**Dawn LeFevre**

**The Last Audition**

Rogue considered driving into Atlantic City to be about as enjoy-   
able as having a gyno exam. She liked going into this neighborhood in   
particular even less. And now, because of some tourists driving five   
miles per hour, hanging out of their car windows, and taking pictures   
of every goddamned thing they saw, Rogue was going to be late for this   
audition. The ad read: *Thrash band Beastiality seeks lead guitarist.   
Auditions held June 8.*

Rogue had seen Beastialiry play and knew they were one of the   
few bands good enough to get paid for their performances. Hell, they'd   
even played Philadelphia and made a demo. For a New Jersey band,   
that was Big Time. She glanced at the newspaper and confirmed that,   
yes, this shithole sitting before her was the right place. She grabbed   
her guitar off the back seat and locked her ancient red Camaro. This   
was the kind of neighborhood were people would be desperate enough   
to steal even a car with a missing rear bumper and four bald tires.

Rogue started up the walkway gripping her guitar case tightly,   
comforted by its weight. **In** case of an emergency like a heavy metal-   
hating homicidal maniac, it would make a formidable weapon. The   
front yard was landscaped with weeds, beer bottles, and other debris.   
All but two of the house's windows were boarded up. Every fourth   
shingle appeared to be missing as well. Rogue looked around for a   
Condemned Property sign, didn't see one, and pushed the doorbell.   
Naturally, it didn't work. She could hear someone inside playing a bad   
rendition of Metallica's "Battery." "Idiot's in the wrong key," she   
muttered disgustedly, kicking the door so she could be heard over the   
noise.

A fat, twentyish guy whom she recognized to be Beastialitv's   
drummer appeared with beer in hand. He looked Rogue over slowly   
from top to bottom, taking in her spiral-permed chestnut hair, care-   
fully ripped jeans, and faded Slayer tour shirt, with a prolonged pause   
at her breasts. Finally, he spotted her guitar case and said, "Oh, your   
boyfriend must be here to audition." He looked over her shoulder for   
the absent male figure.

"Nope," Rogue answered, "I am."

"Huh? You? No way. No girls."He began to close the door. Swiftly,   
Rogue rammed her guitar case into the doorjamb and forced her way

*Pacific Coast Journal* - 5

into the house. And abruptly stumbled over a guitar cable. She had   
entered what appeared to be the living room, but it was hard to tell. A   
twelve-piece drum kit, various guitars, basses, and amplifiers were all   
crammed into the room. Not the mention the musicians themselves, most   
of whom were sprawled along a ripped sofa that was slowly vomiting its   
stuffing onto the filthy floor. More beer bottles, assorted stale snack foods,   
and an empty condom package were the decor of choice. Everyone -   
including the Metallica-slandering auditionee - was staring at her. For an   
eternity no one spoke; after all, these were people whose vocabulary   
consisted mainly of the words "urn" and "dude". At last, Beastiality's singer   
cracked, *"OK,* who ordered the strip-e-gram?" A hairbrush suddenly   
materialized and he began preening his fake blonde locks.

"I am not a strip-e-gram. I'm here to audition," Rogue wearily replied.   
"Audition, huh? Well let's go to my room and I'll give you a private   
'audition." the singer said, putting his arm around Rogue's waist. In-   
stantly, her guitar case shot out and whacked him on the knees. She   
would've went for the crotch, but she needed this job too much. Holding   
up her left hand, she said, "See this hand, Mr. Hormones? I'm married."   
He walked away from her muttering "bitch" and other equally laudatory   
adjectives.

Rogue had indeed been married - three years ago - but she wasn't·   
going to tell them that. Now, there was one rule she always kept: never   
sleep with other musicians. They were too competitive. Rogue knew this   
because she'd been married to one for a whopping eighteen days. Of   
course, that was when she was twenty-two ana still believed, naively, that   
she'd find a band who wouldn't force her to wear tight leather miniskirts   
onstage.

It was day fourteen of their wedded bliss that Rogue and her husband   
both auditioned for the heavy metal band Dark Victory. Dark Victory was   
about to fly to the heavy metal heaven known as L.A. when their guitarist   
oh so conveniently O.D.'d. Rogue remembered her hubby saying, "I hope   
you get it, dear." Well, when Dark Victory called two days later and said   
that, yes, Rogue had the job, all hubby could say then was, "They only   
hired you cause you're a girl." Another two days later, dear darling hubby   
disappeared without even leaving a note. And yet, if it had been reversed,   
Rogue knew she probably would've done the same thing. As for Dark   
Victory and Rogue, they never made it to L.A. and broke up six months   
late, citing "musical differences," i.e. - they couldn't stand each other.

6 - *Pacific Coast Journal*

Rogue glanced around. The mutilated sofa was already full. The floor   
was a gamble she'd rather not take. No telling what forms of wildlife   
she'd encounter there. So she sat straddling her guitar case as if it was a   
horse. The next hour or so was spent enduring the music of three very   
mediocre and two speed demon players. With the mediocre ones, Rogue   
got to playa game of guess which famous guitarist they're trying to   
imitate. George Lynch? Paul Gilbert? How about Randy Rhoades? Christ,   
couldn't these bozos play something *original?*

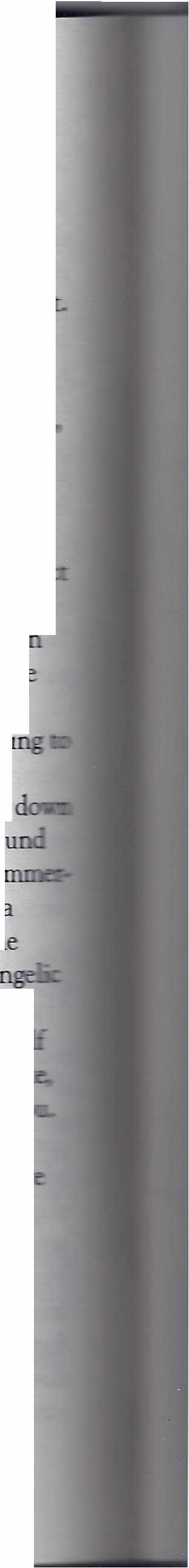
Rogue could spot the speed demons even before they plugged in their   
guitars. Most of them were skinny pale types who looked like they hadn't   
been outside, slept, ate, or got laid in years. Or played with a band for   
that matter. The speed demons were too busy locking themselves up in   
their rooms for twelve hours playing Yngwie Malmsteen songs note for   
note than to learn how to stay in time with a band. Keep practicing,   
boys, she thought maliciously, maybe you'll discover what a time signa-   
ture means.

And there was Rogue's favorite - a thirty-five-or-so-year-old guy   
wearing John Lennon shades and a Grateful Dead t-shirt, His chances of   
being hired were nil even before playing a note. There was no way this   
group of twentysomething guys would hire a sixties leftover like him. As   
it turned out, he was awesome. At jazz, that is. Must've done too many   
drugs when he was young, Rogue mused, because he's certainly at the   
wrong audition.

And then only Rogue was left. *"OK,"* the singer told her, "I guess it   
wouldn't hurt if you gave it a shot." Beers were opened and the band   
began chatting merrily among themselves, ignoring Rogue. And then she   
pulled out her purple Paul Reed Smith Signature Series and slammed the   
case shut. "How did you get an axe like that?" the drummer asked.

"Oh, I sold my body for it," Rogue sarcastically replied, unable to   
control her irritation. Jeez, what'd they expect her to play? A $199 K-   
Mart special? She was tired of their lustful leers and presumptions that   
she'd suck. No, infuriated was more like it. So, she sauntered over to the   
amp and twisted the volume knob as far as it would go, hoping she'd   
blow the damn thing. Then she plugged in her six string and launched   
into something that sounded like a lawnmower grinding up live cats. Her   
fury coursed from her brain down to her fingers and they flew up and   
down the guitar's neck, spewing out venomous riffs. Now *this* was thrash   
- music for all the malcontents like herself who know the world is

*Pacific Coast Journal* - 7



screwed up but feel powerless to do anything about it. Except maybe   
bang their heads, letting the music scream out their frustration.

Rogue didn't know how long she went on like that until she   
suddenly became aware of everyone gaping at her. An attack of   
tendonitis flared in her left arm so she stopped her musical onslaught   
"Whoa, dude, you play like a guy," the drummer said. Rogue decided   
to take that as a compliment.

"Can you play 'Spanish Fly?'" the singer asked her.

"Sure,and just to be unique, **I'll** even play it on my electric here.   
she answered, trying to sound casual. To herself she thought, "God   
not 'Spanish Fly,' the song from Hell. The song that used artificial   
harmonics requiring her fingers to not only be on the exact fret   
location but also to apply just the right amount of pressure to produce   
the correct tone. Rogue tried to smile. It looked more like a grimace.   
And then Rogue began to play, a little too slowly perhaps, but even   
Eddie Van Halen would not have been displeased with the way she   
handled his song. Suddenly the band was in a huddle, debating   
whether or not they wanted her. Rogue just stood there, pretending   
be cool, that it didn't matter.

Then He walked in. He had wavy, sandy-brown hair flowing d   
to the middle of his tanned back, cheekbones that are usually found   
on *Vogue* covergirls, a complexion that should be in Noxema comer-   
cials, and full lips that gave the impression that He'd just eaten a   
cherry popsicle even when He hadn't. He was beautiful. Only the   
spider and scorpion tattoos on His biceps ruined an otherwise angelic   
appearance. But He was still beautiful. Female fans would worship   
every note he played like a sermon. Hell, Rogue even caught herself   
checking out his ass. And so, even though He was over an hour late   
Beastiality let Him audition. And He was good. Not great, mind   
He had trouble with the more technical stuff and made minor mis-   
takes, but He was good enough. Rogue was out the door long before   
He was finished playing.

8 . *Pacific Coast Journal*