



Scripts.com

It 's So Easy and Other Lies

By Christopher Duddy

The fuck!

Just kill me.

"The punk scene in Seattle
"was all about creating
something out of nothing.

"There was only one bar
that booked punk bands.

"The Gorilla Room.

"Aside from that,

"bands had no choice

"but to do it themselves.

"And people didn't take themselves
too seriously in this scene either.

"There was a weird sense of humour.

"And being musically different
was rewarded."

This was our punk rock haven.

The record store there. There's a record
store there. There's a record store there.

There's Coffee Corral there.

And we just...

Hung...

Out.

"In the summer of 1979,

"I played my first real concert
"with the Vains.

"Because we were all under-age,
"together with two other bands,
we rented a community centre

"attached to a public park.

"Now, the week before the show,

"Andy and I stole about

"20 plastic milk crates

from the back of a grocery store

"and somehow nailed plywood onto them.

"But now we had a stage.

"That alone was pretty damn exciting
for a 15-year-old fucking kid.

"Our own stage.

"Now we can play anywhere."

This punker dude in our neighbourhood,
who had like a pink mohawk,

heard that I played bass.

And he asked me if

I wanted to start a band
with him and my buddy, Andy.
Because Andy played drums.
Criss Crass.
That's the guy with the pink mohawk.
He doesn't have a pink mohawk any more.
That's Andy, the best friend I grew up
with. He was the drummer. Then there's me.
That was called The Thankless Dogs.
I don't know if we ever played a gig.
But that morphed into...
What people generally think
is my first band, which is The Vains.
Yeah, we put out an album. Um...
It was a 45, with three songs on it.
It's actually in the EMP Museum here.
It was the first viable commercial
punk rock recording in the Northwest.
But I know that today, that the
originals are real collector items.
I enjoyed going to the shows.
When he was playing with, um...
Fastbacks, 10 Minute Warning...
I always wanted to go
to where they were playing.
You can see like...
We were going from punk rock,
into like a whole
different thing. We had long hair.
That band was killer.
This band was awesome.
Ten Minute Warning, The Fags...
Last show.
Hands down, one of the best bands ever.
D.O.A.
Vancouver.
That's the Fastbacks opening up.
I made this.
I made that flyer. Here's
some lyrics I wrote,
when I was probably about 17.
This is all, of course, before Guns.
There was this really thriving music scene
that I was involved with.

Five bands. Five bucks.
That's The Fastbacks.
Kim Warnick, Lulu, Kurt Bloch,
myself, with a turtleneck.
You know, back in 1980, 1981...
You weren't really supposed to like...
You know, it was kind of wrong
to like punk rock.
If you're a punk rocker,
you're a punk rocker.
If you're an alternative rocker,
then you're into that.
I mean, you had to pick your...
You had to pick your team.
And you know, we didn't really know.
It's like we loved...
All of Van Halen and AC/DC
and Cheap Trick, you know,
just as much as The Ramones and Black Flag.
I'd been reading The Rocket,
and hearing about you guys...
10 Minute Warning, The Fartz and...
All these other bands, and, uh...
I was just like, I gotta go here.
Every city's got their local scene. But...
Seattle, to me,
we're talking before,
took punk rock and Sabbath
and put it together in all these bands.
For, uh, 20 years,
my mom and dad had eight children.
Myself as the oldest, Jon,
and then, Carol, unfortunately,
who has departed us.
And then we have Mark.
Bruce.
Claudia.
Joan.
Matt.
And then, Duff.
"I started smoking pot
at a really young age.
"Fourth grade, to be exact.
"I took my first drink in the fifth grade.

"And tasted LSD for the first time
"in the sixth grade,
when I was offered blotter acid,
"by an eighth grader, on my way
to Eckstein Middle School in Seattle.
"I first snorted coke
in the seventh grade, too.
"I also tried
"codeine, quaaludes and valium
"in middle school.
"My best friends and I started
hot-wiring cars in middle-school."
Andy had heard something
about the pre-'63 VWs.
We found out that you could actually
use a Swiss army knife
and you could start old VWs.
That you could start the engine
with a screwdriver.
That dashboard.
I don't want to give all the tricks away.
We stole a few cars.
I was actually a little more
prolific at it than Duff was.
We'd go to these parties
over in Ballard.
Which is far from
where we were from, in Seattle.
And we'd have to walk or take the bus.
Now, the bus stopped running at 1:30.
We couldn't take the bus.
So that's a long walk.
How am I gonna get home?
Hey, you steal a car, go home.
Dump it a couple blocks away,
and you're walking.
No harm, no foul. We always called it
borrowing. We didn't call it stealing.
But I was involved in more
car thefts than I can count.
And more than I'd care to remember.
But Andy, I think, at the end of his run...
It was something like 112 cars he stole.
I lost count after 200, but, um...

"By the end
of the summer of 1984,
"I began to think that
if I didn't get out of Seattle then,
"I might never get out at all.
"I could make it to L.A. in my old car,
"leap-frogging from crash pad to crash pad.
"Maybe land at my brother's
apartment for a few nights.
"But beyond that,
there was nothing in particular
"drawing me toward Los Angeles.
"It was just a place, a bigger place.
"A place that wasn't Seattle.
"And with luck, a safer place than
the heroin-infested Pacific Northwest."
What kind of destroyed all of that...
The excitement in Seattle
was the heroin coming into that city.
It was just like this dark cloud came in
and just took all the fun away.
And it really seemed like
it came in it like a tidal wave.
Suddenly, it was there
and everybody was trying it,
because it was kind of romantic.
It was kind of punk rock. It was...
I don't know. But once you...
You know, any opiate, once you're...
Got a little bit of a habit,
you're kind of just in.
It became an epidemic.
I saw it take out these guys
who were so full of life.
Who were smart. All smart guys.
I was too young to even take it all in.
"What do you mean they're...
"Dead." We've just begun, you know.
It kind of shocked me
when he did leave to...
To L.A., and it was sort of
an end of an era in Seattle.
And the grunge thing didn't happen until
10 years later.

He was really motivated to...
Be a musician in Los Angeles.
I don't think he was motivated to be a...
Like, a well-known musician.
I just think he wanted to
be able to get into the music scene
down here and get into a band.
Slash told me what booth that he
and Steven would be sitting in, at Canters.
I knew to walk in and look to my left.
And I put an ad in The Recycler
for a bass player influenced by
Aerosmith and Alice Cooper.
I'm not sure who else in there.
And he called.
And I had him meet me at Canters Deli.
You know, I assumed,
because his name was Slash,
I thought he was probably
a punk rock guy.
An old punk rock guy like me.
And in walked this,
you know, six-foot-plus guy
in a red and black
full-length trench coat.
Hair to the ceiling.
And, like that, I said,
"That's got to be him."
He had this sort of
punk rock thing going, but then he sort of
had the anti-rocks thing going.
Sort of fusion rock-and-roll,
punk kind of deal going on.
"I walked in,
"looked at the first booth on the left
"and saw all this fucking hair.
"Somehow...
"Somehow, I'd expected these guys
to look like Social Distortion.
"Instead,
"even though they appeared about my age,
"the dudes in Roadcrew had long hair
"and rocker chick girlfriends.
"If the sight of two long-haired rockers

from Hollywood was a shock for me,
"I could hardly imagine
having to talk to them.
"Of course,
"with my short, day-glow blue hair
"and long pimp coat,
"I must have looked like
a Martian to them, too.
"Both parties were a little surprised, and
curious, when we first met face-to-face.
"Slash's long hair, it turned out,
"hid a shy introvert.
"He was cool, though.
"He had a bottle of vodka
stashed under the table.
"Now, he and Steven
"weren't yet 21 either.
"And this was as close
as we could get to a bar.
"We drank vodka and ate bowls
of Canters' Barley Bean Soup.
"And Steven Adler, he was really nice.
"And expressed himself with an infectious,
almost childlike enthusiasm.
"He said,
"'Listen, we're going to be great. Gonna get
the feet stomping and the hands clapping.'
"And he still says that, to this day.
"Gonna get the feet stomping
and the hands clapping."
And then going back to
Slash's house that night,
after we talked at Canters.
And he started playing guitar.
I was like, "What is up with this guy?"
He had a snake, you know,
and then he got the snake out...
"Isn't she? She's such a sweetheart."
I'm like, "It's a snake, dude.
"I don't know about the sweetheart.
And you're playing guitar like that?"
"When I showed up at my
first GN'R rehearsal
"in late March, 1985,

"Axl and I said hi to each other
"and started joking around
about this and that.
"And I liked him right away.
"Whoever was running the sound then
asked Axl to test out the microphone.
"And Axl let out one of his screams,
and it was like nothing I'd ever heard.
"There were two voices
coming out of him at once.
"I suppose there's a name for that
in musicology.
"But all I knew in that instant
"was that this dude was different
"and fucking powerful
"and fucking serious.
"And as for Izzy,
"he wasn't from the school
of fancy guitar playing.
"More a Keith Richards,
than an Eddie Van Halen.
"Not only a great songwriter,
"but in my eyes,
"the baddest man walking the planet.
"One night,
"when we were talking after rehearsal,
"Izzy mentioned a band called
The Naughty Women.
"And it rang a bell.
"'I know that band, ' I said.
"Trying to place the name.
"'I think I played a gig
on the same bill with them once.
"'Wait...
"'Izzy, weren't they cross-dressers?'
"'Yep, ' Izzy said.
"'I was the drummer.'
"Finally, Slash and Steven
agreed to come to a rehearsal,
"just days before our
previously scheduled June 6th gig
"at the Troubadour
"that was supposed to serve
as a warm-up for our tour.

"We met at a space in Silverlake.
"We rented it for \$6 an hour.
"And that included a drum kit.
"From the moment the five of us
laid into our first song,
"we could all hear and feel
that the fit was right.
"The chemistry was immediate,
thunderous and soulful.
"It was amazing,
and all of us recognised it instantly."
It had to have been some sort of
meant-to-be kind of thing going on.
Because Duff ended up there,
Izzy, Axl, Steven's from Cleveland.
We were the only guys that
could have made up that band.
"We knew
we had to make it on our own.
"And after our Seattle road trip,
"failure was not an option with this crew."
And we were like all really...
Became very tight, very fast.
And we were all fucking driven and...
Set on this path together, you know?
- It's a very romantic type of story.
- Four months, five months later...
He calls me, he says,
"Come on down, we got signed!
"I just got 20,000 bucks."
And he bought me a plane ticket.
And I went down there,
because they were playing at The Whisky.
And Aerosmith's manager rolls up.
And they got this limousine.
And that's when Duff said,
"Well, you can't come."
Hell, I'm standing on Sunset Strip.
First time I've ever been to L.A.
by myself.
Aerosmith's manager, Tim Collins,
wanted to meet with us.
And I couldn't very well
bring my friend along

for this big meeting.
It's like, well, wait a fucking minute.
What am I gonna do?
"Well, you know how to get home."
"Here's the key to the apartment.
Just go..."
To the apartment.
Wasn't like I left him in the fucking dust.
Man, I was pissed off.
First of all,
I wanted to be in the limousine, but...
Second of all,
he fucking abandoned me. Anyway...
I went and saw them
and I said, wow, that's the spirit.
They're playing from their heart.
We said, let's take these guys on the road.
These guys would be great.
They're just like us. They're coming up.
And let's give them a break.
Ozzy gave us a break.
That particular tour was awesome.
There was two, sort of,
hell-raising bands from Los Angeles.
One that's been successful for a while.
And one that was on the way up.
But we were from that same gritty,
street kind of environment in L.A.
And we knew each other.
So it was just cool.
But yeah, and then it was just like...
It was just like, um...
It just took off like a jet.
"In early August, 1988,
"we were sitting backstage one day
"when some people from our record label
"came in with a sheet cake
"from the local grocery store.
"'Congratulations, ' they said.
"'You're number one.'
"I remember thinking,
"Wow.
"'A fucking sheet cake.'"
I was like, I got to find this record

by this band, Guns N' Roses.
I didn't know what they
looked like or anything.
And then I saw what they looked like
and I was like,
"Jesus Christ!
"These guys are creeps!
"Who are these fuckers?"
And yeah, the record
definitely changed my life.
I listened to the shit out of it.
Growing up in England in the late '80s,
you could do nothing but hear
Guns N' Roses. It was everywhere.
When Appetite came out,
I played it over and over again.
I worked at Aron's Records,
which is no longer there, on Melrose and
the original copy with the original cover
came in and I would always grab one
and put it in the back.
And there were stickers
in it and everything.
And then they changed the cover
and then there's that one.
And then I had the EP. So I loved it.
I learned to play just about
every instrument from that record.
I learned every song on guitar and bass.
I got a crappy drum set.
And I learned to play
drums from that record.
I had this boom box,
you know, next to the kit.
Just every day, the cowbell.
Just the perfect record to learn
to play drums on.
He used to pack up his Tama kit
into the back of his Gremlin
and drive out to Rancho La Brea Park
and set up on the lawn in the park
and practise out there.
We would do things like
stop by the dressing room and go,

"Hey, you're travelling with us."
And we had our own jet.
So we'd, like, throw a couple
Guns N' Roses guys on the jet.
And it was fun for us,
because, here we are,
basically a punk rock band
and I've got these kindred spirits.
Well, we got a jet!
It's like, this is funny.
This stuff doesn't happen to us.
I was in Seattle selling drugs,
just a few years before.
I got a jet. And now I got brothers.
Let's just go wreck shit!
I think it was the Monsters of Rock show
where they just blew
everybody out of the water.
Within a week of that show was talk
about this new band from America
that was kind of a mix between...
Like, just really edgy
heavy metal and punk.
A trippy phenomenon to be inside of.
Because you go out on tour...
And we'd come back to L.A...
We were gone for a year and a half.
We came back
and everybody's dressed like us.
Guns N' Roses and...
The big shows, that stuff
made me uncomfortable.
- Oh.
- It's uncomfortable to be around it.
I mean, it was...
I don't know.
It was surreal.
That my buddy was playing the Kingdome.
When we walked into a room,
we were sort of like this little gang.
And nobody could fuck with us.
And nobody could fucking
rock better than us.
Never felt intimidated by anybody

and it was just like...
This thing, and it was very tight.
I remember seeing them
opening up for Aerosmith.
And Duff was on the road.
He'd been on the road
opening for Aerosmith for a while.
So I couldn't even talk to him.
Couldn't get a hold of him.
There weren't cell phones or anything.
So I had to get my own
tickets to go see him.
Seeing my brother up on
the stage in front of,
I don't know how many,
50,000 people maybe.
And for the first time, seeing him
in that sort of environment...
Thinking, "Oh my God, this is amazing."
"On Christmas Day, 1989...
"I gave her the Halliburton luggage
Aerosmith had given me
"and asked her to get out.
"I was adamant.
"And I was keeping the dog.
"Merry fucking Christmas.
"I felt completely lost and heartbroken.
"I thought I'd let my mom
and my family down.
"I thought I'd been caught living a lie.
"Or rather, lies.
"Those little lies you tell yourself
"to help make your life fit
a more idealised image.
"Now, they'd all suddenly been laid bare.
"For me,
"it all boiled down to one simple thing.
"Just like my dad, I thought,
"in whose footsteps
I'd tried so hard not to follow."
It was...
Awful.
It was awful.
Um...

We got to see, right before us,
infidelity on my father's part.
We got to see our mother break down.
We would be there,
you know, picking up the pieces
of what my father left behind.
Including each other.
Duff had come up to visit us
so that he could introduce us to his wife.
And we went out for breakfast at
a really nice restaurant.
So, he ordered a screwdriver, a triple.
And he told the waitress,
just keep them coming.
And that was at breakfast time.
She was a heavy drinker. And she, um...
She really contributed,
I think, to his problem.
That was not a good marriage.
Bye.
"A lot of people around me
hoped that once the day-to-day pain
"of the marriage
and its immediate aftermath faded,
"I would be able to pull back a little from
my everyday vodka habit.
"But instead of straightening out,
"I kind of fell apart.
"My drinking had taken off
as the marriage went sour.
"And when she left the house,
I started to add more drugs to the mix.
"My first drink of the day slipped forward

"from about 4:

to more like 1:

"I also started to score
larger amounts of cocaine
"so that I could drink more
for longer periods of time.
"It proved a diabolical cocktail for me.
"Now I could drink until I finally had
to sleep, and if you're doing coke,

"you don't have to sleep
for up to four days in my case.
"The only time I slowed down
was if someone I respected,
"like my brother Matt,
would say, 'Slow the fuck down.'
"And I figured I'd cut back on
the drugs and booze at some stage
"when the heartbreak subsided."
The concern for me
mainly came from the anxiety
that he was having.
And our family has
a background of having anxiety.
So, I knew how he was feeling.
So, we would get together and...
He would be having
a panic attack or something.
We would talk about it
and try to calm him down and...
I think that's where my concern was
for him, was to try to control his anxiety.
"The attacks felt like being on
a merry-go-round, just starting up,
"then going faster and faster,
until it was too fast.
"Then the ride turned into a Gravitron.
"Where you're spinning so fast,
you are pinned to the walls
"and the bottom drops.
"You're unable to move,
"unable to make it stop.
"Unable to get off."
"The sugar in alcohol speeded up
panic attacks,
"as did cocaine."
"But drinking even more was
the only way I knew to combat the attacks."
You know, that's their problem.
"It was a harrowing experience
each time I arrived at a concert venue.
"And then came the gig at
the Riverport Amphitheatre,
"outside Saint Louis on July 2, 1991.

"The show started about an hour late,
"which by this point,
almost counted as on time.
"We played about an hour and a half and
were in the middle of Rocket Queen
"when all hell broke loose."
I remember we were playing Rocket Queen,
and there was this whole
breakdown section, and we go into this...
We're just jamming.
And there's a guy in the pit,
and he's filming,
right in front of the security guys.
And Axl on his microphone says,
"Hey, stop that guy from filming."
"Axl dove into the audience to try to address
something the house security had not."
And the next thing I knew
he leaped off the stage
and I just saw all these
black feathers flying out.
"His foray didn't last long.
"And I helped pull him upright,
as he lunged back up on stage.
"He then strode to the mic and announced
that because security hadn't done their job,
"he was leaving.
"He slammed the mic down, and stormed off."
It was like a mob scene, you saw
the crowd gradually turning to a mob.
So, I remember going in
Axl's dressing room and saying,
"Hey, man,
maybe if we go back out there it'll...
"Take down the crowd a little bit."
Axl said to me,
"Yeah, let's try to make it back up."
And at one point Ax says,
"Okay, let's go back out."
We're standing next to the stage
watching the stage, but at this point,
there were people on the stage.
They were taking the amplifiers
and there was like two guys

carrying the piano off.
But the reaction was something
that nobody was expecting.
Then it got really bad.
Fights broke out.
"We began to worry about
the scale of what we were witnessing.
"Much of the venue was already in ruins.
"And people
"were getting hurt."
And it was like opening the door,
it was like the one of the many doors
in the hallway of Yellow Submarine,
the Beatles movie, when you go...
And there's a train coming.
And it was just like we opened
that door to go back out there,
and it was pandemonium out there.
I vandalised some property here
and I pulled out some plants
and I threw it against the wall.
I was mixed up in the commotion.
I know I shouldn't have done that,
but I just let my adrenaline take over.
The scariest part is, they were
actually kicking apart the plastic seats
and throwing up pretty large chunks of
plastic seats with metal on them.
"But we could hear it all,
the screams, the crashes,
"the thunder of thousands of feet."
About 15 people have been
arrested in last night's incident.
They will be charged with everything from
disturbing the peace,
to destruction of property.
"The band was shoved
into a small van
"and told to get on the floor
so we weren't visible.
"But Slash's hat was sticking up.
"The driver asked him to take it off."
I remember that, yeah.
"Clots of cops ran around with

batons and pepper spray.

"Kids ran this way and that.

"Medics rushed around
treating bloodied fans.

"Police had people in cuffs.

"And it looked like a fucking war zone."

Slash and Duff were pretty good drinkers,
when I first met them.

They obviously became world-class drinkers
towards the end of, uh...

The big GN'R tour.

He was so young when he started drinking,
it's just hard to know

what his brain was really like.

We used to get up every morning,
make a fucking cocktail

of a big Solo cup of vodka this high,
with a splash of cranberry juice.

And we did about a half-gallon to our heads
a day, just out of the refrigerator.

And then, we went to bars and fucking...

So, it was 24/7 for years.

Well, at some point it becomes maintenance.

It's not like he's getting higher and higher.

He just needs that, so
he doesn't feel crappy.

I think Duff pushed it about as far as
anybody could humanly push it.

"I opened my eyes.

"Thirsty as a motherfucker.

"Vodka.

"I sit up, drape my legs
over the edge of the bed,
"elbows on knees, head in hands.

On the ground.

"Vodka.

"Where the fuck am I?

"That sound, that ominous sound."

Scheisse, scheisse, scheisse.

"Scheisse.

"Not a good word. The change in tone.

"The bad rumble in the stadium of
fans becoming foes.

"Again. Not again.

"That much vodka and that much cranberry!"
He would take his first sip of it and he
wouldn't realise right off the bat that it
wasn't the mixture that he wanted, so he
would just chuck it into the barricade.
And he'd look over at me,
he'd turn his back and go.
And I had to make him a proper one,
unfortunately. So...
He could go through
and would go quite frequently through...
A half-a-gallon and a
fifth of vodka in a day.
"I spit on the hotel carpet again
and rubbed my eyes.
"Knock at the door. Thank fuck. Ice.
"I pour a tumbler of vodka
over the fresh ice cubes.
"Back at the jet, snort some more coke.
"Vodka. Vodka. Vodka.
"No, Izzy. It's not going down like this.
"Don't go.
"The whole room is
vibrating with anger from within
"and more ominously,
"from without."
Scheisse, scheisse, scheisse.
"I see the line,
I'm standing with my toes right on it.
"Time for a line. I've got to sober up.
"I disappear behind a stack of amps.
"Get me the fuck out of here, Wembley!
"Vodka. Only an hour and a half gone by
since the openers.
"On we go. I can stand. I can see.
"Izzy.
"This was your band.
"This was our band.
"Our band.
"This is a fucking war of attrition."
Well, I remember when he decided
he was going to stop drinking.
I remember we went to his house and he was
a holding a half-gallon of wine, Gallo.

He says, "I stopped drinking."
- And he's holding a jug of wine.
- I said, "What's that?"
He said, "Oh, I stopped drinking vodka."
I'd tapered off of vodka. I was drinking
wine, which I thought, in my head,
you're trying to, like, okay,
wine's less potent than vodka.
But not if you're drinking
10 bottles a day.
To be honest with you, from my experience,
if you're a drug addict
or you're an alcoholic,
which to me is the same thing...
You have that thing. It doesn't go away.
Duff definitely had a blackout
period. I wasn't aware of it at the time.
He definitely had that.
He was at that point
where he didn't remember a lot of
the stuff that we had been doing.
Like trapped in a jail
that you can't find a way out of.
It's a scary place, because an addict
doesn't want you
to tell them what they already know.
At some point, Duff,
something had to shock him enough
for him to make up his mind.
It was like another morning,
waking up, like,
what the fuck did I do last night?
And then, when I rolled over, there was
like a shooting, stabbing, sharp pain.
So, I rolled over again and then,
that pain spread.
It spread down lower into my guts.
That's not fucking heartburn.
So, I get a call from Duff,
"You need to get over here right away."
So, I go upstairs
and I find him laying on the floor,
sort of in a half-fetal position,
naked as a jaybird.

It spread and I couldn't move. It was so...
Like I was on fire.
So...
I suddenly thought, "Well, this is it."
Let me hear you.
Basically,
half-flung him over my shoulder
and get him into my car
and we go to Dr Thomas's office,
which is about four blocks away from here.
Basically, alcohol is a poison.
In his case, it was just direct toxicity
to the pancreas cells and they just get...
Pissed and release all this
nasty juice into themselves.
And they got me to the hospital
and I asked everybody. The RN and...
"Just kill me. Just kill me. Just kill me."
I was barely whimpering.
There was a guy with a broken back and
there was me and they had morphine in.
And, uh, it wasn't working, man, and the
guy with the broken back said, "Man...
"I got a broken back, but I'm just glad
I don't have whatever you have."
Well, he said, "Dude, my pancreas exploded.
I got to slow down."
I guess that was pivotal for him.
That moment.
And I think his life changed after that.
My pancreas had expanded
to the size of a football.
And it burst.
So, I did have third-degree burns
on the inside and so, I was on fire.
No, I mean, not like you'd think
of a colon exploding
or a gall bladder or an appendix exploding.
But it basically just started chewing
itself apart from the inside out.
I remember them asking Andy
all these questions about me.
"What's your friend on? What's your friend..."
Like I wasn't there, and I really wasn't.

I remember at one point...
Telling me that...
It's a good chance
he's not going to make it through this.
And so, I went out to the hospital
and I saw him out there.
And his mom was there,
just like he talks about in his book.
And it was... It was hardcore.
And they gave me a button for the morphine.
A button for the Librium.
"Take as needed." So, I was just like...
The last thing you need
when somebody's basically having
a third-degree burn inside their abdomen
is to have them also go through
alcohol withdrawal.
But they came in and did another
ultrasound before surgery
and my pancreas had come down.
"It's looking like you've been given
a second chance, dude.
"And you better figure out
what you're going to do with it."
And that was like all the rehab I needed.
"You knew this was coming, ' I thought.
"All you ever wanted to do
was leave your mark on the world.
"Get in, get out.
"You've done that."
"I figured, as part of Guns,
I'd left a big mark."
What else do you have to live for anyway?
"I'll never forget when my mom
came to the hospital to see me.
"She was in a wheelchair
from Parkinson's disease,
"and there I was...
"Her youngest son."
Now, you've failed your fucking mom.
She shouldn't see you like this.
That wasn't part of the plan either.
"The order isn't right here.
"I should be taking care of her.

"It's not right.
"You're a fuck-up.
"I'm a fuck-up.
"The key for me was admitting
how selfish I was being.
"And how terribly bad I'd been
hurting my own mother."
Who knows what the crystal ball ever holds,
right? But if he hadn't stopped drinking,
I don't think he'd be here.
He really would have pushed it to
the point where there's no coming back.
I'm Thundering Nine Horse,
known as Benny "The Jet" Urquidez.
I'm what they call a trouble shooter.
When they're in trouble, they come to me and
I'm able to not teach them a way of life.
My job is to give them tools,
so they can live their life.
I teach the art of war. I teach the art of
mental warfare, physical warfare,
spiritual warfare, character warfare.
I turn people inside-out and so
they can see themselves.
And sometimes, a lot of times,
we hide it very well.
I think Duff had this light in him,
but he couldn't see it.
He just didn't know where to find it.
"After jumping rope,
there was a heavy stretch.
"I would be shaking by this point
and Benny would stretch me
"and sometimes that would be
the rest of the workout.
"He could tell when my body
had been pushed far enough.
"He could also pick up on stress
during the stretching sessions.
"He looked at my eyes and gauged
the tension in my muscles
"and could tell
what was going on inside of me.
"He talked to me when he

sensed I was receptive to his lessons.
"But it wasn't a conversation.
"Still stretching me, Benny began to talk.
"It can feel like
everyone is out to get you.
"That's when you have to refuse to succumb.
"Make people realise you are a force.
"But you also have to
give and take in these situations."
"Place pain in a steel box
and let it float away, ' Benny would say.
"Pain will always be there.
It's how you deal with it that matters."
So, we went from the mental workout
to a physical workout.
And then from the physical workout,
he really got a chance to
really start to recognise that
he was actually going into a line-up.
Mental, physical, spiritual line-up.
I think it was really good for him
and to really get into that
and have such a great mentor in Benny.
Calming and had great, very wise and...
Just a great influence on Duff
and I think that was a big part of
helping him get his life back on track.
Everybody, after you get done
with a self-destructive habit,
whichever one it is, you have to channel
that energy into something else,
and when you quit,
that was the direction that he went.
He's like, "Do you want to go work out at
the Washington Athletic Club with me?"
And I was like...
"Yeah, man.
I'll fucking work out with you. Sure."
It was the fucking worst day of my life.
His warm-up at the gym
was more than my whole three workouts.
And after each step, I'm like, okay...
So, where's...
Time for the shower.

And he's like,
"Okay, now we're going to go hit the bag."
And not many people get first chances.
Not many people get second chances, third,
it seems like...
He's got nine lives.
But I just was very impressed
by the fact that he could,
after what he had been through, that he
can totally turn his life around now.
"Her name is Susan, '
"he said, as we waited for her to answer.
"He quickly told her about me
and then just handed me the phone.
"We exchanged pleasantries and
agreed to meet up at some stage when
"I got back to L.A. in October.
"And she sounded really nice."
He connected us on the phone
and the minute we started talking
we really just kind of clicked.
I know it sounds crazy, but it's true.
And, um...
We just enjoyed each other's company,
good old-fashioned way,
just talking on a telephone.
"And as we walked past a news
stand, he pointed to a magazine cover.
"That's Susan there, ' he said.
"Oh."
"Oh, check this out. She happens to have
a picture in Allure Magazine this month."
And then he showed Duff the picture
and Duff was like, "Uh, yeah."
"Now call me shallow, but I was much more
interested once I saw that fucking photo.
"She had long, brown hair
and dark almond-shaped eyes.
"Fucking beautiful.
"She was nearly naked in the shot, too,
and her body was absolutely slamming.
"Yeah, ' Stain said, reading my mind.
"She's the real deal.
"I didn't want to say it,

but the famous fashion photographer
" 'Steven Meisel gave her the nickname
The Body after one of their shoots.'
" 'What's The Body's last name?' I said.
"Holmes.
"She was 5'11".
"And I fell in love with her
in that very instant."
And we were pretty much
inseparable ever since.
I think that they just got together,
was just a great, great match.
Yeah, I think that all the bad stuff
had already happened to him
and so, when she came along,
she, uh, I don't think,
ever saw any of that.
For all who have touched the lives of these
two, have helped them on their journey,
and who are their friends now
and will be always, we pray to the Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer.

- I, Duff.
- I, Duff.
- Take you, Susan.
- Take you, Susan.
- To be my wife.
- To be my wife.
- I promise to be true to you.
- I promise to be true to you.
- In good times and in bad.
- In good times and in bad.
- In sickness and in health.
- In sickness and in health.
- I will love you.
- I will love you.
- And honour you.
- And honour you.
- All the days.
- All the days.
- Of my life.
- Of my life.
I present to you
for the first time as a married couple,

Mr and Mrs Duff McKagan.
"Susan and I went to go see our doctor
"when she was two weeks overdue.
"He said he was going to make
us an appointment
"to go into the hospital
the following morning
"so they could induce labour.
"Shit!
"Susan showed me through
15 excruciating hours of labour,
"that she owned the
warrior spirit of 10 men.
"She powered through
all of that pain and confusion.
"I know she was more scared
than she'd ever been in her life.
"But she never quit,
"and she never cried,
"and then it happened.
"Our daughter.
"My daughter?
"My baby girl.
"I have a baby girl?
"I have a baby girl!
"We named her Grace.
"And now life made sense.
"This was why I survived my pancreatitis.
"I was here to be a father of a baby girl.
And I was, at last, ready for it."
"And then,
we were blessed for a second time.
"Susan gave birth to
our second daughter, Mae.
"She was a big, round Buddha baby,
"and Susan's labour was much shorter
and easier than it had been with Grace.
"I never thought my life
could be this full.
"For a middle name,
we gave her Marie, after my mom."
It was pretty funny.
That first day,
I called roll, and I got

to Michael McKagan,
and he said,
"Here, but you can call me Duff."
And, um,
I didn't quite understand him,
so I said, "Duff? Duff McKagan?"
And the class kind of
tittered, and I thought,
"Hmm, okay," and went on,
and that was it,
I still did not know who he was.
Ann Dawson was
my first accounting professor.
So we're into really serious
day-in, day-out classes,
and it's going fast,
and she, I think, she kind of caught on.
Eventually, that even though I was 32,
I was a new student.
And that I was there for
a different reason than the 19-year-olds.
And I think maybe looking down
the road at his future,
wanted to have some options.
And also, yeah, maybe wanted to have
more control over his income.
When Duff, having
graduated business college
and having a full-on knowledge,
basically, how
the record business works
and how royalties work
and how publishing works,
and how percentages work...
And all this other,
you know, detailed stuff that he'd
gone in there to really get a handle on.
He was a stellar student.
And I'm not really talking about
A's, B's and all that.
Although I think he did very, very well.
But he was a very interested student.
For some reason, me and Duff
decided to take the subway downtown.

We came out of the subway
and we were going up towards our hotel,
and this guy came, "Hey!
You're Matt and Duff from Velvet Revolver!"
You know.
And we'd been these guys in
Guns N' Roses our whole life, you know?
And we were like, oh, yeah,
we are, you know?
That was a really good moment for us.
We have a new life.
You know? A new beginning,
which was cool.
I remember when we went in
to the premiere of The Hulk,
we didn't have a name.
And Slash had Revolver,
but we couldn't trademark that,
because there was a million Revolvers,
you know?
I remember, we were walking through the
door to watch the premiere of the movie,
and Scott goes,
"What about Dead Velvet Revolver?"
And Duff said, "Why don't we just get rid
of Dead and call it Velvet Revolver?"
And it happened
almost overnight,
and it was all about Velvet Revolver,
and that band really...
Um, I think came along at the right time,
just like Guns had in 1987.
"At this point,
I should have taken a step back
"and assessed the situation.
"Never before had I felt I had
so many people depending on me.
"I was now juggling being
a good father and husband
"with trying to get a guy sober,
so that he could do the same.
"But I was also doing this
"because I saw real possibilities
"for this new band, with

Scott as our singer."
I remember saying to Slash and Duff, going,
"Are we sure this is the guy?"
It's like marrying a stripper or something,
you know what I mean?
It's like, you know you're in for trouble.
"With the national exposure, there was
a lot of interest in Velvet Revolver.
"And for the first time ever,
"I was mixing the spiritual healing
of martial arts
"with commerce."
And it was major success.
The record went to number one,
the single went to number one,
we sold a lot of records,
and we headlined arenas, you know?
Sold out arenas all over the world.
"Seeing Scott nodding and jonesing up there
"reminded me of some
not so pleasant memories.
"In hindsight,
"I see that this was the moment
"I swerved away from the path I'd been on.
"A path that shielded me
from the dark parts of my past.
"Each of us makes
a handful of decisions in life
"that can have a drastic impact
on subsequent events."
We fly out to New York
to master the record,
and when the record was finished,
we were at Sterling Sound,
and high up on a shelf
somewhere in the studio there was
an unopened bottle of Jack Daniels.
And, so, I fell off the wagon that night.
I remember I was the
first one that fell off.
Everyone kind of looked at me
like I was the Antichrist, you know?
It's like...
This sucks. I remember this is

the fucking most boring shit.
I'd go backstage,
and it'd be sitting there, but these guys
would be reading books and shit.
I'm like, what the fuck just
happened to rock and roll?
You know, really?
Is this how we're going to do this?
You'll get an extended adolescence
by being a musician
that's working. Period.
So there's just no rules, really.
One of my lowest bottoms
during that and I allowed it,
I watched it happen,
and I allowed myself to go down that path.
I actually was very aware of it
and conscious of it.
And just kept following,
going down that rabbit hole to see where
it was going to lead.
And when I finally got to the bottom,
I was like, you know what?
After all these years, and this and
that and the other, this sucks.
You know, by the end of 2005, everybody
was pretty fucked up on something.
It was like living the old life again.
You know, so Slash is drinking,
I was getting drunk
and doing my share of drugs.
But Duff had gone into this
sneaky pill-popping thing.
"I looked at the bottle
for a few minutes.
"Then opened it,
"and shook one of the pills
onto the palm of my hand.
"I swallowed a Xanax pill
sitting in a hotel room,
"because everything
"seemed to be coming down
on my shoulders.
"Fuck."

I think in his mind...
"Pills will be okay.
"That won't affect my pancreas, right?"
I remember the moment thinking
about, are the pills in my backpack,
and I knew...
I knew the moment I thought about it.
You're in trouble.
What kind of game? What kind of game?
And Dave, you know,
is like,
"Dude, what's going on with you?"
And, you know, I lied to him.
It's what you do.
I'm like, "Dude, what did you take today?"
He's like, "Oh, I just took some,
blah, blah, blah." And he bullshitted.
You're fucking off the wagon, dude.
Xanax is in the same family, actually,
as alcohol. It's a benzodiazepine,
which is the same feeling you get
when you drink.
"Then the pill kicked in."
"Everything's fine."
"The next day I took two pills."
"My high tolerance for
drugs came right back."
"By the third day, I was figuring out
how to get a hold of more pills."
"Lots more pills."
In a week's time, I was at 22 milligrams,
so 22 of those pills a day.
He just was like everything
was slow motion.
I knew at that point, like,
"Okay, you're taking pills again."
"And you're not just taking them to fly."
When I knew he was in trouble,
is I found him on the tour bus passed out
on the toilet of the tour bus.
And he was in there for
like fucking two hours.
"I'll deal with this soon."
"I've got what it takes."

"I'll go cold turkey as soon as I'm home.
"Sue.
"Susan had never known me fucked up."
"So she didn't instantly recognise it."
Okay, you're down. You got knocked down.
Are you gonna stay on the ground,
or you gonna get up?
What are you going to do?
Your choice!
You want to die, you want to live?
What do you want to do?
You want to die?
Let me go and get you a gun.
Get it over with.
You want to live? Let's fight.
Get up on your feet. Let's go!
I needed this to happen to me.
I wasn't bulletproof.
It was time to get back to the dojo.
That was a real awakening for him,
and thank goodness for Susan
and the two girls,
because they really
have helped him to be a good
family man, and a papa.
Yeah, they got great kids. Two great girls.
And yeah, they're both fantastic parents.
He's a great dad.
I'm probably the luckiest guy in the world.
You know, to have grown up
under the tutelage of seven siblings.
Like, through all the different periods
of my success and going back to school,
and having kids and all that.
You know, my brothers and sisters
are pretty grounded,
and I think that kept me pretty grounded.
And we can talk about Duff
a lot and not talk about Guns N' Roses.
Obviously, it's part of his legacy.
But it's not who he is.
It's just part of who he is.
That's what I find fascinating about him.
"I maintained an idealised,

Norman Rockwell-like picture in my mind
"of how our home life should look.
"Until I suddenly realised
that right there, right then,
"I had everything I'd always wanted.
"A family that needed me.
"Kids who were excited about something
I could actually help them with.
"And my baseball team on the TV.
"If only Norman Rockwell
had been there to paint this scene."

Hi, Mike.

Seattle.

On the pedal steel,

Mr Paul Hutzler.

This handsome man to my left,

Mr Mike Squires.

International man of mystery,

Mr Burke Thomas on the drums.

My partner in crime back here on the bass,

Mr Jeff Rouse.

There's been a vote, the best guitar player
in America, right here, Mr Jeff Fielder.

We've been blessed to have
this string quartet here.

Put your hands together
for Mr Andrew Joslyn.

Alina To.

Seth May-Patterson on the viola.

And on the cello, Danah Olivetree.

And this man right here,

we've journeyed through some shit together.

My brother...

We're going to ask you guys to help
in a second here.

You ready?

Let's hear you, Moore Theatre!

Okay, you guys should know
those lines by Axl, sing it.