

A book of interpretations.

This book was compiled as a gift for my Mum, who is partial to Tool, and to the meaning behind music. I began work on it in late November 2002. I thought it would take me about a month and that I would have it ready for Christmas. The reality was closer to seven months of work (with several breaks), and the book ended up being a June 2003 birthday gift.

There is only one real book. Any and all are welcome to this PDF.

There are photos of the real book at:
www.vanillacircus.net/book/

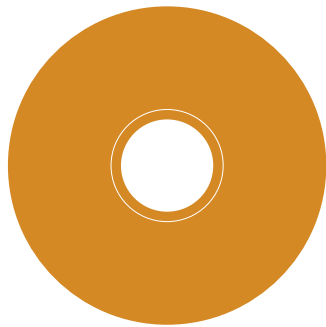
Compiled by Steven Caddy.
toolbook@vanillacircus.net

Any and all feedback welcome.

Special thanks to the forum members at tooshed.down.net. Without your thoughts, opinions and discussion this book would have been near impossible, and much, much less interesting.

For Heather,
My mother.

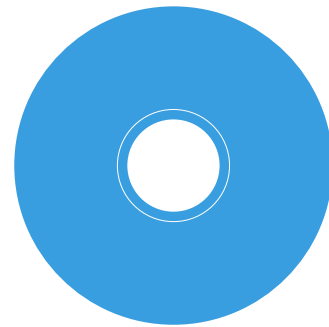
Who taught me to love and think about
music.



Ænima



Salival



Lateralus

Introduction

People enjoy music on many levels. Some people enjoy it sonically – they just dig the riffs, beats and melodies in the music because they make them feel something, for whatever reason. Some people really get lost in the lyrics and what they mean, whether that be what the band intended them to mean, or their own interpretation. Others admire technical perfection, the mastery of sections that are really difficult to play.

I hope that I'm somewhere in between all of those, though I'm definitely lacking when it comes to a technical understanding of what's hard to play and what's not. The reason I've found myself so drawn to Tool, (and that other band that counts itself as an obsession of mine) is a special combination of factors. I've always found their music powerful and dynamic, but also very layered and complex, so that each time I hear an album, for many, many repeat listens, I hear something new.

Damn! How is he carrying the high hat like that? Some whispering I didn't notice before, some lyric that suddenly makes sense to me or a sudden awareness of what one instrument is doing here, another there, and how they all come together perfectly just... now. And it makes me smile, just to get lost in it.

Over that there are the vocals, which carry some amazing and enigmatic lyrics. Usually I try to work them out for my self, checking the web here and there, and trying to find my own meanings in the song though reflection, feeling and discussion.

This is the first time I've undertaken to research as much behind the words as possible, to fully explore themes that I might not have been able to arrive at on my own. But how do you do this without sucking the joy and subtlety out of the music? I've been told more than once that I have a tendency to scrutinise songs to breaking point — why can't I just enjoy them?

Mostly it's a feeling that the song is undiscovered until I know or feel what its about. Someone spent a good deal of time thinking and penning the lyrics to them, and its almost like a debt, or responsibility to me to find their meaning. It doesn't mean that I'm pouring over every word as it plays, quite the opposite. Once I've discovered for myself what the song's meaning is, once that task is over, then I can let it go, let it sink in and become another level at which to simply feel and relate to the rest of the song as a whole.

Learning any skill or method can be tedious and slow, but once mastered, you use it swiftly and almost without thinking. I find the secrets of a song lend to its enjoyment in the same way.

For future reference:

The black text is the song lyrics.

Red text is a line by line commentary.

Blue text is an introduction and overview.

Ænima

As an album, Ænima deals constantly with themes of change, rebirth, destruction and reconstruction, realisation and new beginnings. The title of the album finds its roots in the psychology of Carl Jung (pronounced 'Young'):

The anima is the female aspect present in the collective unconscious of men. The anima may be personified as a young girl, very spontaneous and intuitive, or as a witch, or as the earth mother. It is likely to be associated with deep emotionality and the force of life itself. The anima or animus is the archetype through which you communicate with the collective unconscious generally, and it is important to get into touch with it. It is also the archetype that is responsible for much of our love life.

The 'E' in the Æ glyph is a half joke reference to enema. The relevance comes when you take it as a flushing out of ideas, of up-tight feelings, in preparation for open-mindedness and something new.

STINKFIST

Something has to change
Undeniable dilemma
Boredom's not a burden
Anyone should bear

Constant over stimulation numbs me
and I wouldn't have
It any other way

It's not enough
I need more
Nothing seems to satisfy
I don't want it
I just need it
To feel, to breathe, to know I'm alive

Finger deep within the borderline
Show me that you love me and that we
belong together
Relax, turn around and take my hand

I can help you change
Tired moments into pleasure

Stinkfist is a dialogue between two voices, the Addict, and a second, which we might refer to as the Drug, though it might be anything that a person could have a destructive addiction to.

The Addict, musing on the very nature of addiction; the cycle caused by natural addiction to substance and situation.

The Drug, beckoning to the Addict, tempting them to relax and give in to the very simple urge to fall into comfort.

The Drug again, speaking in a quiet, subdued voice, like the voice in the back of your mind perhaps.

Seeming to be a relatively simple song about addiction, Stinkfist uses the rather disgusting metaphor of fisting (think body cavity search fetish and you're on the right track) to convey both the extent of addiction and the incremental increase in desperation in the addict — to find or feel something alive and hopeful in themselves. The search can, of course, ultimately lead only to recovery or destruction.

Widely banned or strongly censored by commercial radio in conservative countries, it has been suggested that the offensive metaphor acts as a challenging entrance to the album; those not willing to look and think beyond superficial meanings should turn back now.

Another interpretation, this one raised by Maynard in an interview, relates to digging and pushing through one's own self, particularly through layers of ugliness, to reach something valuable and enlightening.

Say the word and we'll be
Well upon our way

Blend and balance
Pain and comfort
Deep within you
Till you will not have me any other way

It's not enough
I need more
Nothing seems to satisfy
I don't want it
I just need it
To feel, to breathe, to know I'm alive

Knuckle deep inside the borderline
This may hurt a little but it's something
you'll get used to
Relax. Slip away

Something kinda sad about
the way that things have come to be
Desensitized to everything
What became of subtlety?

The Addict again.

Once again, the level or commitment of addiction increases, as it must, until the Addict is destroyed or realises his fate in time, and is able to shake off the Drug.

The Addict. At this point the song changes slightly; The Addict begins to question what is happening. There is a realisation that what began as a harmless flirt or recreational use

How can it mean anything to me
If I really don't feel anything at all?

I'll keep digging till
I feel something

Elbow deep inside the borderline
Show me that you love me and that we
belong together
Shoulder deep within the borderline

Relax. Turn around and take my hand

has gotten out of control. They begin to weigh
the worth of the Drug against its affliction of
numbness to everything but craving.

Digging is both the search within the self for
the strength to quit the Drug, and the destruc-
tive chase of the next, ever-more elusive high
(chemical, personal or emotional).

Over committed. In way too deep...

And still the Drug keeps calling, whether
as an ongoing addiction or as nothing but a
memory is left up to us to decide.

EULOGY

He had a lot to say
He had a lot of nothing to say
We'll miss him

So long
We wish you well
You told us how you weren't afraid to die
Well then, so long

Don't cry
Or feel too down
Not all martyrs see divinity
But at least you tried

Standing above the crowd,
He had a voice that was strong and loud
We'll miss him

Ranting and pointing his finger
At everything but his heart
We'll miss him

The image I get of the person Eulogy is written for, is that of an aggressive public figure-head. Mentally I picture a figure not unlike Hitler, though that is almost certainly not who this song is for.

At everything but his heart works well to describe the nature of dictatory rhetoric; the exorcism of evils in every little thing in the name of the cause.

Eulogy was the first song to really make me twig to the depth of music coming from this band. My initial interest came from the smooth and powerful guitar riffs from *Stinkfist*, which was in the charts at the time and being played all over campus.

I remember first hearing this song, as with the rest of the tracks on this album, at about four in the morning, playing video games with my great friend Shaun D'Amico, and thinking "Damn... what is *this* all about?"

To me at least, *Eulogy* is a relatively straightforward (for Tool) and aggressive work against the betrayal and misleadership of false martyrism. I don't attach it to any real figure – content with holding the target of the song as representative of any or all false martyrs.

There is however, a very solid case to make that the song is written for the late political

No way to recall
What it was that you had said to me,
Like I care at all

So loud
You sure could yell
You took a stand on every little thing
And so loud

*You could be the one
To save me from
My own existence*

*I was so sure that I'd sin and you'd pay too
I'm just glad you knew me enough to allow me
to always sit by you
So mad since you stopped giving all your com-
mands
You weren't too mad when he called you
Your mind is helpless*

These stanzas aren't included in the lyrics provided at toolshed.down.net, and are distorted almost to the point of obscurity in the recording. They also have a different tone, more intimate and certainly more cryptic than the majority of the lyrical content here. Perhaps it's an indication that this song is written for an actual (rather than metaphorical) person. *You could be the one to save me from my own existence* seems to hint that it might be directed at a spiritual leader, but though it would fit nicely with Maynard's opinions of the 'middle men' of religion, "My views against Christianity or religion in general are directed towards the 'middle men' - those who are in power

comedian, Bill Hicks. Strongly and vocally opinionated, intelligent, articulate, pro-drug, vehemently opposed to U.S. hegemony and the armed forces, Hicks was a close friend of the band, and it is believed that his influence on Maynard was significant.

So why would Maynard write such an aggressive song about his friend and mentor? A good friend of mine suggests that it is written in anger at Hicks' sudden departure from Maynard's life (Hicks died). A martyr? Hicks certainly took some heat for his pro-choice, anti-establishment views, and he did eventually die an early death, but the song could be quite irrational and still make sense if you think of it being written in the anger / denial phase of mourning.

Standing above the crowd,
He had a voice so strong and loud and I
Swallowed his facade cuz I'm so
Eager to identify with
Someone above the ground,
Someone who seemed to feel the same,
Someone prepared to lead the way, with
Someone who would die for me

Will you? Will you now?
Would you die for me?
Don't you fuckin lie

Don't you step out of line
Don't you fuckin lie

You've claimed all this time that you would
die for me
Why then are you so surprised to hear your
own eulogy?

You had a lot to say
You had a lot of nothing to say

and use religion as a market force by which to
manipulate human beings for their own per-
sonal gain. The middle men taint any purity
of spirituality that could result from genuine
religious / mystical experiences".

Come down
Get off your fuckin cross
We need the fuckin space to nail the next
fool martyr

To ascend you must die
You must be crucified
For your sins and your lies

Goodbye

H.

What's coming through is alive
What's holding up is a mirror
But what's singing songs is a snake
Looking to turn this piss to wine

They're both totally void of hate,
But killing me just the same

The snake behind me hisses
What my damage could have been
My blood before me begs me
Open up my heart again

And I feel this coming over like
a storm again
Considerately

Venomous voice, tempts me,
Drains me, bleeds me,
Leaves me cracked and empty
Drags me down like some sweet gravity

The snake behind me hisses
What my damage could have been

In reference to the birth of his son, and of seeing elements of himself in him
The snake represents his past, the songs his concerns about the cyclic nature of abuse and doubts about his ability as a father.
Of course, past and future simply are, being neither good nor evil. Still his fears are real and tormenting.

There's a great concern that his past will compromise his ability to father well.
While on the other hand, the love for his son calls him to open up vulnerabilities and passions that abuse may have hardened in him, until now.

The storm (again) is a symbol of the cyclic wrestling he must do with his self and his past in order to better himself. The 'storm' aptly embodies meditative calm and tumultuous thought.

The past is haunting, and painful, doubts and mental wrestling is tiring.

For some people the song is an essay about slipping into the deadly trap of a heroin (H) addiction, and while there are references that can be construed that way, I don't believe that it tells the song's full story. If addiction is a theme in H., (and I'm still not certain it is), then it is only one layer of a deeper theme.

It is worth considering the song from the beginning as a narrative with three 'characters' – the present person, his past, and his future. In a show played shortly after the release of *Ænima* Maynard gave this introduction, "Any of you ever watch those Warner Brother's cartoons? There is the scene where the guy has a devil on one shoulder and an Angel on the other. It's usually pretty obvious right? The angel is going to give him the good advice and the devil is going to try to get him to do what's going to be bad for him."

My blood before me begs me
Open up my heart again.

And I feel this coming over like
a storm again

I am too connected to you to
Slip away, to fade away.
Days away I still feel you
Touching me, changing me,
And considerately killing me

Without the skin,
Beneath the storm,
Under these tears
The walls came down

And the snake is drowned and
As I look in his eyes,
My fear begins to fade
Recalling all of those times
I could have cried then
I should have cried then

Too connected to his son to escape his fears by
simply leaving; as this new relationship forms
and grows, the father is changing and his
hardened self is weakening.

Hardened parts exposed and sensitive.
Change is upon him.
Weeping (rain from the storm that is change).
He finally opens up and lets his defences
down.
His love for his son is enough to defeat his inner
demons and he comes to realize that there
were many times like this when he should
have opened up and been more emotionally
honest.

But sometimes it's not that simple, sometimes instead of Angels and Devils they're just friends giving you advice, urging you to do what they see as good advice, but not actually seeing what is going to be best for you in the long run. So it sort of comes down to you. You have to make the decision. This song is called H."

Further to that, there is this hint in an interview with Maynard by Carie Borzillo that appeared in *Strobe* magazine in 1996;

Borzillo: *Who, or what is 'H'?*

Maynard: *(Keenan begins to get really annoyed with this line of questioning.) My son's name is Devo H. That's all I'll say.*

So here is our entry point into the context of H. We know that Maynard was once the victim of abuse, that there are recurring themes of abuse in Tool's music and that abuse is a cyclic behaviour (in that abused children tend towards abusive behaviour as

And as the walls come down and
As I look in your eyes
My fear begins to fade
Recalling all of the times
I have died
and will die
It's all right
I don't mind

I am too connected to you to
Slip away, to fade away
Days away I still feel you
Touching me, changing me,

And considerately killing me

Demons defeated and looking forward now,
he is free and able to love with commitment
again. The future is full of possibility.

...And been reborn transformed, perhaps.
There is also the idea that from birth we begin
our path to death, and so are dying every
minute, every day. The time he spends with
his son is spent rightly and makes life (death)
worthwhile, meaningful and joyful.

In this way, with this connection between
life and death (for they can't be separated),
considerate killing is nothing more than an
enrichment of the life journey.

adults). The band has dealt with this topic
before 'do unto others what has been done
to you' (*Prison Sex/Undertow*) It's entirely pos-
sible that H. is one of those songs that can
be over-explained due to its densely layered
and personal themes. The best approach
as always is to keep and open and active
mind, and to use your heart as much as
your head.

I should mention that it took me some time
to really get into this song – the minor key
intro and heavy rise and fall of the guitars
put me off for a while, but give it a chance,
it's an incredible song.

USEFUL IDIOT

Useful idiot is, of course the sound of a vinyl record at the end of its play, with the needle bumping up against the end of its track.

In the military forces, 'useful idiots' are largely unskilled or unintelligent soldiers, whose expendable nature makes them useful to the larger army.

Sonically, this 'expendable' track serves to clear the ears of the weight of H., in preparation for the next track. In fact, the album has quite a few such tracks separating the 'real' songs (Message to Harry Manback, Intermission, (-) Ions, Cesaro Summability).

FORTY-SIX & 2

*Joining my
Joining my child
As I'm digging through
My old numb shadow*

My shadow's
Shedding skin and
I've been picking
Scabs again

I'm down
Digging through
My old muscles
Looking for a clue

I've been crawling on my belly
Clearing out what could've been
I've been wallowing in my own confused
And insecure delusions
For a piece to cross me over
Or a word to guide me in
I wanna feel the changes coming down
I wanna know what I've been hiding in

The first few lines aren't a part of the 'official' lyrics and are whispered quietly. 'Joining my child' is interesting when considered with the interpretation of *Jimmy* later in this book.

The first verse deals directly with the Jungian concept of the Shadow, or anti-self. The song proposes that by exploring and knowing ourselves truly, our potentials both good and bad, we can be stronger, capable of clearer thought and higher consciousness.

The idea of digging through muscles works as a metaphor for getting inside one's self, 'old muscles' and 'muscle memory' make elegant reference to unconscious learning, things that are felt rather than thought.

This stanza illustrates well the idea that journeying within the self and ultimately confronting of the parts of ourselves we deny isn't an easy task. What can he find to open up everything he hides and is afraid of in himself?

Forty-Six & 2 makes many people's list as one of the greatest rock epics of all time and really is one of the pivotal tracks on the album, being extremely focused and summary of the themes of change and rebirth that make up *Ænima*.

While it is perhaps one of the most concise and punchy tracks on the album, it is also one of the most densely layered, making reference to several schools of thought on life, consciousness, humanity, change and personal evolution.

The basic premise is of positive change or personal transformation. All the usual themes of self analysis and discovery are here; in fact, Forty Six & 2 really marks a point that begins quite a thematic and positive journey that continues into the bands next album, *Lateralus*.

To allow easy navigation through the themes in the song, it is best to briefly

My shadow
Change is coming through my shadow
My shadow's shedding skin

I've been picking
My scabs again

*Joining my
Joining my child
As my shadow moves
Closer to me now*

I've been crawling on my belly
Clearing out what could've been
I've been wallowing in my own chaotic
And insecure delusions

I wanna feel the change consume me,
Feel the outside turning in
I wanna feel the metamorphosis and
Cleansing I've endured within

My shadow
Change is coming

Dealing more directly now with the idea of
changing through knowing both sides of
himself. Well on the way now, what's been
repressed is beginning to take form.

This is a really interesting way of describing
the pain involved in confronting and know-
ing the non-self (remembering that we define
ourselves by the things we are *not*, as much
as what we *are*). For example, he is thought-
ful, confident and clear-headed, so he must
confront the parts of him that are chaotic,
insecure and confused...

...And in doing so will change.
Repressed is opened, unconscious is made
known. So here's the point: "I want to feel the
metamorphosis and cleansing I've endured
within my shadow"

explain some the concepts that it makes
reference to, and the additional concept of
temporary belief systems.

In their 1994 newsletter, the band recom-
mended a book by Bob Frissell entitled
'Nothing In This Book Is True, But Its
Exactly How Things Are', which explains,
the basic concepts behind sacred geometry
including the Golden Ratio, Phi (see Ap-
pendix A at the end of this book). Beyond
the ratio (referred to by some as the Flower
of Life), Frissell explains that in addition to
our individual consciousness, we have a
collective, human consciousness – propos-
ing that as well as individuals, we are a part
of, and intrinsically connected to the greater
human organism and beyond that, all living
things. The idea of collective consciousness
isn't new, but Frissell's proposal of how we
might realise it is the key to the title, and
psychologist Carl Jung's exploration of it
leads us to the next branch of meaning and
explains the references to 'my shadow'.

Now is my time
Listen to my muscle memory
Contemplate what I've been clinging to
Forty-six and two ahead of me

I choose to live and to
Grow, take and give and to
Move, learn and love and to
Cry, kill and die and to

Be paranoid and to
Lie, hate and fear and to
Do what it takes to move through

I choose to live and to
Lie, kill and give and to
Die, learn and love and to
Do what it takes to step through

See my shadow changing,
Stretching up and over me
Soften this old armour
Hoping I can clear the way
By stepping through my shadow,

Muscle memory refers to our unconscious learning. Literally, muscle memory is what helps us perform learned actions well without thinking, think of co-ordination sports and touch typing.

This stanza is the acknowledgement of all his potentials, good and bad. Not all will be realised, but all the elements of him that are necessary to do these things exist within him. All these things – killing, crying, dying – might well be rehearsed in the mind simply so that they are known. Once acknowledged and dealt with they are less of a force to be feared. It seems as though the character in the song is trying to merge his ego and shadow (self and non-self) to better understand himself, to move forward and evolve.

“This old armour” – the line drawn between the parts of himself he was comfortable with (self) and those that were repressed (non-self, or shadow).

In his book, Frissell proposes that humans must evolve to take advantage of their collective consciousness. An integral part of that evolution is the addition of two new chromosomes to our genetic construct. Modern humans make use of 22 normal chromosomal pairs, with 2 sex chromosomes (44 & 2), so the next evolutionary jump ought to take us to 46 & 2. Don't be concerned if you find yourself feeling sceptical, it took me a long time to accept this as the explanation for such an intelligent band's song. In fact, I rejected it flatly until introduced to the notion of temporary belief systems, which I'll explain shortly; but first it is best to deal with the Jungian concepts in the song.

Carl Jung began his career in psychology as an understudy to Freud, but who took a much more interesting path of research into the origins and mysteries of self through studies of various cultures, lucid dreaming and personal exploration.

Coming out the other side
Step into the shadow

Forty six and two are just ahead of me

Almost there...

The Jungian concepts of Anima and Shadow are helpful in understanding Forty-Six and 2 (and much of Tool's other work).

Anima/Animus (pronounced On-ee-mah)
In Jungian psychology, the anima refers to personality traits regarded as feminine that are often repressed into the unconscious of males, while the animus refers to traits regarded as masculine that are often repressed into the unconsciousness of females. Although suppressed from conscious awareness, the anima/animus influences our behaviour in powerful ways. In most individuals, it is projected onto people of the opposite sex and accounts for the experience of falling in love with someone we hardly know. As the unconscious pole of the self, the counter-ego represented by the anima/animus can also be a guide to one's own unconscious realm. It is often experienced as the guiding female (if you're male) or male (if you're female) presence in dreams.

The Shadow

In Carl Jung's personality theory, the ego represents the individual's sense of personal self. The sense of personal identity is purchased, however, at the expense of certain tendencies that are rejected as 'not-self'. According to Jung, these rejected traits come together as a kind of unconscious 'counter-ego' which he termed the shadow. We may become unduly anxious or irritated when in an environment or around a person that in some way reminds us of repressed aspects of our self. If a person has rejected his or her own sex drive, for example, that person may feel irrational fear or anger around an overtly sexual individual. The shadow may appear as a person in one's dreams, usually as an individual of the same sex. Of all the archetypes, the shadow is the most powerful and potentially the most dangerous. It represents everything about ourselves that we fear and despise.

Let's return to Frissell's book, and chromo-

somal theory (which, it should be noted, is expanded from Drunvalo Melchizadek's sacred geometry theories). If you were sceptical about the talk of human evolution through pronounced genetic change, then exhale now. Basic research into chromosomal development shows that more doesn't equate to better, or more highly evolved – some primates already have 46 & 2 chromosomes, rabbits have almost 100. Frissell's theory is fundamentally flawed.

So why make use of it? Although Frissell's ideas about human development are wrong, exploring them for a little while as though they aren't gives us an opportunity to see things differently, to consider things from a new angle, and perhaps learn something we would otherwise miss, and in that way his ideas are still valuable. In the song, 46 & 2 provides a tight metaphor for discovery, progression and evolution. The notion of discovery through temporary belief systems reflects Tool's advice of open-mindedness.

Figlio di puttana, sai che tu sei un pezzo di merda?* Hm? You think you're cool, right? Hm? When you kicked out people [out of] your house? I tell you this, one of three Americans die of cancer, you know? Asshole. You're gonna be one of those.

I don't have the courage to kick your ass directly. Don't have enough courage for that, I could, you know. You know you're gonna have another accident? You know I'm involved with black magic? Fuck you! Die. Bastard!

You think you're so cool, hm? Asshole. And if I ever see your fucking face around, In Europe or Italy, Well I'll — That time I'm gonna kick your ass.

Fuck you! Fucking Americans, Yankee. You're gonna die outta cancer, I promise. Deep pain... No one does what you did to me. You wanna know something? Fuck you! I want your balls smashed, eat shit! Bastard!

MESSAGE TO HARRY MANBACK

Hotsy Menshot from Green Jelly (a joke-metal band in which Maynard debuted as one of the Three Little Pigs explains:

“The voice on Message to Harry Manback is my old friend Francesco, (from Rome, Italy) who would come and live with me and my old roommate Jerry, off and on. I kicked him out after he stole some possessions from Jerry, and he called that night on the answering machine because he was afraid of me, and couldn't threaten me to my face. He was 6'2” but only weighed 130 pounds and looked like Ichabod Crane from Sleepy Hollow. I could've broken him like a twig.

He called back again the next morning, and that message was finally heard on Message to Harry Manback II on Salival. Anyway, everyone used to imitate it from my impression, even though they have never heard it.

Years later, I found the tape and played it for

Pezzo di merda, figlio di puttana.** I hope somebody in your family dies soon. Crepa, pezzo di merda, e vai a sucare cazzi su un aereo!***

* Son of a bitch, do you know you're a piece of shit?

** Piece of shit, son of a bitch.

*** Die, piece of shit, and go suck dicks on a plane!

Maynard, who by this point, was my roommate. Next thing I knew, a few edits, some piano ... viola! ... “Harry Manback” is a joke name from the famous comedian, Bill Hicks (deceased)”

I met a boy wearing Vans, 501s, and a
Dope Beastie T, nipple rings, and
New tattoos that claimed that he
Was OGT,
From '92,
The first EP

And in between
Sips of Coke
He told me that
He thought
We were sellin' out,
Layin' down,
Suckin' up
To the man

Well now I've got some
Advice for you, little buddy
Before you point the finger
You should know that I'm the man,

And if I'm the man,
Then you're the man, and

The Vans (shoes), Levi 501 (jeans), Beastie
(Boys) t-shirt, nipple rings are all 'alternative'
icons, and except for the nipple rings, com-
mercial brand names. OGT stands for Original
Gangster: Tool (ie. an old-school Tool fan),
1992 being the year Tool released their first EP.
The irony is that if he was such a dedicated
fan, you would think that he'd have had the
tatoos done in 1992, rather than around the
time the *Ænima* lyrics were being penned.

The Man, of course, has long been a lable for
authority / government / corporate power. In
consumer culture though, the system literally
is everyone involved in it.

HOOKER WITH A PENIS

Hooker is Tool's blatant comment on con-
sumerism and the somewhat contrived
notion of bands 'selling out' — something
that suspiciously coincides with a band
breaching a certain threshold of popularity
or commercial success.

He's the man as well so you can
Point that fuckin' finger up your ass

All you know about me is what I've sold you,
Dumb fuck
I sold out long before you ever heard my
name

I sold my soul to make a record,
Dip shit,
And you bought one

So I've got some
Advice for you, little buddy
Before you point your finger
You should know that
I'm the man,

If I'm the fuckin' man
Then you're the fuckin' man as well
So you can
Point that fuckin' finger up your ass

All you know about me is what I've sold

This hints at the sacrifices any band makes to be heard and achieve some success. The boy in question has only come to know the band through the work they've managed to sell. He (perhaps incorrectly) assumes that what he has bought in the past is what the band has always wanted to play and be known for.

you,
Dumb fuck
I sold out long before you ever heard my
name

I sold my soul to make a record,
Dip shit,
And you bought one

All you read and
Wear or see and
Hear on TV
Is a product
Begging for your
Fatass dirty
Dollar

So ... Shut up and
Buy my new record
Send more money
Fuck you, buddy

INTERMISSION

Intermission is, of course, an electronic organ mutation of Jimmy, the song that it precedes, but think of it like this:

Intermission is childhood skipping down the street, not really looking where you're going, watching the cracks in the footpath slip by. When finally you catch yourself and look up and find yourself in a dark and unfamiliar place...

JIMMY

What was it like to see
The face of your own stability
Suddenly look away
Leaving you with the dead and hopeless?

Eleven and she was gone
Eleven is when we waved good-bye
Eleven is standing still,
Waiting for me to free him
By coming home

Moving me with a sound
Opening me within a gesture
Drawing me down and in,
Showing me where it all began,
Eleven

It took so long to realize that
You hold the light that's been leading me
back home
Under a dead Ohio sky,
Eleven has been and will be waiting,
Defending his light,

... adulthood.

Interpretations for Jimmy should be taken very openly, with a grain of salt if you will, and I will try to be vague, as the lyrics deliberately are.

Things to keep in mind are:

Jimmy is a nickname for James.

Maynard's birth name was James Herbert Keenan (now Maynard James Keenan).

Maynard grew up in Ravenna, Ohio, USA.

Maynard's mother is not dead, as was printed incorrectly in Rolling Stone magazine.

This interpretation was posted in the toolshed.down.net forums and I find that it closely matches my own feelings about the song. I have modified it to suit my own voice.

Jimmy seems to be the union of a man with his child self. The fact that "jimmy" is

And wondering...
Where the hell have I been?
Sleeping, lost, and numb
So glad that I have found you
I am wide awake and heading home

*I wish that I could see you
Turn and run to play
Dreams are fading
Carry my ancient soul*

*Carry me into the light
Aim your body heavenly
Enduring a memory
I'll come to your light*

*Hold your light
Hold your light where I can see it
Hold it
High*

Hold your light,
Eleven
Lead me through each gentle step by step

These lyrics do not appear as a part of the
'official' song words, but they are whispered
softly in Jimmy at:

2:52

3:15

in lowercase in the linear notes implies that Maynard in his youth, but I really don't think the song is about him, at least not necessarily. "Eleven and she was gone/Eleven is when we waved goodbye" means the child lost his mother, or at least a mother-figure, in some way when he was eleven. Since then he has been, in some sense, frozen in time, "standing still."

Perhaps he has been mentally traumatized and can't move on, unable to grow and become whole as an adult. The lyrics certainly paint bleak scenery. "Under a dead Ohio sky." "Leaving you with the dead and hopeless." Also, the fact that he is "defending his light and wondering 'where the hell have I been'" gives me a picture of a boy struggling to hold on, though he feels alone and abandoned.

As an adult he realizes his lost child-self, and wants to go back and save him. Somehow he is shown "where it all began."

by inch by loaded memory

I'll move to heal
As soon as pain allows so we can
Reunite and both move on together

Hold your light,
Eleven. Lead me through each gentle step
by step
By inch by loaded memory
till one and one are one, eleven,
So glow, child, glow

I'm heading back home

Perhaps returning home stirs up old feelings, or maybe he has repressed memories of youth that traces back to his loss at eleven.

Since then his mind has been “sleeping, lost and numb,” but still he has felt some kind of draw to the source or his despair, or whatever he feels. “It took so long to realise you hold the light that’s been drawing me back home.” The fact that his inner self still holds the light, still glows, shows that there is still hope of getting back.

The adult gets back to the child with each “step by step, by inch by loaded memory,” going back perhaps to repressed memories. He has resolved himself and won’t stop until “one [man] and one [boy] are one [being].” He tells his inner youth-self to shine bright so they may do this, so he will be “heading back home.”

DIE EIER VON SATAN

GERMAN

Die Eier von Satan

Eine halbe Tasse Staubzucker
Ein Viertel Teelöffel Salz
Eine Messerspitze türkisches Haschisch
Ein halbes Pfund Butter
Ein Teelöffel Vanillenzucker
Ein halbes Pfund Mehl
Einhundertfünfzig Gramm gemahlene
Nüsse
Ein wenig extra Staubzucker
... und keine Eier
In eine Schüssel geben
Butter einrühren
Gemahlene Nüsse zugeben und
Den Teig verkneten

Augenballgroße Stücke vom Teig formen
Im Staubzucker wälzen und
Sagt die Zauberwörter
"Simsalabim bamba salado saladim"

ENGLISH

The Eggs/Balls of Satan

Half a cup of powdered sugar
One quarter teaspoon salt
One knifetip Turkish hash
Half a pound butter
One teaspoon vanilla-sugar
Half a pound flour
150 g ground nuts
A little extra powdered sugar
... and no eggs

Place in a bowl
Add butter
Add the ground nuts and
Knead the dough

Form eyeball-size pieces from the dough
Roll in the powdered sugar
and say the Magic Words:
"Simsalabim bamba salado saladim"

"The Eggs of Satan"

The moral to this one is that things are not always as they seem. Tool's most consistent message to their listeners is that they should think for themselves, and "question everything". It shouldn't come as too much of a surprise then that what will sound like a Nazi propaganda rally to anyone eager to draw conclusions is actually a recipe for hash cookies.

There is also a parallel between the reactions of people to perceived evils – those who would be up in arms about "that Nazi song" might just be the very same who would be outraged that a band be allowed to condone "illicit drugs" on an album. Think for yourself.

Then there is this idea: If you were to remake yourself, to improve things inside you, would you leave out the seeds of evil, the eggs of Satan – in you that tempt you to continue a destructive cycle?

Auf ein gefettetes Backblech legen und
Bei zweihundert Grad für fünfzehn Minuten
backen
UND KEINE EIER

Bei zweihundert Grad für fünfzehn Minuten
backen und Keine Eier

Place on a greased baking pan and
Bake at 200 degrees for 15 minutes
...AND NO EGGS

Bake at 200 degrees for 15 minutes
and no eggs.

PUSHIT

Saw the gap again today...
While you were begging me to stay
Take care not to make me enter
If I do we both may disappear

I will choke until I swallow...
Choke this infant here before me.
What is this but my reflection?
Who am I to judge and strike you down?

But you're
Pushing and shoving me
You still love me and you pushit on me

Rest your trigger on my finger,
bang my head upon the fault line
Take care not to make me enter
'cause if I do we both may disappear

But you're pushing me,
Shoving me. Pushit on me

Slipping back into the gap again
I'm alive when you're touching me,

'Take care not to make me enter' ... the gap,
which is explained a little later.

He can't move on until he accepts his situation for what it is, and what he must do to escape it. Here also, is the recognition of the cycle that will spark its end.

The 'Rest your trigger' lines seem to allude to blame being placed – the way insignificant things can trigger an eruption of anger, or the way in which a person can be constrained with rules in such a way that they cannot help but break them.

The 'gap' feels like different things to me at different times – the hole that the abusive per-

Pushit is one of the reasons I love music and poetry. I can't think of another medium through which such inexplicable, complex and contradictory feelings and ideas could be so easily translated.

Quite simply, Pushit is a song that deals with the paradoxical nature of an abusive relationship – that we can truly love someone who treats us so badly, and that in an environment where abuse is the only contact, that it can come to be a kind of cursed loving touch. The song also makes reference to the cyclic nature that such relationships tend to entail – the tendency for abused to grow into abusers.

The character in the song finally escapes their dire situation, but only through terrible desperation and at the horrific price of having to kill someone they hold dear.

The opening stanza begins with the reiteration of the cycle by the main character.

Alive when you're shoving me down

But I'd trade it all
For just a little bit of
Piece of mind

Put me somewhere I don't wanna be
Seeing someplace I don't wanna see
Never wanna see that place again

Saw that gap again today
As you were begging me to stay
Managed to push myself away,
And you, as well

If, when I say I may fade like a sigh if I stay,
You minimize my movement anyway,
I must persuade you another way

There's no love in fear

Staring down the hole again
Hands upon my back again
Survival is my only friend

son threatens to drag the character down into, the recess of acceptance that will keep them trapped forever or even from Bob Frissell's book (again) in which he writes, 'The gap between the way in which you have evolved and the way in which you haven't is getting greater and greater with the years. It is almost large enough to kill you.'

Resolution to leave is building within the character. They're beginning to see exit as an alternative to what might ultimately be their destruction. This is the realisation of the false belief that an abusive relationship is better than no relationship at all. So the character proposes that they leave. They call it off, but a peaceful separation is not to be had so easily...

And they harden their resolve and despair. Thoughts of how life might otherwise be have made the abuse feel worse. This will be the

"Ever have some one love you so much that they tried to kill you? Or perhaps suck you down into a hole, and you had to kill them to get away? Me either."

—Maynard, introducing Pushit at Houston.

Terrified of what may come

Just remember I will always love you,
Even as I tear your fucking throat away
But it will end no other way

last time, though what must be done to escape
is terrible, frightening and heartbreaking.

CESARO SUMMABILITY

Cesaro summability is a mathematical method that determines the summability of a sequence when it is not summable by standard means – basically any infinite sequence either diverges on a constant or goes to infinity.

To my mind it sums up fairly simply a theory I read some time ago (the Omega man theory), which goes something like this: Once a species is born [crying baby] it has two possible fates – extinction (zero) or immortality (infinity). Omega man theory goes on to propose that an immortal species would continue to expand the amount of information it can store (memory, history, culture and later shared consciousness) and that since information takes a certain space to encode a species must expand physically to accommodate that. Extrapolate that to infinity and you have a species, or being, that knows everything because it is everything. At this point the species/being is God.

ÆNEMA

Some say the end is near
Some say we'll see Armageddon soon
I certainly hope we will
I sure could use a vacation from this

Bullshit three ring circus sideshow of
Freaks

Here in this hopeless fucking hole we call LA
The only way to fix it is to flush it all away
Any fucking time. Any fucking day
Learn to swim, I'll see you down in Arizona
Bay.

Fret for your figure and
Fret for your latte and
Fret for your hairpiece and
Fret for your lawsuit and
Fret for your prozac and
Fret for your pilot and
Fret for your contract and
Fret for your car

It's a

The opening breathing suggests laboured,
survivalist gasps...

The material things and status-image lifestyle
objects that we've come to value so highly.

'Pilot' refers to a television pilot, a single show
produced to gauge potential popularity.

This track expands on the late Bill Hicks' stand-up comedy, Arizona Bay. In it, Hicks (comedian, social commentator, philosopher and long time friend of the band) suggests that Los Angeles is beyond the moral point of no return, and ought to be destroyed for the good of the world.

Tool pick up on the idea, but expand it into a pointed reminder that lately our society has place material wealth and personal image above the things that really matter.

It should be noted that present-day Arizona doesn't have a coastline, but is quite inland from California (in which L.A. is located). Limited edition copies of Ænema included a revised map (sans California), inspired by geologic projections of the effects of a major fault line collapse on the United States east coast.

When played live, the song is often introduced as being about 'better living through

Bullshit three ring circus sideshow of
Freaks

Here in this hopeless fucking hole we call LA
The only way to fix it is to flush it all away
Any fucking time. Any fucking day
Learn to swim, I'll see you down in Arizona
Bay.

Some say a comet will fall from the sky
Followed by meteor showers and tidal waves
Followed by faultlines that cannot sit still
Followed by millions of dumbfounded
dipshits

Some say the end is near.
Some say we'll see armageddon soon
I certainly hope we will cuz
I sure could use a vacation from this

Silly shit, stupid shit...

One great big festering neon distraction,
I've a suggestion to keep you all occupied

irrigation', a statement that, with the title
suggests bowel irrigation – the 'cleaning out
of the nasty shit' if you will.

While it may seem contradictory that May-
nard tips the very people he seems to want to
destroy to learn to swim, you can easily take
it as a warning to prepare for judgment – to
reassess what is valuable in life. You can also
that with everything but life itself destroyed,
how this misguided population might refocus,
indicating that it's not the people, but their
unhealthy obsessions that are the problem.

The city.

Learn to swim

Mom's gonna fix it all soon
Mom's comin' round to put it back the way
it ought to be

'Mom' being our creator – God, Nature, Allah,
the Great Spirit, or otherwise as applicable.

Learn to swim

Fuck L Ron Hubbard and
Fuck all his clones
Fuck all those gun-toting
Hip gangster wannabes

The founder of Scientology.

Learn to swim

Fuck retro anything
Fuck your tattoos
Fuck all you junkies and
Fuck your short memory

Learn to swim

Fuck smiley glad-hands
With hidden agendas

'Smiley glad-hands' are our smiling, waving
show-politicians.

Fuck these dysfunctional,
Insecure actresses

Learn to swim

Cuz I'm praying for rain
And I'm praying for tidal waves
I wanna see the ground give way
I wanna watch it all go down
Mom please flush it all away
I wanna watch it go right in and down
I wanna watch it go right in
Watch you flush it all away

Time to bring it down again
Don't just call me pessimist
Try and read between the lines

I can't imagine why you wouldn't
Welcome any change, my friend

I wanna see it all come down
Suck it down
Flush it down

At this point the song takes on a soothing and calm melody, contrary to the lyrics which, on their own, project an angry and vengeful tone, the music takes a hopeful, forward-looking, quietly enthusiastic, positive tone.

This is perhaps the biggest hint of all that Maynard is calling for mass re-evaluation rather than death and destruction.

(-) IONS

The electric buzzing sound is caused by a device called a Jakob's Ladder – essentially two long metal rods which arc electricity between each other. The other sounds are an improvisation of the build up before a storm. The title refers to negative ions, which are famed for causing a feeling of freshness and wellbeing in humans when present in the atmosphere. Negative ions are found in the air in greatest numbers immediately before storms and near waterfalls (and to a lesser extent, water in general).

THIRD EYE

"See I think that drugs have done some good things for us, I really do, and if you don't believe that drugs have done some good things for us do me a favour, go home tonight, take all your albums, all your tapes and all your CDs and burn 'em. Cuz you know what? The musicians that made all that great music that's enhanced your lives throughout the years? Real fuckin' high on drugs."

Today a man on acid realised that all matter is merely energy condensed to a slow vibration, that we are all one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively. there is no such thing as death, life is only a dream and we're an imagination of ourselves. Here's Tom with the weather.

Dreaming of that face again
It's bright and blue and shimmering
Grinning wide
And comforting me with it's three warm
and wild eyes

On my back and tumbling

Spoken by the late Bill Hicks.

This little quip nicely sums up the chemical/ physical state of all things. Its quite a strange thought, especially because it's essentially true, the rest of course is extrapolation but in a purely physical (as in physics) sense it makes sense. Now, life goes on...

Possibly the beginning of hallucination, but because it seems to be closer to the true theme of the song, its also possibly the beginnings of deep meditation. To reconcile the point its worth mentioning that psychoactive drugs and mediation stimulate similar parts of the brain.

For a long, long time, this was the track I always skipped because the brutal repetitive hammering of "pry-ing op-en my third eye" was just too uncomfortable to listen to. Eventually though, I forced myself to listen to it though several times and it softened up somewhat. It's still not a track that can really be left in the background, it's one of those that has to be played loud (especially to enjoy the build up and subtlety of the percussion in the early stages) and held in the foreground of your attention.

The general theme is one of trying to achieve enlightenment. The third eye refers to the spiritual, astral or mind's eye, commonly illustrated as residing in the forehead. It also makes an appears as one of the four higher chakras – the crowning chakra, which provides connection to the universe beyond. 'Third eye' also refers to the human pineal gland, which is stimulated by both hallucinogens and deep meditation,

Down that hole and back again
Rising up
And wiping the webs and the dew from my
withered eye

In... Out... In... Out... In... Out...

A child's rhyme stuck in my head
It said that life is but a dream
I've spent so many years in question
to find I've known this all along

"So good to see you
I've missed you so much
So glad it's over
I've missed you so much
Came out to watch you play

Why are you running?"

Shrouding all the ground around me
Is this a holy crow above me?
Black as holes within a memory
And blue as our new second sun

Down (out of consciousness) and back (into
higher awareness).

Mediative breathing; or failed attempts to
reach and hold onto the enlightened state.

*A man dreams so vividly of being a butterfly, that
on waking he exclaims: "I do not know if I am a
man dreaming of being a butterfly, or a butterfly
dreaming of being a man."*

The voice of the spirit familiar – a personal
guide to assist in the journey to and through
the higher plane.

But I'm not, I'm slipping out...

I'm reasonably sure this refers to Native
American mythology. The crow serves as a
guide to the spirit (from one world to the
next), while the blue sun is mentioned as the

is thought to be the 'seat of the soul' and
resides at the geometric centre of the skull.
In lower vertebrates, the pineal gland has an
eye like structure and it functions as a light
receptor and is considered by some to be
the evolutionary forerunner of the modern
eye.

Themes of practiced insecurity (through
the abandonment of what we assume to be
true), questioning (everything), and thinking
for one's self are secondary but prominent.

The three most common paths to higher
awareness – drugs, meditation and death
(the non-existence of) – are all alluded to,
though death and drugs appear only in
the album intro. Other performance have
different spoken introductions, the themes
always similar with regard to some kind of
quest for enlightenment.

Perhaps the narrator is trying to reach this
higher state, but the road is hard and they

I stick my hand into his shadow
To pull the pieces from the sand
Which I attempt to reassemble
To see just who I might have been
I do not recognize the vessel,
But the eyes seem so familiar
Like phosphorescent desert buttons
Singing one familiar song...

"So good to see you
I've missed you so much
So glad it's over
I've missed you so much
Came out to watch you play
Why are you running away?"

Prying open my third eye

So good to see you once again
I thought that you were hiding
And you thought that I had run away
Chasing the tail of dogma
I opened my eye and there we were

final sign of the coming of the fifth world (the Apocalypse).

Possibly a reference to peyote (button like cactus with narcotic effects, used by some Native American tribes).

Third eye open, the narrator joyfully meets his spirit familiar. The other way of looking at it is that he's speaking to his higher self, rather than a spirit guide. Either interpretation works well here.

feel that they are trying to force it (whether through drugs, or through the more difficult but true path of meditation). Perhaps it's been a while since the narrator's been here and he's finding the return difficult.

It has been suggested that the comforting face, and the 'person' singing to the narrator might be a spirit guide or familiar in the higher consciousness. Such a figure would correspond both with Carl Jung's writings on consciousness and native American myths of other planes of existence.

So the sentiment goes both ways, with the narrator longing and working hard for his return to his enlightened state with his spirit familiar, and the familiar's own longing for the narrator's return.

So good to see you once again
I thought that you were hiding from me
And you thought that I had run away
Chasing a trail of smoke and reason

Prying open my third eye

Salival

The Salival box consists of a DVD of the band's video clips, and an 8 (plus one hidden) track CD of live and previously unreleased recordings. Not being an album as such, Salival isn't written around a group of central ideas, but it does shed some light on the band's ability to approach old material from different angles proven in the deeply moving rework of Pushit and the cover of Led Zeppelin's No Quarter.

THIRD EYE

*Think for yourself. Question authority.
Think for yourself. Question authority.*

*Throughout human history, as our species has
face the frightening, terrorising fact that we do
not know who we are or where we are going in
this ocean of chaos, it has been the authorities
– the political, the religious, the educational
– authorities who attempted to comfort us, by
giving us order, rules, regulations; in forming,
forming in our minds their view of reality. To
think for yourself you must question author-
ity, and learn how to put yourself in a state of
vulnerable open-mindedness – chaotic, confused
vulnerability – to inform yourself.*

Think for yourself. Question authority...

Dreaming of that face again.
It's bright and blue and shimmering.
Grinning wide
And comforting me with it's three warm
and wild eyes.

Timothy Leary sample.

This version of Third Eye isn't performed in such a way as to deepen or extend its meaning. The new opening sample reinforces the song's message of free thinking and the battle to achieve objectivity and even sight.

Thankfully for those listening at volume (as you should be) and those who are new to Tool, fresh from softer sounds, the final line isn't punched out quite so many times as in the album version.

On my back and tumbling
Down that hole and back again
Rising up
And wiping the webs and the dew from my
withered eye.

A child's rhyme stuck in my head.
It said that life is but a dream.
I spent so many years in question
to find I've known this all along.

"So good to see you.
I've missed you so much.
So glad it's over.
I've missed you so much.

Came out to watch you play.
Why are you running away?

Came out to watch you play.
Why are you running?"

Shrouding all the ground around me
Is this a holy crow above me?

Black as holes within a memory
Blue as our new second sun.
I stick my hand the shadow
Pull the pieces from the sand.
Which I attempt to reassemble
To see just who I might have been.
I do not recognize the vessel,
But the eyes seem so familiar.
Like phosphorescent dessert buttons
Singing one familiar song...

"So good to see you.
I've missed you so much.
So glad it's over.
I've missed you so much.
Came out to watch you play.
Why are you running away?"

Prying open my third eye.

So good to see you once again.
I thought that you were hiding.
And you thought that I had run away.
Chasing the tail of dogma.

I opened my eye... and there we were.

So good to see you once again
I thought that you were hiding from me.
And you thought that I had run away.
Chasing a trail of smoke and reason.

Prying open my third eye.

PART OF ME

I know you well.
You are a part of me.
I know you better than I know myself.
I know you best, better than anyone.
I know you better than I know myself.

You don't judge.
You can't speak.
You can't leave.
You can't hurt me.
You're just here for me to use.

I know you best,
better than one might think.
I know you better than I know myself.
It's time for you
to make a sacrifice.
It's time to die a little.
Give it up.

You are a part of me.

A short, aggressive song from the band's first album, Opiate. Released long ago, and without any comment available from fans or band I honestly can't say who or what this song is about – whether its addressed to an internal aspect, or an external partner is itself open to speculation.

Take it as you find it.

PUSHIT

We've been trying something a little different this tour. We've been looking at one of our songs from a different angle, under a different light, so we can hopefully kind of see it almost for the first time. We'd like try that for you tonight, is that okay?

We're gonna need your help though. We're gonna need your help and your permission, so we need you to find a comfortable space, that is not only comfortable, but vulnerable.

I want you to shut your eyes and go there, and we'll meet you on the other side...

Saw the gap again today.
While you were begging me to stay.
Take care not to make me enter.
If I do we both may disappear.

Saw the gap again today.
While you were begging me to stay
Managed to push myself away
And you as well, my dear
And you, as well

Maynard prepares the audience for a song that is personal and emphatic. The lead in is almost like the beginning of a hypnosis, visualisation or meditation.

The journey begins...

The gap, as before, could be several things, but more definitely than ever now it feels like a dark abyss of acceptance whose edge, once passed, won't be returned from.

And so they raise their need to leave, and when denied, lack the strength to insist. Inside though, a resolve is sparked when they see that this person who loves and hurts them can't let them leave. And in feeling that

Almost every Tool fan looks upon this performance, if not this song, as something very special. The theme of the original is intact, but this time the tone is much more reflective, more personal, more vulnerable and much more painful. It is more of a love song, more of a tragedy, and more of a victory than the original.

The narrating character grapples and claws against their only options. They resolve, slip then resolve again to escape by any means, but the undertow in this version is more definitely one of sorrow and desperation rather than the strength and anger that comes through in the album version.

Musically the tone matches. Lighter and more tentative than the heavy, methodical footstep-beats of the original, but ultimately larger and darker and more tragic.

Pushed you away my dear

I will choke until I swallow
Choke this infant here before me
What are you but my reflection?
Who am I to judge or strike you down?

But you're pushing me
And Im shoving you
And your pushing me
And Im shoving you

Rest your trigger on my finger,
Bang my head upon the fault line
You better take care not to make me enter
If I do we both may disappear

But you're pushing me
And Im shoving you
And your pushing me
And Im shoving you

You still love me

resolve they are distanced from this other person, their only love. The tabla begins the tempo of hesitation and resolve ... like rain-drops of determination collecting slowly, or time spent thinking around and around in circles until there is only one certainty left. Underscoring it is the slow and powerful bass. *I have no right... But there's this inescapable situation.*

We're pushing and we're shoving
And you're pushing and I'm shoving

You still love me

And were pushing and were shoving
And I'm pushing as your shoving

And Im slipping back into the gap again
I feel alive when you touch me...
I feel alive when you hold me...
...down

Slipping back into you

I am somewhere I dont wanna be (yeah)
Put me somewhere I dont wanna be
Push me somewhere I dont wanna be
Seeing someplace I don't wanna see
Never wanna see that place again...

Saw the gap again today
While you were begging me to stay
Managed to push myself away,

*Repeat, repeat. Am I trying to convince myself?
Am I in denial?*

They're back there, in a situation that's grown
familiar but is so dangerous and so frightening.

I'm accepting this.

This part is told by the music alone. The
character, alone and wounded in the after-
math, drifting in their oppression begins to
feel a desperate need to escape. The character
collects themselves, builds up their courage and
resolve, decides that they must do something.
Guitars and drums in crescendo are strength
and steel within the character... their mind is
made. How? When? Its inevitable and now

Again, I can only be humbled by Tool's ability to pull a person directly into an emotional engagement – into understanding an almost unexplainable, completely illogical situation. If a person knows only abuse as an expression of love, then the act of violence takes on a special and disturbing duality.

And you as well, my dear

If, when I say I may fade like a sigh if I stay,
You minimize my movement anyway,
I must persuade you another way

Pushing and Shoving and
Pushing and Shoving and
Pushing me

There's no love in fear.

Staring down the hole again.
Hands are on my back again.
Survival is my only friend.
Terrified of what may come.

Remember I will always love you,
As I claw your fucking throat away.
It will end no other way.

that their strength has grown, their is no ap-
parent sadness in pushing their lover away
this time. *A test... a chance to let me go, to let us
both escape.
Please!*

No!

It all comes down to this.

This will be the last time.

*I have to do this...
Oh God...*

Goodbye.

MESSAGE TO HARRY MANBACK II

Stronzo, stronzo di merda
I'm trying to take a nap but
I couldn't sleep overnight because of you
Ugh, you really hurt me,
Ohhhh you really hurt me
When I was high,
You called me an asshole?
Talk to me fai schifo*
Pezzo di merda
Have you ever been trying to take a nap?
My heart beats too fast
Because I'm thinking of your fucking ugly
face
You, you suck
Fai schifo
Pezzo di merda
Fai proprio schifo**
Vafanculo, ah
Stronzo bastardo.

* you disgust me

** you make me sick

YOU LIED

Setting sun can't shine, now you're gone
Inside sleeping, my heart beating
You know that you tried to hide it
Couldn't you have said what you meant?
Oh...

Time heals, time congeals around us
Endless hours of wasted moments
Understanding, not demanding
Your eyes tell what you feel inside

Setting sun can't shine, now you're gone
Inside sleeping, my heart beating
You know that you tried to hide it
Shouldn't you have said what you meant?

You lied!

Feeling dead inside, living on.

When love is confessed to, forgiveness and healing slowly come about, but a lie is like a thorn that digs deeper with every moment. Understanding/not demanding hints at the narrator's desire for their love to come forward and admit the truth, but in spite of both parties knowing the truth, they don't.

This is a cover of a song by Peach, from their album Giving Birth To A Stone. Tool toured with Peach during their early days.

The song is fantastically non-specific about what was lied about. In the betrayal of love, the crime isn't important, because love simply forgives. Lying and hiding is more painful.

MERKABA

[THERE ARE NO WORDS]

SAMPLES:

[it's / having / in] some kind of psychedelic experience.

Our body is light, we are immortal.

Our body is love, we are eternal.

Eternal...

Omniscient,

Omnipotent,

Omnipresent,

Without judgment.

The song with no words:

When I started researching what (if anything) Merkaba might be about, I didn't expect to dig up much – I'd never even heard the word before. But strangely, of all the Tool songs, this morsel yielded information that exceeded all the others in volume and strangeness.

In the context of Tool, Merkaba has strong ties to Third Eye, and to a lesser extent Lateralus/Disposition/Reflection.

Merkaba is supposedly a metaphysical vehicle that is able to be activated by a person through repeated meditation. Once activated the vehicle has both preventative and medicinal physical effects and allows the occupant to travel at or very near to the speed of light, as well as through time.

While most recently related to New Age mysticism, involving the consolidation of

various spiritualities including Judaism, ancient Egyptian mythology, early Christianity, sacred geometry and far Eastern mysticism, the deep meditation techniques said to activate the merkaba (and open the third eye) have existed for thousands of years. New Age mysticism frequently states that it brings no new knowledge to humanity, but aims to revive ancient and forgotten knowledge.

From the Tool forum:

“Merkaba” was defined in the Tool FAQ as “revolving lights” and as an internal vehicle of sorts. I was reading Mandala Symbolism by Carl Jung the other day (a fantastic read) when I came across the term “Merkabah”, meaning the four animals (the winged bull, the golden eagle, the winged Lion, the archangel) used to describe the four archangels, or sometimes the four Christian evangelists. The four animals came from the Justinian gnomism (I think) and have other symbols as well. I don’t think it ties into the song, but

just something to think about. Jung used the “Merkabah” as part of an explanation of the mysterious quaternity (of three plus one – in this case three animals plus one human) that seems to be omnipresent in human art and society. Also in the book was an illustration of a mandala that looks quite a bit like Lateralus (in that there was a black circle bordered by the creepy looking flaming eyes, with a central, lighter circle.) Also, there was a picture closely resembling the can opener thingy that is behind the cover art man’s head. Maybe a sign of the collective unconscious alluded to in the song, Reflection?

NO QUARTER

Lock the door, kill the light.
No one's coming home tonight.
The sun beats down and don't you know?
All our lives are growing cold, oh...
They bring news that must get through.
To build a dream for me and you, oh.

Locked in a place where no one goes.

They ask no quarter
They have no quarter.

Lock the door, kill the light
No one's coming home tonight

It's getting colder
Locked in a place where no one goes.

Lock the door, kill the light
No one's coming home tonight

They bring news that must get through.
Dying peace in me and you

Selected original Zeppelin lyrics in italics:

*The snow falls hard and don't you know?
The winds of Th(r)or are blowing cold.
They're wearing steel that's bright and true,
The carry news that must get through,
They choose a path where no-one goes.*

This line has no equivalent in the Zeppelin version.

This is a cover of a Led Zeppelin song by the same name, which appeared on *Houses Of The Holy* and alluded to parts of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic, *The Lord of The Rings*.

The Tool rendition, however, has different lyrics, changing or omitting many of the links that the original had with Tolkien's story. If we take it that, like the original, Tool's performance refers to a difficult and desperate journey though, that might just be enough to be satisfied, but if you want to look further, an analysis of the alterations is in order.

It's been suggested that the Tool rework might refer to the Vietnam War term 'no quarter', used to indicate the death of soldier or inescapable, deadly position. Though there's no formal evidence to support it, taking the song in such a light could paint 'a dream for me and you' in the light of the U.S.'s obsession with stamping out communism around the world at that time.

Locked in a place where no one goes.

We have no quarter

We have no quarter

We ask no quarter

Support for this idea might or might not be found in the near-inaudible whispers at 5:14 ('radical reasoning') and 5:34 ('so many lives, so many minds that are more important'). There is much more obscure whispering throughout the song (specifically between 4:30-5:10 and 5:15- 6:20) but I have no firm idea of what is being said.

Lateralus

Perhaps more unified and focussed in its themes than the preceding albums, *Lateralus* deals primarily with extending the positive notions that first appeared in *Ænima*. Sanctity, progression, extension and evolution are continuing themes.

Lateralus is commonly considered less accessible than *Ænima*. Initially it sounds loud and disjointed in the beginning and very long in the end – such that in the first few plays of the album it might be difficult to listen all the way through. Persistence however, is richly rewarded. Those who know and love it think of *Lateralus* as a warmer, smoother sounding album than its precursors, and its themes are consistently positive. In between those first few uncomfortable listens and intimacy with the album is a journey of discovery. The album is literally made to be discovered, and one should not expect to hear all there is to hear in any of the songs the first, fifth or twentieth time around. Just as it's possible to go deeply into lyrical interpretation or enjoy the band superficially, it can be fun to follow individual instruments closely through the songs, listening for things you haven't heard before – it'll make you appreciate the work a whole even more in the times when you aren't so absorbed in it.

THE GRUDGE

Wear the grudge like a crown of negativity
Calculate what we will or will not tolerate
Desperate to control all and everything
Unable to forgive your scarlet lettermen

Clutch it like a cornerstone
Otherwise it all comes down
Justify denials and grip `em to the lonesome
end

Clutch it like a cornerstone
Otherwise it all comes down
Terrified of being wrong
Ultimatum prison cell

Saturn ascends, choose one or ten. Hang on
or be humbled again

Clutch it like a cornerstone
Otherwise it all comes down
Justify denials and grip `em to the lonesome
end

Saturn ascends, comes round again.
Saturn ascends, the one, the ten

Self-righteousness – the game of antagonistic guilt-tripping and intolerance. ‘Scarlet lettermen’ is possibly a reference to the scarlet letter that adulterers were made to wear as an indicator of their sin in days past. Regardless of their future actions they are judged by their past crime.

This deals with the concept of Right and Wrong, the idea that in any argument, being wrong amounts to losing something.

An opportunity for choice, choose the ideal (philosophical) or the basic, logical, imperfect path.

The Grudge is, in principle, a song about bearing a grudge, the weight of it, and the options facing the bearer (to continue bearing the grudge or to let it go and forgive). There are however, some strange metaphors and references at work, some of which will show up later in the album.

The basic gist of the song isn’t hard to work out, it’s getting around the references to ‘Saturn’, ‘the one’ and ‘the ten’ which take a bit more looking into.

To explain these references, we can look to The Tree Of Life a central part of the study of the Byzant Kabbalah, a mystical system that has its roots in Judaism. ‘The Tree of Life describes the descent of the divine into the manifest world, and methods by which divine union may be attained in this life. It can be viewed as a map of the human psyche, and of the workings of creation...’

Basically, the references in the song break

Ignorant to the damage done.

Wear the grudge like a crown of negativity
Calculate what we will or will not tolerate
Desperate to control all and everything
Unable to forgive your scarlet lettermen

Wear the grudge like a crown
Desperate to control
Unable to forgive
And we're sinking deeper

Defining, confining, controlling, and we're
sinking deeper

Saturn comes back around to show you
everything
Let's you choose what you will not see and
then
Drags you down like a stone or lifts you up
again
Spits you out like a child, light and innocent

'Ignorant to the damage done' is possibly a reference to the way people are inclined to cling to moral justification if it means being 'right', even when the consequences are worse than forgiving or admitting fault.

'Sinking deeper' away from reconciliation, towards the logical, thinking, Earth path.

Reconsideration, seeing things as they really are for a moment.

The path from the Third Path (Saturn) to the First on the tree diagram is upward and out ('lifts you up like a child'), while the path to the Tenth is steeply down ('drags you down like a stone'). 'Spits you out ... light and

down in the Tree as follows:

'Saturn' is the Third Path - 'Binah', it is the first to form out of the abyss, indicated by the color black and representative of understanding, reason, intelligence and language. The potentials of Binah are developing self-control, silence, secrecy, impersonal understanding and objective love.

'The One' refers to the First Path - 'Keter', indicated by white, representative of ideal wisdom, will, inspiration and spirit. The potentials of Keter include solving the inner quest, revelation, inspiration and enlightenment.

'The Ten' is the Tenth Path ('Malchut'), represented by the Earth, and evocative of body, earth and physical reality.

The question then is how are the concepts embodied in these Paths are used to aid the song's purpose?

Saturn comes back around
Lifts you up like a child or
Drags you down like a stone
To consume you till you choose to let this
go.

Give away the stone
Let the oceans take and transmutate this
cold and fated anchor
Give away the stone
Let the waters kiss and transmutate these
leadен grudges into gold
Let go

innocent' can be likened to the feeling of
unburdening – the lifting of weight off of the
shoulders – that comes with releasing the
grudge.

Release the grudge, let it return to it's place.
In this way it's much like karma – where the
release of bad energy creates a movement
towards good.

Saturn can be seen as reasoning or realisation. In the song it represents the awareness of the grudge and the opportunity to make a decision regarding it – to shrug it off or to keep it up. One is the most ideal of the three paths mentioned in the song, and can be taken as the influence to forgive and forget - to cast off the grudge. Ten, on the other hand, is 'the beginning of personality; the physical body', 'the realm of the sub-conscious ... where repressed energies are channelled up'.

Also worth keeping in mind is that the path from the Third Path (Saturn) to the First on the tree diagram is upward and out ('lifts you up like a child'), while the path to the Tenth is steeply down ('drags you down like a stone').

EON BLUE APOCALYPSE

While this is little more than a lead in to The Patient, If the reference to “our new [blue] second sun” in Third Eye is taken from Native American mythology (which Maynard has said he’s interested in), then its appearance is the final sign of the coming of the fifth world (the Apocalypse).

Hence, Eon Blue Apocalypse.

Another, lighter spin on the title relates to Adam Jones’ dog, Eon, who died of cancer. (Eon’s Apocalypse?)

THE PATIENT

A groan of tedium escapes me,
Startling the fearful
Is this a test? It has to be,
Otherwise I can't go on
Draining patience, drain vitality
This paranoid, paralyzed vampire act's a
little old

But I'm still right here
Giving blood, keeping faith
And I'm still right here

Wait it out,
Gonna wait it out,
Be patient (wait it out)

If there were no rewards to reap,
No loving embrace to see me through
This tedious path I've chosen here,
I certainly would've walked away by now
Gonna wait it out

If there were no desire to heal
The damaged and broken met along

The theme of this song barely needs a specific explanation. It's so open that the listener is welcome to apply it to whatever difficult situation or tedium they might have in mind. Simply put, it's about persistence, patience and reward.

For a theory on what might have inspired it, one might look to the legal difficulties the band had with their record label between the release of *Ænima* and *Lateralus*. The reference to blood as metaphor for energy and time in this song might tie in well then, to a similar reference in *Ticks And Leeches* ('blood sucking, parasitic little ticks'), especially if you're inclined to think of the ticks and leeches as lawyers and label-men.

It's best to take this song to heart and make it your own.

This tedious path I've chosen here
I certainly would've walked away by now

And I still may ... (sigh) ... I still may

Be patient
I must keep reminding myself of this

And if there were no rewards to reap,
No loving embrace to see me through
This tedious path I've chosen here,
I certainly would've walked away by now
And I still may

Gonna wait it out

MANTRA

There are several explanations for this interlude, one of which is a very deep analysis of the phonetic groans and their meanings as they would be in true meditative mantra.

Interesting and possible as that is, it does seem, even to me, a little farther fetched than a simpler explanation, and taking that path of exploration has the potential to dramatically upset the interpretations of the other songs covered in this book so far.

So for now, let's take Mantra to be an interlude and a preparation for the mood of Schism. It is, to this end, another sonic and mental cleansing track, similar to those found throughout *Ænima*.

There has been speculation as to what produced the 'monk groaning' in Mantra, with suggestions ranging from guitar effects, to Maynard's cat, but the question is irrelevant to the interpretation so I haven't pursued it.

For those wishing to pursue the meaning behind the phonetic mantra (and doing so appears to be quite an undertaking) it seems appropriate to begin research with the writings of Alistair Crowley.

Related material can be found at the URL below.

<http://toolshed.down.net/opinion/forum/showthread.php?s=&threadid=609>

SCHISM

I know the pieces fit cuz I watched them fall away
Mildewed and smoldering. Fundamental, differing.
Pure intention juxtaposed will set two lovers souls in motion
Disintegrating as it goes testing our communication
The light that fueled our fire then has burned a hole between us so
We cannot see to reach an end, crippling our communication.

I know the pieces fit `cause I watched them tumble down
No fault, none to blame it doesn't mean I don't desire to
Point the finger, blame the other, watch the temple topple over.
To bring the pieces back together, rediscover communication

The poetry that comes from the squaring off between,

I know it used to work, because it must have to have broken.
Things aren't good, an acknowledgment of fundamental difference.
The difference in wills sets the context for them to drift apart;
And as they move away from each other, their ability to resolve and communicate is tried.
Their passions, once solely for each other, now are focussed on contradictory things.
Blinded by their individual desires, they're unable to see a solution, and talking about it seems futile, so they don't.

It's not that either of them has really done anything wrong, but that doesn't make it any less easy, or still the wish to take the easy route, blame his partner and put an end to the relationship, perhaps in the hope that it might be able to be rebuilt from scratch. Or perhaps they just need to have the argument and to clear the air.

Schism is clearly a song about communication in relationships. The post below, from the toolshed.down.net opinion forum is an almost perfect summary.

Schism is most easily recognized by showing a relationship.

It is a metaphor, take the song and apply it to almost anything that shares a relationship with something else. Schism can be applied to the most broad as well as specific relationships all around us.

Human relationships, inter-personal relationships, anything.

People say it was a prediction to the September 11th attacks, but look, the Two Towers shared a very simple, unnoticeable relationship that was torn down, this song applies to everything, it is a lesson in how on a wider scale everything comes down to communication.

And the circling is worth it.
Finding beauty in the dissonance.

There was a time that the pieces fit, but I
watched them fall away.
Mildewed and smoldering, strangled by our
coveting
I've done the math enough to know the
dangers of our second guessing
Doomed to crumble unless we grow, and
strengthen our communication.

Cold silence has a tendency to atrophy any
Sense of compassion
Between supposed lovers
Between supposed brothers

Still the energy in the relationship, the company, even when it's conflict-torn has its good aspects. He seeks to appreciate these, and pays recognition to the poetic inspiration that the conflict brings in him.

The risk of course is that the end they meet will be final, and the relationship will die completely. Though there is a situation now that tears at them to move separately, they must see to move beyond that, to learn and grow from it and to resolve it with each other.

To not communicate is to separate.

The crescendo lines are a great credit to this song, deliberately opening it up to wide application for the listener. The sonic climax drives the message of the song home, 'Cold silence has...' feels mournful compared to the power and triumph that is given to the final mention of the relationship (lover/brother).

Communication is the basis for every relationship so to speak.

I don't think that what Maynard lyrically and spiritually intended for this song was an actual, specific encounter learn from. I think he was laying down a concept, setting a foundation, from personal experience, for any relationship.

PARABOL

So familiar and overwhelmingly warm
This one, this form I hold now.
Embracing you, this reality here,
This one, this form I hold now, so
Wide eyed and hopeful.
Wide eyed and hopefully wild.

We barely remember what came before this
precious moment,
Choosing to be here right now. Hold on,
stay inside...
This body holding me, reminding me that I
am not alone in
This body makes me feel eternal. All this
pain is an illusion.

Lover's body holding me, or my own body,
vessel of my self.

Like so many of Tool's other songs, pinning Parabol (and its partner Parabola) down to a singular, explicit meaning is to tie it to your own personal beliefs, feelings and experiences. There aren't any of the clues that are in other songs – no numbers or striking references to go look up and dig into. This one, these two, are for the listener alone to work out, but I'll try to get you started. The most common interpretations are that these songs deal with the sanctity and appreciation of life and form. Much of Tool's music focuses on transcendence, but these two songs pay homage to what we already have in life.

Another take on it, and really, this isn't too dissimilar to the first when you think about it, is that the pair are an ode to lovers' intimacy. Playing on that, or extending it, the pair of lovers could easily be the self and the body. Pushing that metaphor further, neither song (Parabol or Parabola) is complete without the other.

PARABOLA

We barely remember who or what came
before this precious moment,
We are choosing to be here right now. Hold
on, stay inside
This holy reality, this holy experience.
Choosing to be here in

This body. This body holding me. Be my
reminder here that I am not alone in
This body, this body holding me, feeling
eternal
All this pain is an illusion.

Alive, I

In this holy reality, in this holy experience.
Choosing to be here in

This body. This body holding me. Be my
reminder here that I am not alone in
This body, this body holding me, feeling
eternal
All this pain is an illusion.

Disregarding the Faaip De Oiad as a non-song, Parabol and Parabola straddle the mid-point of the album. On a parabolic chart of the album's tracks they would be at the top of the arc. It's likely that Parabola's title is little more than a pun, but there may well be a lesson in this 'familiar parable'. If Parabol is a meditation, Parabola is its celebratory partner - the dizzy thrill of enlightenment and joy of life.

Maynard's explanation of the 'illusion' is relatively straight-forward. When queried about the line in a magazine interview, he brought up the timeless question of what we really are. At a basic level, we're nothing but simple chemicals and electricity bound together. Further extrapolated, we're nothing but slowed down energy. The same stuff as everything. At that level, there is no such thing as pain. The concept is similar to the Buddhist one which deals with our selves as mere ripples in the cosmic pond.

Twirling round with this familiar parable.
Spinning, weaving round each new experience.
Recognize this as a holy gift and celebrate
this chance to be alive and breathing.

This body holding me reminds me of my
own mortality.
Embrace this moment. Remember. We are
eternal.
All this pain is an illusion.

The themes of mortality and eternity are
common to all religions, but the concept of
'we' being eternal and mortal are strikingly
typical of the Eastern schools of thought.

*It is said that life is empty and meaningless,
and that it is only through this very empti-
ness that infinite possibility is made avail-
able.*

Suck and suck.
Suckin up all you can,
suckin up all you can suck.
Workin up under my patience like a little tick.
Fat little parasite.

Suck me dry.
My blood is bruised and borrowed.
You thieving bastards.
You have turned my blood cold and bitter,
beat my compassion black and blue.

Hope this is what you wanted.
Hope this is what you had in mind.
Cuz this is what you're getting.
I hope you're choking.
I hope you choke on this.

Taken all I can, taken all I can, we can take.
Taken all you can, taken all you can fuckin'
take
Got nothing left to give to you.
Blood suckin parasitic little tick,
blood suckin parasitic little tick

Take what you want and then go.

Hope this is what you wanted.
Hope this is what you had in mind.
Cuz this is what you're getting.

Suck me dry.
Is this what you wanted?
Is this what you had in mind?
Cuz this this is what you're getting.
I hope you choke.

TICKS AND LEECHES

What or who is Ticks And Leeches about? It sure is angry.

Some say it's about the record industry (I'm inclined to agree), others think it's about superficial and demanding fans. The reality is that it could be about practically anyone or anything that tries the patience in a big way.

Given the legal battles that Tool went through with their former record label after the release of *Ænima* it seems fitting that it would be directed at the record industry's parasites and lawyers.

The one rule is that it must be played loud.

LATERALUS

Black
Then
White are
All I see
In my infancy.
Red and yellow then came to be,
Reaching out to me.
Lets me see.

As below, so above and beyond, I imagine
drawn beyond the lines of reason.
Push the envelope.
Watch it bend.

Over thinking, over analyzing separates the
body from the mind.
Withering my intuition, missing opportuni-
ties and I must
Feed my will to feel my moment drawing
way outside the lines

Black
Then
White are

1 Black, white, red and yellow refer again to
1 the Tree Of Life. Black is the first part of the
2 personality to emerge from the void. White
3 is the infinite, the ideal, the formation of
5 will, inspiration and spirit. Red is 'enter-
8 ing into the bigger world', while Yellow is
5 beauty, equilibrium, the Golden Ratio (Phi)
3 and the Sun. 'In my infancy' could refer to
the beginnings of spiritual exploration.
13 This stanza wonders about what is out
8 there (above: divine) and what is inside
5 (below: spirit, self). The author pushes
3 against his known boundaries and finds
that they yield.
The first chorus-of-sorts dwells on the
nature of western life and the over-valuing
of thought. Many meditations and faiths
teach practices that 'still the thoughts', in
preparation to explore the spiritual side of the
self. Drawing outside the lines could mean
outside the lines of convention or of generally
accepted bounds. The exploration and experi-
1 mentation are both personal and wild, lead-
1 ing to places and insights as yet unknown.
2

Where to begin? Lateralus, and its indis-
pensable partners, Disposition and Reflec-
tion must by my favourite Tool songs. Or I
should say song. The three were originally
written and recorded as a single song (they
are performed live as such) but were split
apart for easier digestion when the album
was made. As a unit they deal, in even more
detail even than 46 & 2, with progression,
evolution and transcendence.

Lateralus, Disposition and Reflection
explore the desire to explore the outer
bounds of human possibility in a mental
and spiritual sense. To look deep within and
beyond, to try to see what we are, what we
can be, and how we are connected with the
universe around us.

Lateralus itself uses the golden spiral as the
basis of a complex and versatile metaphor
for possibility. The spiral in the song repre-
sents all that is, and is possible. To 'spiral

All I see 3
In my infancy 5
Red and yellow then came to be 8
Reaching out to me 5
Lets me see 3

There is 2
So 1
Much 1
More that 2
Beckons me 3
To look through to these 5
Infinite possibilities 8
As below, so above and beyond, I imagine 13
Drawn outside the lines of reason 8
Push the envelope 5
Watch it bend. 3

Over thinking, over analyzing separates the
body from the mind
Withering my intuition leaving all these op-
portunities behind

This possibility of 'so much more' intrigues
him (there are endless examples of this in
Tool's work). Who are we? What are we?
Where are we going? Why are we here?
Where did we come from? What's next?
All of these questions seem as though they
might be critical to life, to humanity or at
least to the spiritual self, but western soci-
ety tends to grossly disregard such things
to focus on the practical and the profitable.
We are more concerned with providing
for ourselves through financial and capital
gain, with fitting in and achieving a suc-
cessful normality than with digging for the
answers to bigger questions.

out' is to work towards realising more of
what is possible. Swinging on the end of
the spiral is to push beyond the unknown,
to reach the unknown territory of enlighten-
ment, transcendence or to make the evolu-
tionary jump to a higher plane (depending
on how you want to see it).

The spiral makes such a powerful meta-
phorical tool because of its other, natural
and intrinsic meaning, which is also woven
into the song. To understand this, a basic
understanding of the Fibonacci set (the
Golden Set) is in order.

The Fibonacci series is a pattern of num-
bers in which each number is the sum of
the preceding two. See the appendix at the
end of this book for a proper explanation,
but the ratio describes an area of space
whose proportion is perfectly efficient when
repeated. It appears almost everywhere in
nature, describing the initial spinal shape of
almost all vertebrae, the way smoke moves

Feed my will to feel this moment
Urging me to cross the line

Reaching out to embrace the random
Reaching out to embrace whatever may
come

I embrace my desire to
Feel the rhythm, to feel connected
Enough to step aside and weep like a
widow
To feel inspired, to fathom the power,
To witness the beauty, to bathe in the fountain,
To swing on the spiral
Of our divinity and still be a human

With my feet upon the ground I lose myself
Between the sounds and open wide to suck
it in
I feel it move across my skin
I'm reaching up and reaching out
I'm reaching for the random or what ever
will bewilder me

The poet not only practices, but makes an active effort to stay motivated to this end – he feeds his will. He urges himself to let go of what is known and secure, reaching out to nothingness, randomness and the unknown in search of stillness and eventually truth.

Of course, for this writer, music has a special significance. He is certainly not the first, or the last to be inspired to feeling more as a result of music. He let's go of conventional notions and feelings, releasing it all and allowing openness, vulnerability, joy, wonder and peace to forward.

How far can we go, how deep? How much can we push? What are we capable of? How do we progress? The next stanza needs no explanation if you're into the music, perhaps in a darkened room, and feeling its full force. Maynard has said that he writes his lyrics based on what he feels from the music that the band has written and composed, and this seems to be an accurate depiction of the process of searching for inspiration, for a clue; it's all a part of the journey.

through air, the shape of nautilus shells and the construction of bee hives. The shape of our A4 page system and the proportions of the Parthenon are based on the ratio. Humans find things in 'golden proportion' to be classically beautiful. In fact, our own bodily proportions are in correspondence with the golden ratio (Phi).

The syllables of the first verses in Lateralus correspond with the numbers in the Fibonacci set, 'spiralling' up and down, where applicable the syllables in a line are indicated by an italic number in the centre column.

And following our will and wind we may
just go where no one's been
We'll ride the spiral to the end and may just
go where no one's been

Spiral out
Keep going

Open to everything, and forging ahead on the
path to enlightenment, guided by ourselves, we
search for answers.

Toward the end the music is furious, energetic,
and determined. This is the peak, it's not sus-
tainable, but don't give up.

There is rest and recovery in the next track,
Disposition.

DISPOSITION

Mention this to me
Mention something, mention anything

...and watch the weather change.

Some thoughts on Disposition:

Mention something to anyone, anything,
and they may have to rethink their entire life.
Their ideas and morals may be changed in
a second. Their attitude, outlook on life, or
'weather' is changed.

Haikus (particularly English language Haiku,
due to the lengthy nature of our sentences)
often rely a great deal on the title of the
poem to convey it's full meaning. For exam-
ple, there is a famous Haiku that goes...

*It's not quite cold enough
to go borrow some firewood
from the neighbours.*

It becomes much easier to understand the
poem when we are aware of the title, 'The
Widow's Lament.'

So, because the meaning of 'Disposition'
is (basically) 'mood', they poem may have

more to do with an emotional context than it
does an intellectual or spiritual change.

Another way of looking at it, carrying on
from the idea of Maynard searching for a
seed for lyrics in the music, is that Disposi-
tion is him beckoning the music to 'mention
something' to him; some meaning, some
mood to inspire him.

However, taken in the context of its sister
songs, we can see Disposition as a mood
change from the strong and positive Later-
alus to the more sombre, troubling chal-
lenges that face the poet in Reflection.

REFLECTION

I have come curiously close to the end,
down
Beneath my self-indulgent pitiful hole,
Defeated, I concede and
Move closer
I may find comfort here
I may find peace within the emptiness
How pitiful

It's calling me...

And in my darkest moment, fetal and weeping
The moon tells me a secret – my confidant
As full and bright as I am
This light is not my own and
A million light reflections pass over me

Its source is bright and endless
She resuscitates the hopeless
Without her, we are lifeless satellites drifting

And as I pull my head out I am without one
doubt

(Perhaps...) he has been almost as far as
he thinks he can in his search. Deep within
himself, he feels he can find nothing more. His
explorations begin to turn up blanks and he
wonders, 'maybe this is all there is?' Resigning
himself to the thought he may have to settle
with this he tries to make peace with it (think:
oh well). But in his heart he is far from content
– he is disappointed, frustrated, saddened and
cheated. Surely there is something more?

And then one night, bitter and frustrated, he
sees the moon and has a revelation. *You are
just like me.* The moon has no light of its own,
merely reflecting that of the sun. The moon
is comforting and may light one's way, but it
serves better as a reminder of what is on the
other side of night: the sun. Without her we
are nothing – cold, dead objects in space, and
he begins to think, *what if I'm digging in the
wrong direction? What if there is no self but what
I imagine. What 'light' am I a reflector of?* So
begins his journey toward the abandonment
of self. The Buddhist realisation of

After the euphoria and energy of Lateralus,
and the relaxed ease of Disposition, Reflec-
tion has a troubled, almost frustrated begin-
ning. The writer finds himself in a place or
time without much progress in spite of all
his efforts to find something more. He is still
here, still normal, still very much imperfect
and unenlightened. The feeling sorry and
pathetic, even exhausted – a come-down
after the efforts of Lateralus. In the midst of
his sulking however, a new hint is revealed
in the moon, and it's used here as a(nother)
metaphor for self (ego) and source (spirit
and / or universe).

Don't wanna be down here feeding my
narcissism
I must crucify the ego before it's far too late
I pray the light lifts me out
Before I pine away

So crucify the ego, before it's far too late
To leave behind this place so negative and
blind and cynical
And you will come to find that we are all
one mind
Capable of all that's imagined, and all conceivable

Just let the light touch you
And let the words spill through
And let them pass right through
Bringing out our hope and reason...

Before we pine away

enlightenment is achieved in a similar way,
(there is also correlation with the New Age notions of collective consciousness).

'This place' is almost certainly Western society
with its perpetual dwelling on ego, image,
hype and materialism.

So make this realisation, be re-inspired, look
in, out and through yourself for the answers.

*Side note: Oddly (it might seem), Buddhism
teaches that the abandonment of self begins with
inward-looking meditation.*

Though I've made several references to
Buddhist ideas here, this song is likely not
inspired directly by Buddhist teaching. Its
concepts are useful, however, in making the
explanation. Feel free to think generally, to
extend, or to reduce the interpretation to
make it your own.

TRIAD

There are no words.

Triad practically begs not to be explained, to simply be heard and felt. One toolshed.down.net forum put it thusly:

Listening to Triad, one has to believe that there is a very specific reason why Maynard chose to not put vocals to it. If he can put vocals to Lateralus and Schism, he can do so for Triad, a 3/4 song all the way through.

From observation, it seems to me that the Lateralus album as a whole is thematic towards spiritual progression. I think Triad has no words to it because speaking is unnecessary. You don't need to speak to experience something. The band is possibly saying that one of the final steps towards spiritual evolution is completely living for your experiences, and flowing through them without judging them or corrupting them. This is the way Buddhists live, and it's a way I agree with, and apparently, a way the band

agrees with.

No clapping, no belting along the chorus... just... listen.

But at the risk of corrupting it all, I will make brief mention of a possible significance of the title. In the Tree Of Life there are three triads – personality, soul, and transpersonal – each representing a balance between three paths.

Personality Triad:
Splendour, Foundation, Victory

Soul Triad:
Severity, Beauty, Mercy

Transpersonal Triad:
Understanding, Crown (the infinite), Wisdom.

Some Tool fans are of the opinion that Triad represents the achievement of the goals of the journey described by the second half

of the album, something which might be likened to the realisation of ultimate and perfect balance. Others feel that it is the sound of surging and relentless determination to continue the search. I won't pollute it any more than that, and hope that you will find your own meanings and interpretations.

FAAIP DE OIAD

"I, I don't have a whole lot of time. Um, OK, I'm a former employee of Area 51. I, I was let go on a medical discharge about a week ago and, and... [chokes] I've kind of been running across the country. Damn, I don't know where to start, they're, they're gonna, um, they'll triangulate on this position really soon.

OK, um, um, OK, what we're thinking of as, as aliens, they're extradimensional beings, that, an earlier precursor of the, um, space program they made contact with. They are not what they claim to be. Uh, they've infiltrated a, a lot of aspects of, of, of the military establishment, particularly the Area 51.

The disasters that are coming, they, the military, I'm sorry, the government knows about them. And there's a lot of safe areas in this world that they could begin moving the population to now. They are not! They want those major population centers wiped out so that the few that are left will be more easily controllable."

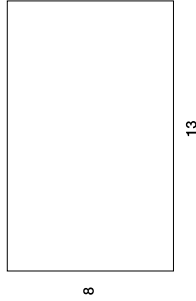
The title is Enochian for "Voice of God."

The talking is from a radio call-in show (Coast to Coast AM with Art Bell). It is one of the classic moments from that show, during which the caller claims to be a former Area 51 employee, and that the military was out to get him. Oddly enough, the satellite which carried that show suddenly died (losing the feed to some fifty stations) during the broadcast. The caller later admitted that the story was a hoax. (From the [toolshed.down.net](#) FAQ).

The crazy sounds in the song (or at least some of them) come from a dying drum synthesizer. When asked about the track Danny says that he heard the thing 'melting down', flicked on the DAT recorder and let it go.

$1 + 1 = 2$, $1 + 2 = 3$, $2 + 3 = 5$, $3 + 5 = 8$, $5 + 8 = 13$, $8 + 13 = 21$

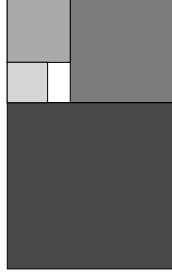
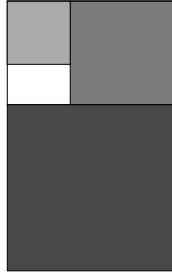
The Fibonacci series: each number is the sum of the two preceding it.



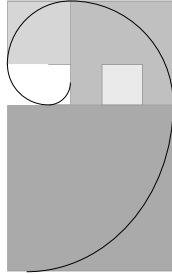
The Golden Section is created by the ratio of any pair in the series.



The relationship between the golden section and the square is reciprocal.



...And so on...

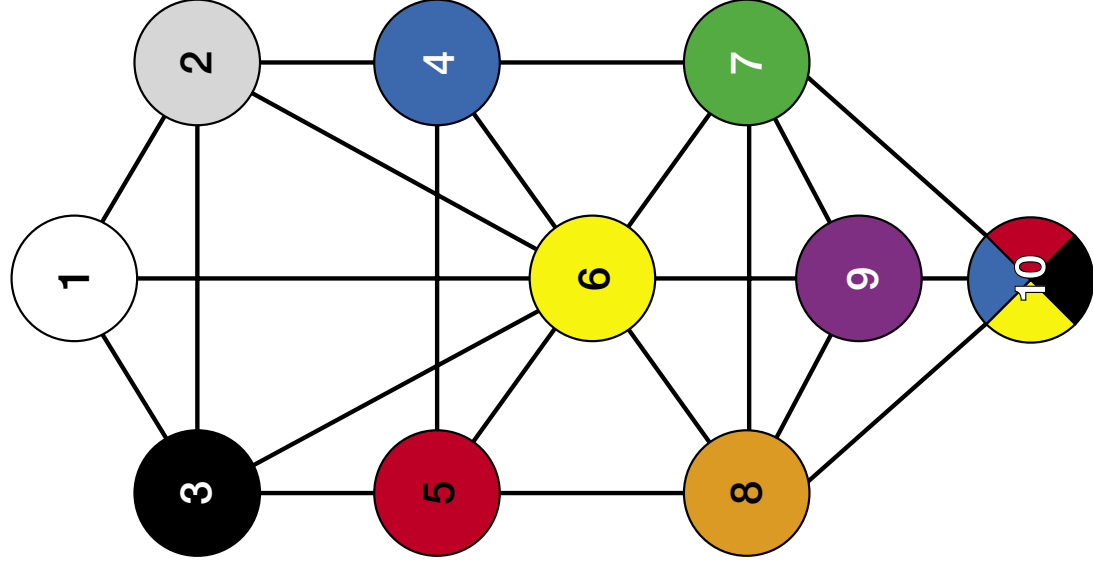


Drawing an arc through the squares produces the golden spiral.

The golden spiral is the initial zygote spine shape for all vertebrates, it describes the basic way air currents interact, the spread of segments in sunflowers, the arrangement of segments in beehives, the shape of nautilus shells, ferns, the basic proportion of the human form, the dimensions of The Parthenon and the trailing arms of spiral-formation galaxies.

It is said to be the mathematical foundation of life and beauty.

APPENDIX A: The Golden Section



The Grudge

- 1 Keter: The Infinite. Pluto. Divine ideal wisdom/Will/Inspiration/Spirit.
- 3 Binah: Saturn. Understanding/Reason/Intelligence/Language.
- 10 Malchut: Is the Earthly Dominion, while Keter is the Eternal Dominion.

Lateralus

- 3 (as above)
- 1 (as above)
- 5 Gervurah: Mars. Severity/Justice/Inner strength/Competition/Rigor
- 6 Tiphareth: Beauty/Equilibrium. The Golden Mean/Phi Ratio.

APPENDIX B: The Tree Of Life

