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Cowboy Mimes

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Cowboy Mimes" comes from the initials of Chris and Meta, the band's core couple—though Paul, brother of the bride, mustn't be forgotten. It's a name that, initially, might call to mind some image of the lawless West, or perhaps more obedient nomads; the latter half of it misleads. As we, a free and noble people, deride *Pravda* and its dictums, so too will the next superpower's citizens scratch their heads over our renewed subscriptions to the *New York Times*, all while they receive their Word from on high. The cyclical, mimetic pattern. Which of course these Mimes have broken out of.



On "Hypnotize," the count-off is urgent, anti-Apocalyptic, moving away from the zero hour. It's not so much about a conspiracy exposed—"They don't even realize/ They don't even know"—but rather, collective triumph: "In some strange body/ We'll rise up from the land." Coming in a little warped, with its edges fuzzed, this is a broadcast we weren't supposed to hear.

But assuming the Bomb won't bring us together, or at least not in the foreseeable future, the Cowboy Mimes have that covered, too. Yeah, the opener is stark, but over the rest of the EP, its tone shades into one more easygoing. There's calm guitar at the base of "Aphrodite's Feather." Meta's wailing gently, Chris begins, gruff, with the lyrics. And then out of nowhere the two voices converge, "We live until we die," in a sudden union, as if they'd been forced apart before. "Willow" sounds thicker, with strings and piano, and Meta proves her vocals on "Aphrodite" were, at least to some extent, a feint—here she lets her voice swell to fill the spaces between beats and chords, spilling into subsequent phrases.

This is all out of a home studio in Toronto, a few blocks from Lake Ontario. Paul just finished putting up a mini-greenhouse in the backyard. Meta's in the kitchen, silk screening band T-shirts. Her coffee mug rests on a Rumi book, next to a pile of records: Tim Buckley, Leonard Cohen, *The "Royal Albert Hall" Concert*. Chris just put his guitar down—he's dropped the needle on Roberta Flack's *Blue Lights in the Basement*, and he and Paul are talking about Everdale, an organic farm where Paul once worked. Maybe two-and-a-half miles southeast of here, some guy's forgotten why, in fact, he's so pissed, while the woman four cubicles down can't remember the last time she's had a dream. On

the top floor, near a window overlooking the city grid, banal, endless, a man tells his son via telephone he never did a thing he wanted to in life. And look where it got him.

So if they're imitating anything, it's something forgotten—due to force, happenstance, a combination thereof. In any event, worth mentioning is that Texas “Bix” Bender piece of cowboy wisdom: “Always drink upstream from the herd.”



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