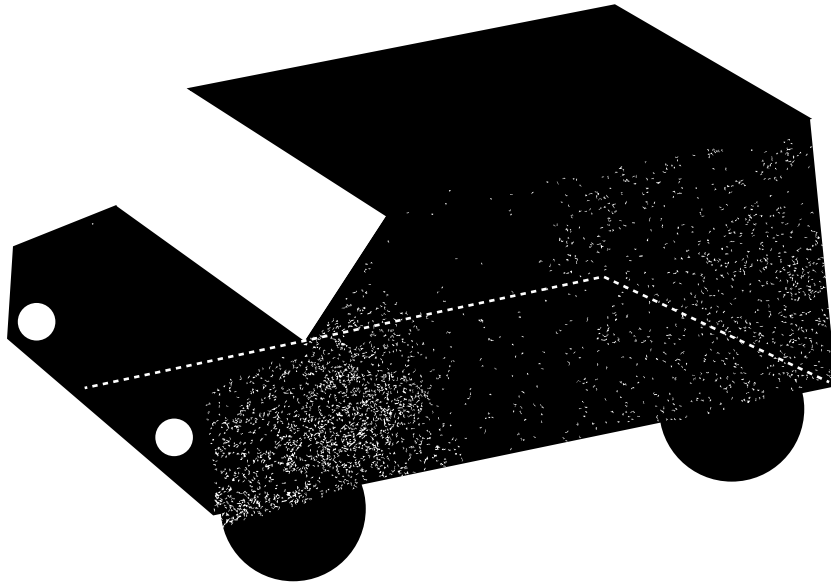


# JANKY



An Odyssey into Touring,  
Heartbreak and General  
Fuckedupedness with Slow  
Down Molasses

by: Chrix Morix

# Preface

On Saturday, October 2, 2010, Ryan Drabble – who tours as a sound tech for Regina’s Library Voices – came through Montreal. The show was at Café Campus, possibly the most insipid venue in the Plateau. In-between each fey, indie pop song, obnoxious dance beats swelled from the club upstairs. I still can’t comprehend why bands allow their agents to continue booking shows there. Tellingly, the night ran late and Library Voices played a surprisingly glib set considering their audience had dwindled to a handful of kids willing to brave another band at 3am.

The next afternoon, Drabble and I met over some veggie burgers and fries. He mentioned that Slow Down Molasses were about to embark on a tour – “the entire country, coast-to-coast,” he smiled.

Drabble always seems a little crazy, albeit in the most amazing, wholesome way ever. But the thought of that band – a group committed to playing the sketchiest shows ever on the road – planning and executing a cross-Canada tour was actually sort of laughable. Slow Down Molasses could barely make it to a coast without having things unravel, fall apart and everything scattering on the sidewalk from a busted pocket.

“Want to come?”

Of course.

There were a lot of reasons to say no. I hadn't worked a real job in over a year and was living off rapidly dwindling savings. I had several other projects on the go – my band called Muskeg was just starting to record and play shows and my other band The Eyebats were about to release an EP on a label. And, truthfully, I didn't like the idea of being away from my partner for over a month – this becomes painfully apparent later on.

But Slow Down Molasses has always been one of my favourite train wrecks, and I loved the idea of spearheading some new debacles with them, like the time I started the drunken dance party in Kelowna, the sailor suit photo shoot on the ferry to Victoria or the time we all got drunk at the skinhead karaoke bar and several of us puked on the van (guilty) or on each other.

A couple of months later I heard the album. It was kind of like the last album, but better. Good enough. I was sold.

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011, after an epic night of partying with Andrew WK, I left Montreal for Saskatoon for a week of practice.

And then we toured. And it was the most epic time of my life. Even more than partying with Mr. WK.

Seriously!

Chrix

# Tour Into The Sea - 2011

March 10 - Saskatoon - Caffe Sola Walk Into The Sea All Ages album release w/ Dreaming of Electric Sheep

March 11 - Saskatoon - Amigo's - Walk Into The Sea album release & tour kick off!

March 12 - Edmonton - Wunderbar w/ Jeans Boots and Jessica Jalbert

March 15 - Vancouver - The Biltmore w/ Jeans Boots and Aunts & Uncles

March 17 - Calgary - Broken City w/ Deadhorse and Scars & Scarves

March 18 - Regina - O'Hanlons w/ Jeans Boots

March 19 - Winnipeg - The Lo Pub w/ Jeans Boots, The Empty Standards and The Slow Dancers

March 20 - Thunder Bay - The Apollo w/ Jeans Boots

March 22 - Toronto - The Horseshoe w/ Jeans Boots

March 24 - Halifax - Gus' Pub w/ Jeans Boots, Dance Movie and Klarka Weinwurm

March 25 - Fredricton - The Capitol w/ Sleepless Nights and Writer's Strike

March 26 - Sackville - The Royal Canadian Legion - Shotgun Jimmie's cd release!!!

March 27 - Charlottetown - Baba's w/ Jeans Boots

March 29 - Montreal - Casa Del Popolo w/ The Sunnies and Asthma Camp

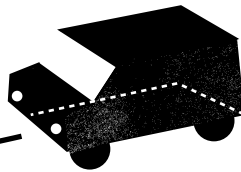
March 30 - Ottawa - The Raw Sugar w/ Jeans Boots and The Ethics

March 31 - Peterborough - The Cannery Arts Centre w/ Jeans Boots and Typewriter

April 1 - Toronto - The Garrison w/ Forest City Lovers and Kite Hill

April 2 - London - APK Live w/ Forest City Lovers and Olenka & the Autumn Lovers

# PART 1



**Wednesday, March 9, 2011**

**4:21pm CST**

**Saskatoon, SK**

Back in my hometown of Saskatoon, alone, staying at my Mom's house, valiantly clutching on to my dwindling savings, it's hard not to be constantly reminded – bludgeoned – by my massive life failures. I've been invited here to participate on the Slow Down, Molasses tour, a band I voluntarily left that has likely achieved more success – albeit a very specific and foreign achievement – than I might ever know. While I am ecstatic for the opportunity it has made me realize the obvious – I am obscenely jobless, transient and wholly without clear prospects.

Of course, the excuse of playing in a rock band remains as steadfast as ever. Here's to bad behaviour.

I've only been in town for a few nights and I've already run out of things to do. I ran into my friend Michelle – another ex-pat – and we bitched about how bored we were.

"I've already hit up the Vinyl Diner, the Vinyl Exchange and I've eaten at Amigos twice," I extrapolated. "I think I only have a couple of things left to do."

She agreed and we laughed. Then my ride pulled up. Oh Saskatoon, I wish you could realize that things I love about you – essentially a river colony of prairie skids – are the things I also abhor about you. I suppose my own roots don't stray too far, do they?

I've started listening to Janis Joplin's Pearl ever since my sludge metal band Muskeg loosely covered "Move Over" at a show at L'Esco in Montreal. I'm always amazed and a little disappointed in myself when I realize how much music I still have yet to discover. Tonight, Janis kicked me in the ass as I listened to the lyrics of "A Woman Left Lonely".

At night in bed, alone, I question why I left my woman to sleep in our bed. Alone.

Invariably I start to think of Slow Down Molasses and the bass cheat lines I have written on the back of my bassing hand. Slow Down's new album Walk Into the Sea is a bit of a heartbreaker, but it's certainly no Pearl.

We've only had a few practices so far – one jam was janky as fuck. I hope this comes together for everyone else's sake.

Furthermore, so much for my colony of skids theory – no one had ever heard the term 'janky' before. What the hell?

**Saturday, March 12, 2011**

**9:57pm MST**

**Edmonton, AB**

Relinquishing having somewhere to sleep at night is an epic adventure. I've slammed down power naps in the back of a van, tossed a sleeping bag into a copse of trees in a park and tossed fitfully on a bench. Of course this was usually wholly by choice. I suspect that touring with a band should rightfully lead to a healthy dose of guilt. How else are you going to gauge how much fun you're having?

When the power fails I steel myself that it might never return. When love dissipates I despair for my failures. Whenever a natural disaster strikes I fear this is the beginning of the end of the world. When my heart beats hard I suspect it might be squeezing out the last few rounds.

I had a conversation last night with a friend about Metis-ness and Catholicism and it's rightful place with identity. C'est vrai, I am the quintessential Catholic – party now, consequences later. I've often thought that I should learn to absorb less guilt but I actually sort of like the feeling. Guilt is the savoury that balances out the sweetness of life, the bitter spice that makes you appreciate the meal, spill the wine and skip out on the bill.

Last night was the Slow Down Molasses album release and tour kick-off. Jeans Boots played one of those amazing sets that blew me away – I love being proven wrong about bands I used to feel meh about. Slow Down Molasses also played well, minus the odd bass flub via moi.

10:14pm

Thinking about the amateur palm reading I received earlier. Apparently my odd thumbs decree that I am a withholder of truth. Perhaps not in a blatantly dishonest way but no less distressing to those I converse with. I thought about chalking this up as a character flaw before deciding to take it as

literary criticism. More truth.

Edmonton is as amazing as I remember it. The show tonight is in an old skinhead bar that has new owners. Too bad they didn't change the name. Yikes!

Jeans Boots just left the stage. They played so amazingly yesterday that I figured that they were going to suck janky balls tonight by comparison.

Truthfully, I was woefully wrong again.

**Monday, March 14, 2011**

**10:21am PST**

**En route to Vancouver, BC**

My motto is regret one thing a day. And I've thoroughly enjoyed reveling in my myriad of flubs, boners and cocked-up situations. Now, on the cusp of numerically aging, I am starting to think of actually whittling it down to one thing a day.

Edmonton was basically the shitshow with everything you could ask for from a show on the road: Great friends, unlimited beer and a receptive crowd full of loud, obnoxious, good-looking people. While I can only hope that this will be the first of many handsome situations I hardly want to get used to this attractiveness, especially since I've been self-bred to wallow in a mire of repulsiveness. I'm more at home with the broken bottles, screaming and perpetually bad sound.

My split personality thunders on: the musician, writer and pundit in me is flexed and oiled – at home my domestic life seems to be conveniently falling apart.

I received a phone call that mapped out all the things I've done wrong in my current relationship. I'm not surprised but I am sick to my stomach. Looks like I can look forward to more guilt – I checked the atlas and Vancouver is still a good six hours away.

A few days ago Japan, home to millions of human beings, was fucked by natural disasters of wholly biblical proportions.

I can't stop thinking about myself right now.

**Tuesday, March 15, 2011**

**1:43pm PST**

**Vancouver, BC**

The best part about touring, an affecting moment of displacement, are the small moments of normalcy. Caught in the middle of a self-imposed Diaspora, surrounded by lechery, cancerous vehicles, handshake deals and liquor there are these moments of beautiful oblivion where you are allowed to breath, kick off the crusty socks and just indulge in nothingness. Right now is one of those moments and it is so devastatingly nothing that I almost feel like just giving the band a hearty fuck you and taking up residency on my friend's couch for the rest of the year.

Tonight we are playing at the Biltmore – a venue that a friend described as “too big” for our band. That sounds weirdly liberating. Or terrible.

Yesterday Slow Down Molasses toured CBC, gave on-air interviews and were given a bunch of free swag. It was a nice respite, a confidence boost, a vicious kiss on the lips and a reminder that I don't mind paying taxes when they are returned in the form of an indie rock radio station that gives you a free toque to cover your greasy, road worn hair. I went exploring and found a fridge – it was full of old sushi and Starbucks cups. No beer. Vancouver can be kind of lame.

We had a day off yesterday so I celebrated by avoiding the rest of the band – sorry dudes. It's a day off. My mind is already warping from the obligatory bad band jokes. The girls make fun of the boys and the boys make fun of the girls.

“Hey wench bench, cram your clam!”

Ugh. No wonder I always feel so dirty on tour.

I went to two karaoke bars with a bunch of friends. I think I liked the second one better – cans of Pabst were \$3. I got drunk with some people I like and some I used to not like very much. Everyone around me is in a relationship. They look and act so normal. Most of them say how cool it is to be on tour. I'd rather be smooching my woman.

On the way home we managed to dodge the knives and puke of every day life on Hastings. A friend of mine likened the area to a third world country within a city that is increasingly unlivable. In some ways it's hard to disagree. I also don't feel like it's terrible. That might be fairly naïve – there are reportedly 18,000 drug users in the Downtown East Side alone.

I have a feeling everything is soon going to resemble a third world country. I don't know to feel about this – I have breakfast. Then I have lunch. And, if there's time, I have supper. I'm doing okay.

**Friday, March 18, 2011**

**8:18 CST**

**Regina, SK**

Returning to Calgary creeps me out. Ten years ago I started a string of shitty and not-so-shitty relationships there. For several years I commuted back and forth, working in-between my month long stints of holing up with hussies and working on my secret life, which entailed short-lived bands, gangs and hipster-baiting at parties.

I vaguely remember being proposed to while there – I can't remember my answer but I am certainly aware of the outcome. Therefore, it's sort of a blessing when I don't run into anyone from my previous lifetime and I am spared the agony of awkwardness.

It's also sort of a curse – I wonder if I will ever be able to be at ease in Calgary. The memories are actually highly outweighed by the what-ifs.

Broken City on St. Patrick's Day was, of course, a total shitshow. The soundman had quit an hour before we got there. No one bothered postering. And, at 5pm, some of the more adventurous patrons were already passing out. I was immediately, and vaguely, threatened by a local drunk who boasted to his friends that he could break my arm. He had a Lollapalooza haircut and wicked awesome tribal tattoos on his head. Instead he merely walked up to me, made a verbal note that I wasn't wearing green, and pinched my tricep with the force of a kitten's touch. Aside from free whisky, the rest of the St. Patrick's Day festivities were mercifully nondescript.

During our set several girls screamed at us with the force of a puma's claw. I think that meant they liked us. I wanted to ask the new soundman, who also doubled as the bus boy, to take out the highs in the monitor. I don't know if anyone would have gotten the joke. After the set we learned that one of the girls was a writer for a prominent Calgary arts paper. I hope those were screams of glee.

Midnight marks the beginning of my birthday. I'm stoked to get older. But I am sick with trepidation that a phone call that I think is rightfully deserved will not be forthcoming tonight.

I don't know what I am doing wrong, all I know is that I feel diseased with grief and self-loathing. I should be having fun – and I am. But I'm wearing a mask and making a massive production of holding it together for the sake of some dear friends whom I care deeply for.

Unfortunately I am not in love with any of them and they are not in love with me.

Last night I jerked off in the tour van, remedying nearly a week's worth of raging boners. I woke up at 7am the next morning and found my jizzy paper towel frozen to the side of the van. It fluttered in the wind like a fey, gross flirt. I chipped it off with a Tim Horton's coffee cup and kicked it under the van. Good morning Calgary commuters.

**Saturday, March 19, 2011**

**5:36pm CST**

**In-between Regina, SK and Winnipeg, MB**

Being on tour has this amazing way of displacing you from reality. Aside from being jammed in a stank van for marathon-epic jaunts with other intense personalities, time has this amazing way of blurring and disorienting. Two nights ago I was using the Rocky Mountains as a sundial – last night I attempted to set my watch to the wintry sway of the prairies.

Tellingly, the van radio is permanently trapped in wrongness.

I am wholly temporally displaced: I eat on the run, I wake up to a toe in the ribs and I only go to sleep when we run out of alcohol.

It's easy to tell where I am in life by the posters in the venue. I know what city I'm. But I'm confused as to where I am in life time-wise.

Last night was part two of turning 31. It was confusing, dizzying, hilarious and a little hurtful. Having the mile marker of a numeric number attached to my name only attaches more confusion. Shouldn't time act as a cardinal point, a latitudinal coordinate for where you are in life?

Of course, being on tour, someone drunkenly spilled coffee on the map and stuffed it on the dashboard.

The show at O'Hanlons had every ingredient needed for spicy awesomeness. A packed house, a receptive audience, free food and beer, lots of pretty girls dancing. Also some smarmy professional photographer took pictures of Slow Down Molasses in the alley. There were a lot of hilarious high kicks and I couldn't help but feel like we were wasting his time.

Last night I said fuck the map and, prefacing my actions with my age, climbed on a three-foot tall amp during the chorus of “Late Night Radio”. I was proud of myself until I was told that I escaped the very likely conclusion that I should have fallen and broken a hip or two – the amp was attached to four very sketchy wheels.

**Sunday, March 20, 2011**

**1:49pm CST**

**In-between Winnipeg, MB and Thunder Bay, ON**

Touring always makes me think of Jordan. The first time I met Jordan was when our bands shared a show in Saskatoon. He immediately blew me away with the amount of heart and guts he poured into his songs. At the time, my shitty band could only get our girlfriends to come to the show. I was ready to quit and jump in the van with him and escape to Edmonton.

Jordan and I quickly became friends, staying up until 5am to chat on the Internet or drinking slurpees together in the park. Embarrassingly, I would rave about his band and how I wish I could back him on the bass.

“Fuck it dude,” he’d always say, “just do it. Lets go.”

My life was something of a mess at the time. I had just dropped out of school. I was teaching a grade 6 class and reasoned that a 20 year old punk rock drunk shouldn’t be at the helm of a room full of prepubescents. It was a good decision but with nothing to fill the void I mostly sat around and got more drunk, whipping bottles from my porch just to hear them break on the sidewalk.

Jordan’s philosophy was to just do it. Fuck it. Lets go. I should have listened to him. But I knew I was too much of a mess. I stayed in Saskatoon and didn’t join his band, who were also my favourite band.

One time in Calgary our bands played a show together. Taking the stage at one in the afternoon, my band played to approximately 15 people. During our last song Jordan jumped on stage to scream the final verse with me. Spit flew from his lips and landed in my mouth. I just grinned. Then I threw my bass, and myself, across the drumset, ran outside and vomited on the front door of the club. The

straight edge kids weren't impressed with my songs or my morning vodka breath. But they liked Jordan and refrained from kicking the shit out of me. Thanks Jordan.

Several months later Jordan's band were on tour in Birmingham, Alabama. Their van was struck from behind by a drunk driver. Jordan was thrown from the vehicle and died instantly. He was 19.

I am sitting in a spot in the van that doesn't have a seatbelt. And I'm thinking about Jordan.

Last night we played in Winnipeg at the Lo Pub, my new favourite Canadian venue and restaurant. The promoters fed us amazing food – I've never had a vegan Philly cheesesteak before – and gave us free hotel rooms. I showered and did laundry, the transformation to feeling human now complete.

The best part of the evening was asking the bartenders for drink tickets. "We'll work something out at the end of the night," they said. Thankfully they just laughed and smiled when I tried to pay for my 14 beers-deep bar tab. Whew.

The show was packed. Playing in front of a swath of dancing girls, cleavage from the heavens hanging in the air, I can't help but smile again. If I won't have anything after this at least I'll have this.

After the show I ran outside to vomit but resisted the urge. I think I've gotten older.

**Monday, March 20, 2011**

**7:58pm EST**

**En route to Barrie, Ont**

Our van's thermostat is completely shot. Too far to the right and the vehicle becomes a cauldron of sweat and odour. But literally three millimetres to the left and everyone starts grumbling into their parkas.

Somehow I've convinced myself that I can find the sweet midway point between dripping with torrid wet and seeing my breath. I'm also convinced that I can straddle the line between hard hedonism and not leaving the tour an emotional, nervous wreck. I'm certain both endeavours are destined for failure.

Thunder Bay is completely fucked in a way that made me want to stay. There are four highly functional venues in a three-block radius. And with bands playing nearly every night, unfortunately this means that all but one stage is a complete ghost town.

Like our show. Two people danced up front, which was really nice of them. Tellingly, we played what will likely be the most competent set of the tour.

After the show, I wandered into the Black Pirates Pub a block away from the Apollo Theatre. Outside a kid was peeing on the door to get in while bragging about getting kicked out. He was completely alone. The beer special was an extra large A&W-sized mug of draft for \$6. Lots of burly men were mid-chug as I sat down. As I ordered one and it occurred to me that these mugs could easily make a handy murder weapon. There were only a few women in the bar – most were total trolls. The two hotties playing pool were carefully guarded by their boyfriends. Everyone else seemed content to wallow in the dank.

After finishing my beer the peeing kid was still outside. He asked if I wanted to fight. A cop car was parked across the street, watching us. I politely declined.

We got free rooms above the venue. The rooms are a byzantine maze of cheap beds and threadbare sheets. I climbed into my sleeping bag and tried not to think of the hotel playing host to a rape holocaust.

My bass, however, is safely locked up in the venue so it's not too hard to sleep.

**Tuesday, March 22, 2011**

**1:47pm EST**

**Patty's house in Barrie, Ontario.**

Every time I visit a new city I immediately start to calculate if I could live there. Amazingly, Barrie has made the list. Patty's apartment is an amazing old lady mansion that is huge on character and cheap on rent. He lives one block away from a liquor store, two blocks away from downtown, which features an impressive bevy of coffee shops and cheap ethnic food. Also, there is a 24-hour grocery store and several strip clubs nearby. Why bother leaving?

Since the age of 27, I haven't lived anywhere statically for over a year. With my 31st birthday already fading in the gutter, this will mark a year and a half in Montreal. And, as of May 1st I will have a new residence.

I don't want to leave. But I don't have a job. And I don't want to go somewhere alone.

At least I'm traveling with Slow Down Molasses, but that's kind of like being alone anyway – all they do is sleep when they aren't onstage. I envy their escape.

**Wednesday, March 23, 2011**

**10:30pm EST**

## **Leaving Montreal, PQ on the Greyhound**

I've never been married before. But I've divorced many times.

Marriage was always sort of ridiculous to me. The idea of something remaining in a constant state is childish and ninny-like – high school science class taught us that living things are in a constant state of erosion.

I never wanted antiquated laws governing my love. My love is far too immature for such things anyway, spitting off the guardrails and stomping on the sidewalk. Besides, high school science class also taught me how to flirt with girls in order to get free cigarettes.

But there are times when I think marriage isn't so terrible after all. And I have to remember it was love – not a cheap wedding – that put me here. I like to remember myself as a child, spying on my parents smooching one another when they thought I wasn't looking. Their love was very dear to me. But dad is dead. And mom kisses a new man now – a stranger. I wish she didn't do it in front of me.

But she doesn't need to ask me, and I don't really need to give an answer. Which is pretty much like being married. There are a lot of questions that you already know the answer to. The difference between being married and being in love, however, is when you are in love you don't need to ask.

Slow Down Molasses is a strange love to me. I helped start the band in 2007, just days after brushing off a particularly weird New Years Eve. And it was a great lover. We had some amazing shows with wild high kicks, waterfalls of beer and even a couple of songs played the way they were meant to be played. But relationships run their course, run out of gas and take a shit and die. My last show with the band was December 23rd 2009, two days before I moved to Montreal for the next adven-

ture. I left without being asked. I didn't want to deal with the question, especially with such an obvious answer. Our relationship was perfect.

Rejoining the band, however, was a tough question. I've always maintained that the best sex is break up sex, but broken up sex is some truly epically masochistic, next level shit. Do I want to know what broken up sex is like? So far no one has asked.

As we left Barrie I began chugging cans of Grolsch. We have yet to get a good mid-day drink on. No one joins me, opting to cajole me instead – I literally have to pee every 20 minutes. Good thing Toronto is only an hour away.

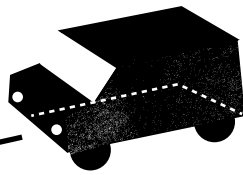
Last night we played the Horseshoe in Toronto, one of my favourite cities in Canada. Despite the confusing line up – a psych-metal-country band and a ska ensemble – Slow Down Molasses played one of the best shows they have ever played. This is especially impressive considering we've only been back together, as a proper band, for just about three weeks.

Even so, we just hit the mid-point for the tour. When it ends, Slow Down Molasses and I will be getting another divorce. It's not especially painful though – these things are always for the best. And, considering I've started smoking again, it's just another reminder that nothing is permanent and that it's unhealthy to live life pretending that these things are bound by either the law of man or god.

Today also marked the first day of my newest divorce. But just so we're straight on something, I totally would have asked you to marry me the shit out of me.

But I'm afraid I already know the answer, my love.

## PART 2



**Wednesday, March 24, 2011**

**10:27 am EST**

**Back in the van, en route to Halifax, NS**

I should be fancying myself a rock music journalist – I’ve been writing consistently for the past 10 years so I figure it’s a deserved title. The best part about writing is getting noticeably better every time I do it. I remember the little tricks I learned last time, I cheat grammar with technology and become vertiginous with amusement when I remember to include that amazing word I heard the day before.

Having said that, my favourite music to write about is the music that I can’t describe. Instead of using characterizations on a visceral level I have to transcend to an emotional one. Right now I am listening to No Age’s album *Everything In Between*. “I want you back underneath my skin.” Right. I’m punching the air in a dizzied frenzy. I keep hitting the back button. And I’m checking my pulse constantly, wondering if I am about to die.

Dad died without warning. Mom told me that it was her day off from work and so her and dad woke up and had a lazy breakfast. Dad was retired so he could do whatever he damn well pleased. And after breakfast, dad did mom. A couple hours later he sat on the bed and either his heart stopped the flow of oxygen to his brain or his brain stopped the surge of information on how to pump blood to the heart. Either way, dad died. But I am in awe of the way he died, suddenly, in front of the woman who loved him.

There are other things to write about that are hard on the emotional level. Words carry a certain bluntness that hides the glib reality; words are clumsy like a little ox.

Last night I took a bus, alone, after the band dropped me off in Montreal. My woman had some things to say to me and I had some things to say back. We had some of the most amazing sex we

have ever had, which makes me suspect it was break up sex. I truly hope not – I'd like to think there is way more sex to be had.

I think the world might be ending. Japan is dying. We are bombing the shit out of Libya. And my lady doesn't want me anymore.

“I want you back underneath my skin.”

Tonight we play at Gus' Pub in Halifax, one of my favourite venues in all of Canada. A few years back when Slow Down Molasses played the Halifax Pop Explosion in 2009, I was sitting at Gus' with Joey Thumbs. As we downed our pints, a girl reached across the table and starting slapping her hand down in front of us.

“Are you guys from Saskatoon?”

I looked at Joey more than a little freaked out. “Yeah?” I said, hesitantly.

The girl shot forward like a lurching schooner.

“You once wrote that my band sounded like a bad Brazilian black and white movie made on no budget.”

Her eyes narrowed. I barreled with laughter.

“You didn't take that as a compliment?” I asked.

A few years back I wrote for a student newspaper where this review had been published. It was hard to believe that she had harboured these feelings for that long.

She looked disappointed.

“That was meant to be a compliment?” she asked trepidatiously.

“Totally.”

“Did you mean it?” she continued, her demeanour melting.

“Every word,” I cooed.

Later that evening she held my hand as we danced at a party and let me sip from her beer when I ran out.

I wish I could remember what that band actually sounded like. They seemed kind of cool.

Later: 3:17 pm

Drinking warm cans of Pabst in a house full of beautiful and hilarious women. Maybe the world isn't ending after all. But if it is I wouldn't mind hiding out here.

**Friday, March 25, 2011**

**3:58pm AST**

**Between Halifax, NS and Fredricton, NB**

Yesterday was amazing – I spent most of the day not feeling like a wet sack of crap, which was really pleasant for a change. We arrived into Halifax early and arrived at our hosts' house, three women named Theresa, Allison and Claire. The rest of day quickly became warm and hazy – the girls made us coffee and cracked jokes that made me laugh until I cried. I brought in a case of warm Pabst and got day drunk – my favourite kind of drunk.

Their home had this amazing vibe that eased the knots out of my stomach, straightened my posture and ruffled my hair teasingly.

We went downtown and I found a rare record for the princely sum of \$10. Next we hit up the Propeller microbrewery – who make one of my favourite IPAs – and stocked up for the evening's rage. When we arrived back at the girls' they had several pizzas on the go for us. I almost felt like crying. Thankfully I just laughed instead.

I like to make fun of my friends who have things like marriages, mortgages and children. They make easy targets because they don't go very far or very fast. They put roots down, settle in and construct a life. They know a few things that I don't and, tellingly, I get jealous.

“How did you do that?” I ask in awe and slight disgust at my friend's child.

“Well, you know...” they just laugh at me.

But I don't know. I can swing a hammer pretty good – when I was teenager rager I once took out the windshield of a car on my best friend's block. But that certainly doesn't mean that I know the

first thing about building a house.

At the show in Gus' Pub some old biker-looking dude kept heckling me. He liked my bass, which is from the '70s, and my amp, which is from the '70s. Throughout the night he would crow at me and then punctuate his nonsensical-isms with a smoky cackle. But he certainly didn't like it when I leant my gear to Tyson for the next set of the evening. He became agitated and sketched-out.

"He's going to scratch that bass," said old biker dude. "Come on man! That thing is a relic – it's from the '70s!"

My friend Jason once told me that old crackheads are actually really interesting people since they tend to get trapped in a specific time and place. It sounds weird, but it might actually be really comforting to do that, to put roots down, settle in and construct a life. Except, you know, for the drugs part.

The after party was without a doubt the tamest, most amazing after party ever. The women made cookies, someone whipped up a raspberry crisp and everyone sipped on boozy hot chocolate. Drabble ordered a pizza and Kurt played the piano. I never had so much fun raging – balancing out the sugar-sweetness of the evening I guzzled from a stash of secret beers that I placed throughout the house.

Slow Down Molasses has never been treated so well on tour. But last night I realized I hadn't been treated that well as a person in a long time. I drunkenly began plotting to stay. I'd slip out of the van and take up residence with the ladies. And we would cook ridiculous foods for each other and keep ourselves loose and drunk the entire time. In my haze it made perfect sense, everything I ever wanted in life.

Instead I went to bed with Drabble, who hugged me when I started to cry.

The next morning Claire and Theresa made blueberry crepes for me, and Allison laughed at me when I tried to wash the dishes. I fell even more stupidly in love with their lives and started wishing I could stay again. But I didn't have the benefit of my beery logic anymore.

Instead I secretly looked forward to the obligatory round of crushing goodbye hugs. Which, of course, were fucking awesome.

Canada's shitty government has officially been dissolved. Is the world starting to end in the West?

On the road again, we experience even more shitty highways – what else is new? The weather has condensed itself to an efficient snarl – it's now both blindingly sunny and howlingly blizzardy at the same time.

The snow comes pelting down from the sky like thick, gelatinous globs, exploding like bullets against our windshield. They look like spilled packing peanuts. Is god moving?

Take a hint bitches. The world is ending and I'm outta here.

**Saturday, March 26, 2011**

**4:25pm AST**

**Sackville, NB**

Last night, immediately following load-out, I climbed into the van and instantly fell asleep. On tour I try to keep one town ahead of myself – I don't need sleep as much as I need to party, play the bass and high kick myself into oblivion. But Fredericton, sorry, you wore me out with your drunken man groupies, suit-and-tie coke losers and anal sex-haters.

Sorry again – that actually makes the show sound a lot better than it really was.

After the show we went to stay with some strangers who were really sweet and nice to us. Their house was an amazing backdrop that could have been taken from the set of the TV show “Hoarders”. Apparently lots of touring bands crash there – maybe they are hoarding musicians in addition to their cornucopia of knick-knacks, sundries and crap.

Sorry again – let me stress again how really nice and well-meaning you were to us.

I'm in Sackville, NB at the Rich Street Café, where I got a baguette sandwich. Drabble looked at it and asked if it reminded me of home. It does. It was the last meal she made for me that I managed to eat without giving up out of despair. Everything reminds me of home.

Sorry again – I didn't mean to cheat on your sandwich with the hussy sandwich from Sackville.

I once had a lover who remarked about how quickly I apologized for everything. I think my innate sense of guilt and self-loathing annoyed her. That is until I reminded her that my apologies were merely thinly-veiled excuses to get drunk, break glass things and wander home with the craziest girl I could find.

Sorry again – but you used appreciate all the things that I loved to regret, which turned out to be you as well.

I hadn't played the bass for a long time before I was asked to rejoin Slow Down Molasses. I'm actually not very good, but I like the feeling of the bass and what it means to everyone. I like to keep back and hang on the root notes. I don't like dominating bass lines – dudes who clutter shit up with too much low end plucking are typically complete douchebags who probably should have stuck with the guitar if they wanted attention. But when you keep yourself lower in the mix it's like the bass is just there to support its buddies, not arm-wrestle them into soundboard oblivion.

I learned how to play the bass when my friends in the hardcore band Set Aside suddenly needed a bro. I was more than happy to oblige despite the serious lack of proficiency. Same with Slow Down Molasses – just good friends needing someone to help them out.

Sorry again – I fuck up some notes now and then but at least I don't play the bass like a douchebag.

Still in the café. I told the cute server girl I wanted something delicious. She asked if I wanted chocolate or peanut butter. She said her favourite was chocolate. I went with chocolate because that's what you do when these things get flirty. I wished I had taken peanut butter instead.

Sorry again – I am a man of regret, poor decisions and lament.

Tonight we play with Shotgun Jimmie. I think I weirdly idolize him. I wonder if he needs a touring bass player? Even weirder, he actually just sat down beside me. I hope he doesn't read this. There are a lot of people who I hope don't read this.

Sorry again – you are totally going to read this.

**Sunday, March 27, 2011**

**7:08pm AST**

**Charlottetown, PEI**

I've never liked the idea of being dependant on other people. It makes me feel silly, sluggish or incompetent. But a huge part of being in a band is camaraderie, which sometimes sucks.

Slow Down Molasses has a typical tour van. It's help together by duct tape, guzzles way too much gas and smells like a nightmare. The windshield wipers are in constant decay, the seatbelts turtle into the recesses of the seats, which are upholstered in crumbs and candy wrappers, and the locks only work half the time. I have trouble getting the back door open. And immediately there are a flurry of hands and keys in front of me. It's the dumbest thing ever. And it drives me absolutely batshit crazy. "My keys were here first!" I thunder, as I smash the guitarist's hand in the door jam. Instead I just step back and seethe silently.

Day 20 ladies and gentlemen, tensions high.

Sackville has the distinction of being the booziest show. I raged so hard that I blacked out, during which I beat Shotgun Jimmie at pool, made a complete ass of myself, lost \$50, loaded out a bunch of gear and then tried to steal a pizza. Sounds like a fuckload of party.

The next morning I was woken up by a puppy. I've never been so happy.

In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island for the first time. It's cute but I'm sick of winter and the icy blasts of ocean gusts that are buffeting through my parka. Instead of trolling around downtown I scurry off to the warmth of the nearest coffee shop. Inside I can huddle with a tea and feel like the world isn't collapsing into a new ice age.

Tonight we are playing Baba's, which is above a restaurant famed for its falafel. Paterson's grandmother and aunt are taking us out for supper, which is really nice of them considering that we are a bunch of dirty, hungover skids. Yikes!

The best part about supper was when P's grandma asked why we all had marker on our hands. I alternated between gagging with laughter and choking on embarrassment as we attempted to explain to two very grandmotherly women why our cellist had the words "TACO FART" written on her knuckles with Sharpie marker.

"Come on," said Paterson, "it's the knuckle tat game."

The two ladies just nodded their heads with polite confusion.

**Monday, March 28, 2011**

**2:33pm EST**

**En route to Quebec City, PQ**

Last night in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Slow Down Molasses narrowly escaped being the victims of a grizzly axe-murder.

We played at Baba's, a nice venue with good people working. However, all our friends had gotten our memos and Facebook invites and ditched us in advance. Maybe eight or nine people paid at the door – two were left at the end of our set. And neither were willing to put us up for the night.

Here is very shit gets very, very creepy.

A man that I would have guessed was in his forties approached us and said we could crash on his floor. Later, Stony as he introduced himself to us, revealed he was actually rough-life mid-30s. Although he now worked on a cabbage farm in the country, at some point he reported that he dealt drugs in Kelowna, BC, where he had gotten beaten up several times by the Hell's Angels. At this point I began noticing his scars.

Drug dealers typically don't phase me. Most are usually really good people, possessing the qualities needed to run a successful small business. Stony lacked many of these traits.

Stony led us to his farmhouse, outside of the city. There was no power so he lit several candles and began aggressively stoking a wood-burning stove – something that he wouldn't stop doing for the rest of the night. The girls, understandably freaked out, hid in the van. The boys laid in sleeping bags on the floor and started to crash.

Stony began asking about the girls. He started demanding to know who was dating who. Ryan said

that they were dating “someone” in the band and pointed in the vague direction of the rest of us. Stony got visibly angry and pulled up a chair next to the door, seething silently into the fire.

Over the course of the next few hours, Ryan and I sent a flurry of texts back and forth, hammering out our exit strategy. I started messaging friends and loved ones, letting them know that I would be thinking of them as my bones were being ground into livestock feed. Ryan hypothesized that we could take Stony down if we could blind him with his iPhone. Laying on the plywood floor in my sleeping bag, I shivered in agreement.

Over the next few hours, just as I would feel myself starting to drift off, Stony would suddenly be standing over me.

“Want some wine?” he’d drawl.

“No. Sorry. No,” I’d mumble, pretending I wasn’t petrified with fear.

Tyson and Patrick’s blissful snoring actually helped the situation – I would have giggled madly if I wasn’t been holding in a hot bladder of pure, undistilled fear. Besides, maybe he’d kill them first. And maybe Slow Down Molasses’ new album would start charting on Exclaim and CBC’s Grant Lawrence would give a touching on-air tribute to the fallen indie rock heroes.

Tyson actually did wake up once at 3am when Stony began cutting wood with a saw in the next room. Comically, he just went back to sleep after muttering some of his non-descript lyrics or whatever it is Tyson talks about.

Drabble’s eyes, however, were as big as pie plates.

“Was that a chainsaw?” I texted.

“WTF?” was the response. “A table saw.”

When we woke up the next morning, we hadn’t been murdered. Ryan had stayed up all night. Apparently Stony, when he wasn’t offering us more wine while we slept, had sat in his chair by the door, watching us.

We absconded in record time and went to go get coffee and bagels from Tim Hortons.

Several hours later, on the highway, Tyson just got an email from a label in France, who want to put out Slow Down Molasses' record there. They also mentioned something about us touring there.

After playing a show on Prince Edward Island, the pituitary gland of Canada, to a whopping two people, and evading an old-fashioned country table saw mass murder, it was nice to get a morale booster.

I cracked the lone can of Grolsch I had stashed under the seat. It's 9:30 in the morning. Welcome to the big time.

\* \* \* \* \*

## @ryandrabble Twitter feed.

I'm in PEI. Some guy named Stony offered us a place to stay In the country. When we arrived, no power and the place is super weird and old.

»

He kinda creeped the girls out, so they stayed in the van. I'm sitting awake, the flickering light of the fire making things look creepy...

»

Some cats are sneaking around in the dark, jingling a bead curtain. The wind occasionally moans threw the chimney.

»

What was that bang upstairs?!? Taking note of what's near me... Using my Cell as a flashlight. I need to get my night vision back. #creepy

»

... Then the power came on! What just before looked like a horror movie, now looks kinda quaint and cute... #wildimagination

»

Stony just came downstairs and offered me chocolate milk.

**Tuesday, March 28, 2011**

**7:41am EST**

**Quebec City, PQ**

I slept in the van last night. I watched my breath dance around my face as I tried to convince myself I was tired and not just exhausted. Later I had a dream that the liquid in my kneecaps froze and I couldn't move. But in my dream Paterson and Tyson were keeping me company in the van until I thawed out and could play my bass again. I woke up to the roar of a diesel engine blowing past me. I was alone.

When we were leaving Charlottetown I was delirious with fatigue. I don't sleep well in vehicles, especially ones with five chattering adults. But, after our escape from Stony the well-meaning table saw murderer, I think I had reached a breaking point. Even before we got to the PEI bridge I had shut my eyes. I opened them approximately two and a half hours later in Sackville. I was so excited when I realized I had slept that I woke myself up.

Later, as we ripped along through New Brunswick, I started thinking about how being the victim of a table saw murder wouldn't be the worst thing. I've had a lot of depressing moments on tour where I felt crippled with grief. My life is still crumbling around me. And there are five more very important shows to play. I don't know what to do when I get home. If we had died in PEI our band would have more people coming to our funeral than we had come to our album release party. Maybe some of those jerks would actually buy the record then.

But I like those jerks. They put up with me and I love them for it. I've gotten to see so many wonderful people on this tour. I suppose it's only natural to wish for these relationships to be ensconced and entombed as the amazing artifacts they have been.

I suddenly shot awake a few hours later. The highway and business signs are all in French. And the

gas station sold booze and cheese curds. I'm home, and strangely happy to be here.

We stayed overnight in Quebec City. Our host was amazing – he insulted everyone with a glib, Franco wit that no one could keep up to. I loved it. He runs a French gangster rap label and played us his new record over and over again, a duo called Black Taboo. And while he was making us supper he came over and set a gun (non-functioning) down beside me. I'd like to think it was a sign of respect or acceptance – no one else got a gun.

We will be in Montreal in a few hours. I don't know what's going to happen. A full-on renewal of love? Broken up sex? I'll let you know.

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011**

**4:12pm EST**

**en route to Ottawa, ON**

Montreal is easily my favourite Canadian city. Tellingly, it can be a vile, dirty, heinous place. And I've gotten fucked over in strange, numerous ways – I've had waitresses take a \$20 from me and disappear into the ether of the bar with my change. I've had metro stations refuse to honour my pass. And I've had ridiculous landlords and concierges so inept at their jobs that gaping holes in the ceiling simply became a part of the décor.

Even worse, I've met some of the worst people ever in Montreal. Surrounded by young hipsters, dressed like some ridiculous gay thrift parade, I have no idea what to say to any of these people. And the aging hipsters, dudes with beerguts and bristly beards who seemingly never work or procreate, frighten me.

Like any young adult, I am confused as to who I am. But I am certainly and painfully aware of who I don't want to become.

Montreal, I'm not sure why I am so in love with the idea of living somewhere so difficult.

Last night's show at Casa was perfect and magical. I met more people last night at the show – audience members, band people and drunk chicks – than I ever have at a rock show. It was the secret weapon to socialization – posing as an out-of-town-band member but really being the local dude. See you around everyone!

Even better, the sound was good and the opening bands – The Sunnies – were amazing. The venue treated us really well and we got free sandwiches for supper. Except I almost didn't get mine. The bartender called bullshit on me.

“You are touring band?” she sniffed. “Haven’t I seen you around before?”

After much elaborate explanation of the duality of my life she finally relented and produced mes bouffe des choix. Alors!

I also realized how many amazing friends I have in Montreal and how many more I will come to meet. I don’t want to leave anymore.

A friend emailed me a job posting today. Apparently the job is half in Saskatoon and half in Montreal. I’ve never wanted to work so badly in all my life.

Also, I’m still not sure what broken up sex feels like. But I imagine it would feel a lot like a kick to the balls. A toe-curlingly face-melting kick to the balls.

**Thursday, March 31, 2011**

**10:27am EST**

**Ottawa, ON**

Yesterday Slow Down Molasses received one of their first bad reviews.

“Listened to the new CD by #yxe indie darlings Slow Down, Molasses. Nice, but why must local indie bands be so milquetoast? Where’s the grit?”

Some band members seethed and raged, railing on the severe inaccuracy of the statement. “The music is lush and layered,” they yelled. “Horseshit!”

I found it hard to disagree.

There are moments when Slow Down produces a wall of noise, screeches and skronks, but there is usually something precious about it – a dainty keyboard line, a fumbly banjo solo or a fey melody. Unfortunately, you just can’t add layer after layer of sissy instrumentation and expect to come out with music that will crush your windpipe.

I told them to take it as a compliment. “It’s actually sort of true,” I said. But they just grumbled into their scarves.

I miss the grit and grime of touring. Some of the venues we play in are far too clean and wholesome. Last night’s show in Ottawa, at the Raw Sugar Café, was one such show. The opening band had their shirts tucked into their dad jeans, the audience listened silently and there was cake at the end for everyone.

After tonight, however, I am wholly convinced that Slow Down Molasses is tough as fuck. I got

the flu sometime after we ate supper. My insides started to burn with a precocious queasiness. My joints flared, rendering my bassing hands useless. Sweating and shaking profusely, I wondered if I would be able to even stand.

But I played on despite my maladies. Mid-set I decided it might be a good idea to pick the most innocuous place to vomit. And I regularly had to steady myself on the amp during some wicked dizzy spells.

So screw you whoever said Slow Down Molasses are a bunch of sissies. I will find you and puke on your shoes.

Oh wait, that was me. And I just might puke on my shoes.

**Saturday, April 2, 2011**

**9:03am EST**

**Toronto, ON**

Being sick on tour has literally destroyed me. My joints are inflamed and every move is wracked with copious amounts of pain. My right ear is now plugged and shirks at the slightest bit of noise, making everything from sound checking my Big Muff pedal to having a whispered conversation painful. Even worse, my cough shoots through me like knives, buckling me until I'm bent over and sick to my stomach.

Playing the bass has become an adventure in sadomasochism – at this point I only do it for the pleasure of others. But pleasure is likely far too strong of word.

Two nights ago in Peterborough, Slow Down Molasses played in a small, makeshift venue called the Cannery Arts Centre. I appreciated what those kids had built for themselves – a wholly-DIY, positive space dedicated to promoting a loosely defined platform of art. Mid set, as I sat on my amp, I felt myself starting to fall asleep. I don't know if anyone noticed.

Peterborough wins for being the strangest place we have visited on tour yet. The kids are bike punk, art-queer, commie musicians with beautiful voices. The town is littered with vegan diners and galleries. And I'm baffled that people can build something amazing in the most unlikely places, making me second guess my own need to belong to something bigger than myself.

But don't forget: that sinister small-town vibe remains very much underfoot – as we left town we passed by a group of proper 50-year old skids who were crushing joints at 10 am. One of them had a Tim Horton's iced cap in the cup holder of his bike. I am similarly in awe of their lives as well.

I don't remember having ever been this sick before in my life. Except for once, when I was in the

hospital for three weeks after I stuck my foot in a lawnmower. I was five years old and dad was mowing the lawn. It probably should go without saying that leaving a small child alone with any piece of machinery is a really bad idea. I lost half of my left big toe.

The hospital was confusing and weird, and I probably cried in bed the entire time. But I wasn't really sick. I was just missing a piece of my beloved toe, a deformity that would forever ruin seminal things in a child's life like going to the beach, walking barefoot on gravel and coming to a complete stop in a pair of hockey skates.

But I'm sick now. And I can't participate in seminal adult things like drinking until 3 am, high kicking across the stage or dominating a plate of greasy vegetarian deliciousness. I wonder why someone hasn't taken me to a hospital yet.

I forgot to write this diary yesterday. I wonder what would have been different then?

In Toronto, I am staying with some very nice people again. I got my own room last night, a room that eerily reminds me of myself. A glance at the bookshelf reveals that we share many of the same titles. And the Queens of the Stone Age screenprint on the wall looks like something I would covet. The room is littered with things like Scrabble boards, vintage cameras and typewriters.

I'm sick to the point of helplessness, which pretty much sucks when your relationship is crumbling. It doesn't seem like I am about to be dumped anymore, rather I feel like I am going to be abandoned or orphaned. Losing a lover is like missing half a toe, but it's actually more like the whole toe and you lost your best pair of shoes and your socks got wet and have to be dried out.

We played last night at the Garrison to a packed house. I high-kicked Tyson's amp mic off mid-set in front of 150 people. Sorry about that McRager. After the show I received several offers to spend the summer in Toronto from various would-be foster women. They are genuinely concerned for me. They care about me. And their hugs are devilishly wicked.

I've been thinking long and hard about this, but I just don't know – moving to Toronto means growing up, getting a job, getting my shit together. I don't know if I am ready for that yet, or if I ever will be.

Today is the last day of tour. I'm relieved but anxious for life post-tour. My brain has atrophied with bad, heinous jokes, truck stop buffets and never-ending highways. I hope things can go back to the way they used to be.

**Sunday, April 3, 2011**

**10:17am EST**

**Toronto, ON, on board Via Rail  
with final destination in Montreal, PQ**

I don't understand why people are being so nice to me.

We woke up to an amazing breakfast – all manner of fruit, yogurt, granola, eggs, French toast, coffee and juice – prepared by James and his partner. They talk with great comfort and easiness and laugh quickly and appropriately. And all I can do to pay back their kindness is to cough into my armpit, sweat into their guest sheets and leave all sorts of dirty Kleenex around the house. But for some reason that doesn't seem to matter. They are genuinely concerned with my welfare. And James has already invited me to hangout in Montreal for a Cadence Weapon show. Being sick has made me second-guess all of my good qualities – at this point I don't doubt them for a second.

Thanks James.

I also met a member of City and Colour – James' roommate. My favourite thing he said to me was “Yeah, I'm on tour too, just like you guys!”

Dude had just gotten back from New York. Later that day he was leaving to Los Angeles and later to Australia. He was an incredibly nice dude. I'm glad he didn't say anything about my dirty underwear that I left on the floor.

Thanks dude.

We picked up Kelly the keyboardist from Forest City Lovers for the two-hour van ride. I remembered that someone at The Garrison in Toronto made the remark that our band needed more estrogen. That's not inaccurate – at one point during the trip the girls started talking about how the clouds looked like things. Still delirious with sickness and the lack of proper sleep, I poked Ryan.

“Hey Drabble,” I growled. “Check out that cloud.”

Everyone started searching for the cumulous form.

“That cloud looks like me banging your mom. I think her head is hitting a bedpost.”

Tyson, trying not to visibly laugh, started reminding me about language in front of guests. Kelly was still looking for the cloud I was talking about.

Sorry Kelly. But thanks for the estrogen.

In London, Ontario at the Alex P. Keaton Live venue – the bartender is super nice but confused when I ask for a Hot Toddy.

“What's that?” she asks.

“Uhm, can you just make me some lemon tea with honey and whisky?”

“We don't have lemon tea.”

“What about hot water, lemons, honey and whisky?”

“Oh, we totally have that!”

Hmm. Thanks for the hot water, lemons, honey and whisky.

It is loathsomely cliché to go on about the healing powers of music. Unfortunately, that is the only words I can use to describe the magic of our last show on tour. A few hours previous I had to lie down. My body was wracked by the cold shakes again and I couldn't find Sudafed – the kind with the natural, organic hippy cocaine in it. Cold FX is fine but the lack of proper uppers in them is pretty much deplorable. I don't know why everyone swears by it so much.

On stage Slow Down Molasses hit a wall – the tour was done and there was nowhere else for us to go musically or otherwise. So we took flying leaps at it, throwing ourselves against these songs we knew too well and suspected would fall apart at any minute. Guitar strings exploded, feedback keened and melodies wavered dangerously on the brink of out-of-tune. I shook my head, wiped the sweat from my eyes and stomped furiously – this was going to be the most fun ever whether I had to choke someone with a patch chord or if my heart were to collapse in a dizzy, flu-induced seizure.

We did it. The last show of tour was fucking awesome. I celebrated with another hot water, lemon, honey and whisky.

Thanks Tyson, Patty, Ryan, Jeanette and Paterson. I'll miss you. Not a lot, but a little bit, which is better than nothing.

I still don't understand why people are being so nice to me. After the set, I was introduced to Simon – a friend of Patty's – who handed me the key and address to his apartment.

"I heard you were sick and wanted you to be comfortable," he said.

I accepted the surrealism as a new wave of post-show, sans-adrenaline sickness came crashing down on me. This was the worst yet. I slept in the van for an hour. I was woken up by gear being loaded in. Then I went to Simon's and slept for three hours. Tellingly, I woke up feeling weird and confused.

Slow Down Molasses is dispersing across the country. Paterson is home in London. Drabble and Jeanette are playing several more shows as they drive across America. Tyson is flying home to Saskatoon. Patty is taking the 'Hound back to Barrie. And I'm on a train bound for Montreal.

Suddenly, we aren't a band anymore. I'm not a bass player anymore. And I don't have any more excuses.

This tour was amazing in so many ways and I don't think I properly told the best parts.

Nothing is forever. Even the massive sprawl of Canadian highways. When you Tour Into The Sea you reach a coast. At that point you uncork a bottle, spit in the ocean and turn around and go the other way. And what happens when you reach the next coast? You uncork another bottle...

Everyone has something to come home to. Jobs, loved ones, kitties. My house is being stripped down of its possessions, ransacked of the effort and love we put into making it a home. We gave up the lease – we have to move by the end of the month. I'd give anything to know where I am supposed to go.

I don't know if this means divorce yet. I still have several more hours before I find that out. A part of me turns numb thinking about it. It just means I'll have to rearrange a few plans for tomorrow, shift my cooking schedule and get used to not having to fight over the blanket.

Another part of me starts dissecting every hilarious anxiety. If we split up the cutlery will she get the knives and forks? I don't want to start eating nothing but soup and cereal.

Another part of me feels relieved. But I don't want to say why right now.

And another part of me feels like throwing myself into the Great Lakes and swimming to the bottom.

Six more hours until home. I hope she's nice to me when I get back.

I haven't texted her my arrival time yet. I haven't done it because I'm afraid she will just ignore it. But I secretly hope that she has done her own sleuthing and is plotting to meet me at the station.

But what if she isn't waiting for me at the train station? Then I'll look for her on the metro.

And if she isn't waiting for me on the metro? Then I'll look for her at home.

And if she isn't home? Then this place isn't really home.

