

**HOLLYWOOD**—Ten to four in the afternoon. Something about a bar during a midafternoon weekday. Slightly seedy. Smells of assignations, affairs. Which is, actually, the case. In a way.

My \$1.40 margarita arrives. I ponder a \$3.10 shot of Commemorative tequila. I pass. Sunlight filters through the stained glass window, illuminating chips, spent matches and other detritus littering the brick-red tile floor.

Four-ten in the afternoon. Late. It's not the "other man" I'm anxiously waiting on; it's the other band, The Magnificent Bastards, other band of Stone Temple Pilots singer Scott Weiland.

It's 4:30 p.m. and no Scott. No other expected Bastards—guitarist Zander Schless or bassist Bob Thompson—for that matter. In the corner, a boy, around ten, devours the remnants of his mother's double margarita as she smokes and reads a trashy novel.

My margarita is long gone. Scott Weiland is paged. He's not here, I am. I pick up a catalog for "The Learning Annex." Open it. One of the first courses offered? "How to Make It in the Music Business." I'll pass. A course on page 13, however, promises "Information including the Purpose of Life." Aha! At last!

It's five-something, and someone fitting the description of Schloss walks in, followed fairly closely by one Bob Thompson. They sit. We drink. We talk. We ponder the whereabouts of Scott. We get a table and decide to sup. Six o'clock, Scott walks in, in cool '60s sunglasses, a suit and a presence.

We are seated in a quiet corner. Scott removes his glasses and apologizes. Seems he's just gotten the news that a friend has been killed in a car accident. He's clearly distraught and emotional, not especially in the mood to talk, though during the course of our conversation he gets into the groove.

Only one Magnificent Bastard is missing: drummer Victor Indrizzi (Masters Of Reality), who replaced Scott's brother Michael in the Bastards. Michael's band, Whiskey Biscuit, was signed to Geffen, then not, and is now in the process of label-shopping with a little help from Scott.

But the week's order of business is the Bastards, who are signed to

with STP. And I saw him at Smalls about six months later. I said, "Hey, Scott, what's goin' on, man?" He said, "Oh, you know, I've been out on the road." I said, "You know what, I saw MTV, you know, and there's this fakin' dude on there captin' your shit, callin' himself Weiland!" And he said, "But I'm Weiland." I said, "No, you're not! You're Scott!"

Scott looks bemused. "I'm Scott. You are not allowed to have a last name! You knew, I had also talked with Jeff Nolan [from *I Love You*]. Jeff was working over at Cole Studios, where actually he was doing preproduction for Purple, and Nolan and I talked and spent a lot of time doing other things. [Your imagination here. —Ed.] So I find out about this John Lennon tribute album through a friend of mine, Rich Conklin. Rich works in film. Does it everybody work in some facet of the entertainment industry?" he says, slightly annoyed.

There's a pause as our drinks—a round of Grand Marnier margaritas, ordered by Zander—arrive. As Zander ponders the salt around the rim, Scott, in his slightly choppy way of speaking, continues the story.

"I'd always thought that Bob was my favorite bass player. I remember I saw Big Drill Car [his former band] play at the Coach House, and it was around 1989. I don't think it was called 'shematic' then. It was still called 'college rock,'" declares Scott.

"It was even after punk rock wasn't even called 'punk rock' anymore," observes Bob.

"Yeah, grunge came out of a mixture of bands that were playing—Influenced by punk bands of the late '70s and early '80s, influenced by rock bands like Sabbath or AC/DC, and had a psychedelic twist in there, you know, like a more arty twist, some of them," Scott spines. "And out of that, it's kind of like, grunge, whatever, started, and I don't think it was Seattle at all, I think Jane's Addiction really was kind of like the band that had a massive impact. Perry and his girlfriend then, Casey, tried to score my chick," notes Scott as a casual aside, raising eyebrows around the table. "She wasn't my wife at the time. It would have been a good anecdote if it would have happened, but..."

Oh, well. We digress as our meals arrive, delivered by a patient waiter.

# The Magnificent Bastard

Atlantic, same as STP, and are out promoting their moving single "How Do You Sleep?" from the John Lennon tribute album, *Working Class Hero*, on Hollywood Records. An avid admirer of John Lennon as a lyricist, Scott formed the band for the Lennon disc—even though the "Mockingbird Girl" single from the *Tank Girl* soundtrack came out first.

"It was sort of an idea that I had in my head, and for one thing, I've known Bob for a long time..." begins Scott slowly.

"I remember you asking me about doing something with you and Zander like a year before..." says Bob.

"Yeah, like a year before that, because Zander and I would see each other at Smalls K.O. [a Hollywood bar]—I mean, this is like even before STP got signed. It was right around the time STP got signed, like four years ago," reminisces Scott.

Bespectacled Zander, always good for comic relief, gears up for a true tale: "I actually asked Scott to join my band before he went on the road

We eat and Bob discovers something that looks like bologna in his food, but isn't. "I'm a fun-lovin' dude that, y'know, likes to eat tamales!" offers Scott, digging in.

Mag Bas was named by Mr. Weiland as he was listening to the classic *Exile on Main Street* LP. "I thought, If this band wasn't called the Rolling Stones, what would they be called? And I just thought of the Magnificent Bastards."

The lineup was originally a one-off thing that lasted about ten seconds. "The boundaries of sonic possibilities are pretty massive with this band," muses Scott, finishing his tamale. "I think as soon as we started jamming together, we were kinda like, 'Wow, this kinda sounds really good,' and we started thinking like..."

"I think they were kind of all put off by me when I first came in because I was like, drunk..." choruses Zander, downing his margarita. "I was like playing slide guitar, really out of tune because I couldn't hear myself..."



# Legitimate Sons Go Legit

by Katherine Turman

all photos by Lisa Johnson

"Jeff, the other guitar player, started taking it very personally," adds Scott. Jeff is no longer in the band.

"See, I'm kind of like the Hannibal Lecter of the rock world," continues Zander. "I find your weak spots and then I like to—"

Despite other commitments, Mag has gelled quickly. "Actually, everyone sacrificed a lot, put aside a lot of other things that they normally would be doing, for practice with the band," says Scott. "You know, which made me completely pleased, because I wasn't doing anything at the time; STP was taking some time off. There's obviously a reason why we're all doin' it; it's probably because it's fulfilling a certain musical need that we all have. I feel like I have total

freedom in this band, and there's no boundaries at all that are holding me back in any way."

Quiet Bob adds his two-cents: "It's kind of like we're all going off and doing completely what comes natural, but it's coming together in a really... It works. It works really well."

However, will it continue to work when other commitments arise? Every member is in two bands. An STP record is due in early '96, and Scott is already at work on it. Zander has the Sweet & Low Orchestra, signed to Interscope, Bob plays in Tiny Buddy, currently unsigned, while Victor is in Masters Of Reality with singer Chris Goss, who, not so coincidentally, is producing the Bastards' debut disc.

At this juncture, a voice is heard above the din,

Make that two voices. Scott leaps from the table, is handed a tape recorder, and runs to an adjoining table. "Keep on singing! Keep on singing! You'll make a national magazine!" he shouts at the two astounded girls. "You're gonna be in the magazine!"

"No, we're not!"

"Yes!" says Scott, snapping a Polaroid of the giggling, singing diners.

While Scott appears totally at ease in public, and in fact patronizes many nightspots, he's also aware of his public persona—the negative side—fueled by his drug bust and other sundry rumors about STP split-ups, etc. [See story on page 44 for details.]

Is he the same person he was before fame and fortune thrust him into the headlines? "I feel I'm the same person that I was five years ago, except for the fact that I don't have to worry when it gets to the 28th of September how I have to pay my rent. And the ability to make music, every day, to make music every single day. To go to my studio at my house, sit down and hack away on my guitar. And play my drums, and record something on my four-track. That is just the most amazing freedom that I could ever imagine anybody being able to have. This band has done so much for my whole excitement of rock 'n' roll. It's really made me feel happy about participating in rock 'n' roll again."

Still, Scott notes that Mag Bas are a "real, full-fledged band." The big question, though, is, what takes priority. Aren't these other bands threatened by the seriousness of the Bastards?

"Yes," replies Zander immediately.

Scott isn't as fast to respond. "The question hasn't come up, but I would have to say that I wouldn't imagine that they would be thrilled about it."

And has the question of "them or us" been raised?

"No, they haven't said that, because I think that everyone in STP has a general amount of respect to let each other have our artistic space, to do other things, because it's for the benefit of STP; the benefit of its longevity, everyone has to be happy working together. And this was like a shot for me in the arm of enthusiasm and excitement about playing in a rock band again. I really got to the point where I felt like going out every night, playing in front of 20,000, was a joke! It was hard to go out there and take it seriously. When we stopped touring, I just felt like, What's real about that? I don't know, but for some reason playing with this band has like changed my whole feelings. Made me excited about STP again."

As it stands now, the STP album should be out around the end of February, while the Bastards' album will probably come out during the summer of '96. And the agenda for both bands? "Do a [Mag Bas] tour this winter, and then STP will tour the summer. [The Magnificent Bastards] record will come out in the end of summer, and then we'll go on tour to support that," says Scott confidently. "We're gonna tour the Bastards this winter [95-'96] without having an album out. Bands used to do that before..."

**MARILYN MANSON**

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