record shops and a return to find Craig in the van, fuming. He's just found out by phone that we have to reach the Swedish Consulate in Den Haag, a long way to the south, to pick up Swedish work permits or ... or else. It's Friday and there'll be no other chance to do it before leaving for Sweden on Sunday. They've been ready to go for almost half an hour. The consulate closes at three and it's going to be tight.

The weather seems determined to stop us. Thick, driving rain pushes against the windscreen and it's unnerving to think that we can't even afford to slow down. A tense general silence gradually melts into touring humour — fast, ritualised repartee, often laced with a razor-edge irony that gets things said. Every touring troupe has it in some form and you couldn't get by without it.

We stop at a service station and Craig makes some phone calls. He manages to persuade someone at the consulate to hang around an extra half hour. We go through Rotterdam and it seems we're gonna make it. Until ...

"Are we there already? Wow, that was ..."

"Er, no ..."

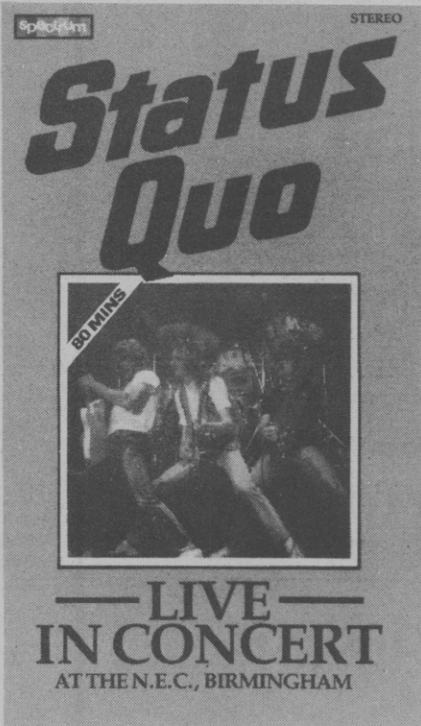
Craig smiles a smile so grim you could go into mourning for it, and he looks fixedly at the map. "We've, ah, gone the wrong way, we have to go back to Rotterdam ..."

"Hanging laps ..." says Lisa.

"Big ones."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

# MUSIC ON VIDEO CASSETTE FOR SALE



20th ANNIVERSARY  
CONCERT  
IN THE PRESENCE OF  
HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

LIVE PERFORMANCES OF

ROCKIN ALL OVER THE WORLD  
ROLL OVER LAY DOWN  
LITTLE LADY  
JOHN B GOOD  
DOWN DOWN  
and many more.

Includes Footage not previously seen  
Colour Dolby Stereo RRP \$65.95 inc. GST



14 Fabulous Songs  
Performed Live including

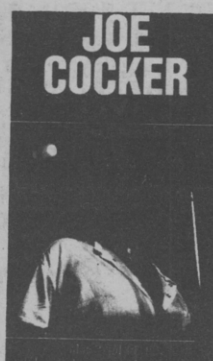
THE MAIN THING  
CAN'T LET GO  
LOVE IS A DRUG  
BOTH ENDS BURNING  
EDITIONS OF YOU

Colour Stereo RRP \$65.95 inc. GST

Available at any of the following BBC/Polygram Specialist Stores:

WHANGAREI, Video Station - 15 James St AUCKLAND MacGregor Hay Limited  
- 218 Great South Rd Manurewa, Glamuzinas Video Library - 4345 Gt North Rd  
Glendene, Video Station - Pakuranga Town Centre Pakuranga GIBBORNE Video  
Station - 116 Bright St, Gisborne HAMILTON Quills Video Mart 750 Victoria St  
Hamilton HASTINGS Video Vault - 311 Heretaunga St, West Hastings NEW  
PLYMOUTH 221 Video Club - 323 Devon St East New Plymouth WANGANUI  
DJ's Video Library - 1 Victoria Avenue Wanganui MASTERTON Hi Vid Theatre Chapel St Masterton WELLINGTON Cyclops Video - Hillary Court Naenae Wellington, Kilbirnie Video Centre - 3  
Rongatai Rd Kilbirnie Wellington NELSON The Video Cassette - 23 Alma Lane Nelson CHRISTCHURCH Budget Video - 25 Wakefield St Sumner Christchurch, Quills Video - 904 Colombo St  
Christchurch, Noel Leeming Limited - 575 Colombo St Christchurch, DUNEDIN Basil North Ltd - 128 Gordon Rd Mosgiel, Southern Video Hire - 115 George St Dunedin INVERCARGILL Video Corner :A  
Avenal - Cnr Dee and Fox Sts HOKITIKA Graham Electronics - 101 Revell St Hokitika

Distributed in New Zealand by Kerridge Odeon Amalgamated Video, P.O. Box 422. Phone: 32-206 Auckland



These and more music videos are at your  
BBC/Polygram Specialty Store  
Pick up a complete listing soon.