

MUSICMAIL

10

Intro... *Rokeby is back!*

“Yes, yes, yes... guys, I’m back. I know I’ve been here... but it hasn’t been the real me. You see, in recent months the music has been decided by the linguistics. In other words... the teachers give me a theme – like... ‘contractions’ or whatever...and I look for a song. This, I confess, has led to a decrease in quality. Today, though... we return to the original Musicmail format where the music comes first. Basically, I look for something to teach you from music that I truly love... music that makes my head explode. Music... like this...”

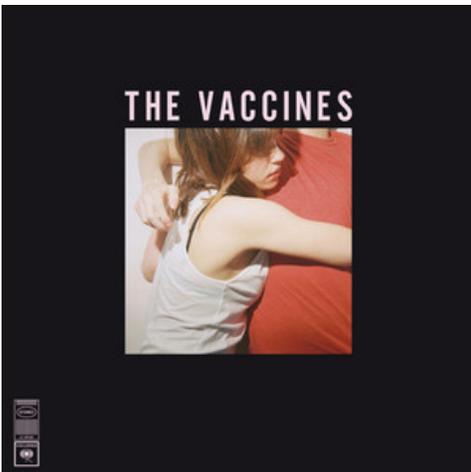


Dive by Tycho... album: Dive

Different meanings of dive...

1. Dive into the water.
2. To ‘dive in there’... when someone does something without thinking or worrying.
3. When a football player pretends to have been fouled. He threw himself... therefore we say... ‘he dived.’
4. ‘Ducking and diving:’ a cockney term which means ‘hustling’ – supporting yourself financially through low level criminal activity. Ducking and diving gives the sense of constantly avoiding and swerving the police.

All in white by The Vaccines...
album: What did you expect from
the vaccines?



Break me on the thirty-seventh hour
Tout me, doubt me, show me all of your power
I will watch you rise on my back from the ground
Friend or foe?
I don't know
Do you like what you've found?

I will one day shine with you
I'll shine on a faithful few

Show me low quotations
Have you earned your stripes?
Fabricate salvation
Lord, I know your type
I've known you all my life
I was always wrong, you all in white

Brush my cause aside with little trouble
Oh my god, I think I'm hearing double
I will watch you rise on my back from afar
Friend or foe?
I don't know now you're up in the stars

But I will one day shine with you

Vocab focus

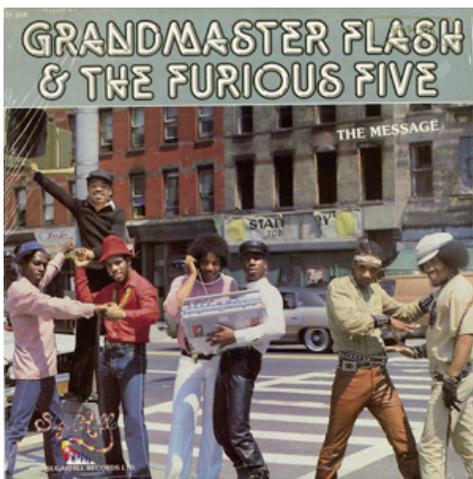
Friend or foe?

Foe means ‘enemy’ and ‘friend or foe?’ was a common question in ancient wars upon hearing someone approach.

Have you earned your stripes?

This is another military inspired phrase. The ‘stripes’ (las rayas/insignia) on a soldier’s jacket show his rank. For example...If he is a general then he has four stripes.

To ‘earn (ganar) your stripes’ is to do something brave or difficult to earn and deserve (merecer) them.



The message by Grandmaster Flash... album – Greatest hits

A child is born with no state of mind
Blind to the ways of mankind (1)
God is smiling on you but he's frowning too
Because only God knows what you'll go through
You'll grow in the ghetto, living second rate
And your eyes will sing a song of deep hate

The places you play and where you stay
Looks like one great big alley way (2)
You'll admire all the number book takers (3)
Thugs, pimps, pushers and the big money makers
Driving big cars, spending twenties and tens
And you wanna grow up to be just like them, huh,
Smugglers, scramblers, burglars, gamblers,
Pickpockets, peddlers even panhandlers

You say: "I'm cool, I'm no fool!". But then you wind
up dropping out of high school (4)
Now you're unemployed, all non-void - Walking
'round like you're Pretty Boy Floyd
Turned stickup kid, look what you've done did (5)
Got sent up for a eight year bid (6)

Now your manhood is took and you're a Maytag
Spent the next two years as a undercover fag (7)
Being used and abused to serve like hell' Til one
day you was found hung dead in your cell (8)
It was plain to see that your life was lost
You was cold and your body swung back and forth
(9)
But now your eyes sing the sad, sad song
Of how you lived so fast and died so young

- (1) mankind = humanity
- (2) alley way = dirty back street (callejon)
- (3) number book takers = illegal gambling
- (4) drop out = leave without qualifications
- (5) stickup kid = atracador, robber, thief
- (6) eight year bid = eight year sentence (condenado)
- (7) fag = homosexual (in this context – forced homosexuality)
- (8) cell = the room where prisoners sleep
- (9) swing = the action of a pendulum

Matter of fact by John Maus... album – We Must Become the Pitiless Censors of Ourselves

"Pussy is not a matter of fact"

(These are the only lyrics in the song. John Maus is a famous surrealist and only he knows what he's trying to say. Don't try and understand.)

Rokeby's personal facebook is...
[facebook.com/vocatic](https://www.facebook.com/vocatic)

He likes to interact with his listeners... make friends now!

Exploring hip hop narrative

A work of genius... urban poetry of true excellence... This part of the track starts with the line... "A child is born with no state of mind..." and then continues to relate a narrative that goes from birth to death.

The rap talks about a child born in a poor urban environment where the only people to admire and who have money are 'pimps' (chulos) and smugglers (traficantes). Inevitably the child ends up leaving school early with no qualifications and begins a life of crime. For a while he's cool and has some money but after a robbery (stick-up) he 'got sent up for a eight year bid' (condenado a ocho años de prision). In jail the boy is 'used and abused and served like hell' until one day he commits suicide and is found dead, hanging in his cell.

But this summary of mine does not transmit the power of the poetry and rhyme... download the lyrics from [vocatic.com](https://www.vocatic.com), study them, and you will see the genius of this track.

Vocatic.com



[facebook.com/conversacionbcn](https://www.facebook.com/conversacionbcn) (music and conversation in Barcelona)

[facebook.com/vocatic](https://www.facebook.com/vocatic) (Rokeby Lynch's facebook)

[facebook.com/vocaticescuela](https://www.facebook.com/vocaticescuela) (official facebook page)



Vocab focus

'As a matter of fact' – de hecho – is used to contradict or state something strongly. "As a matter of fact, it wasn't me who ate the cake."

Pussy can mean...

1. Cat
2. Vagina
3. Women (derogatory)
4. Coward