

STING

At the beginning of 1990, when I was expected to start work on a third studio album, there seemed to be a certain amount of anticipation regarding a new piece of work. At the time I had very little to show in the way of material. In fact, since the recording of "...Nothing Like The Sun," in 1987, I hadn't written as much as a rhyming couplet, much less a whole song. I was suffering from what they call 'writer's block' ... sounds romantic doesn't it? ... It wasn't. It wasn't any fun at all.

The important thing to remember, so I'm told, is that there's a reason for everything and if you can't think of anything to write, it's either because you don't have anything to say or that you do have something to say and you're too afraid to say it... maybe.

I decided I'd try to shock myself into activity. I booked the Guillaume Tell recording studio in Paris, hired three musicians, Manu Katche on drums, Kenny Kirkland on keyboards and Dominic Miller on guitar. I signed up Hugh Padgham to produce and hoped that a deadline and a couple of contracts would jump start the proceedings.

Well, plenty of music came out of my head but no words. No shortage of melodies, chord structures, harmonic themes, intros, middle eights, codas, cadenzas, and contrapuntal calypsoes. But not one line of a lyric -- nothing... Not a damned thing.

I took long drives, long baths, long walks -- still nothing. I walked from one arid beach to the next. My deadline, like an ominous tidal wave, was getting closer and closer and was about to swamp me.

I'm told that in times of crisis it's quite common for your life to flash before you -- why not? Might as well wheel it on 'eh? Lets have a look.

Well, the past couple of years haven't exactly been the easiest. A few people I cared about were abruptly taken off the planet, plus the usual mid-life sort of stuff. No, we're going to have to look much further back than that. Let's take that long road back to the beginning of things,

"What's your earliest memory?" I asked myself.

"Easy... A great big bloody ship ... And the river... The river flowed to the sea."

The river flowed to the sea... And so did the words.

- Sting
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