

## [It scarcely seems possible](#)

the blog of Nick Walters, Bristol-based SF author, cyclist and oisk

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Posted by: **Nick Walters** | November 24, 2011

### **The Fall: Ersatz G.B.**



Less polished and more mental than *Your Future Our Clutter*, this is also much more fun. It begins with *Cosmos 7*, a mad rush of a track with everything happening at once before the song almost falls over its own ascending riff. A storming opener! *Taking Off* follows, a wonderful melodic thing which sounds (rather appropriately) a bit like *The Blue Aeroplanes* before, er, taking off into its own Fall flight of fun. Next, *Nate Will Not Return*, a 6-minute monster during which M.E.S. grudgingly and growlingly spits out rhymes of the titular character, whilst Pete Greenway (the hero of this album), worries and strangles his guitar into a stuttering series of phrases which culminate triumphantly in a glorious repeated riff. Simply astonishing.

*Mask Search* is next, probably the weakest track, though it is still great, and fun; a rockabilly stumble which recalls *Hot Cake* from the last album. The stop/start ending is hilarious. *Greenway* is next – an exact copy of

a song called Gameboy by a Greek HM band (this is where all this “new Fall album is gonna be Greek Heavy Metal” stuff originated). It’s fun, it rocks, and MES gargled lyrics are... interesting... but it could have done with some of Eleni’s keyboards. A slight disappointment. Talking of Eleni, Mrs Smith takes centre stage for Happi Song, a light, poppy number which comes as blessed relief after the heady rush of the first four tracks. It’s been unfairly slagged off, which is a shame as it is a nice little song and provides contrast to the swirling madness of the rest of the album.

Beginning Side 2 (yes, I still think that – and in fact side 2 of the vinyl version does start here!) is Monocard, the album’s centrepiece, 8 minutes of beetling, bruised beauty which could have fitted on Bend Sinister - from me, there is no higher praise. Based on the most primitive metal riff imaginable, this is a masterpiece of repetition, and the way it stops... then starts... then stops... then starts again builds an incredible atmosphere of menace and suspense. The lyrics are typically obtuse: “When will I get grasp of monocard? Is it bread? When will it begin? At my peril and at my demand – Monocarrrrd!” (Google monocard and all will become clear...not!). Eleni’s synths recall the BBC Radiophonic Workshop and at several points morph alarmingly into a sting which recalls the 1970’s Doctor Who theme music. It’s the best track and a true Fall classic.

Laptop Dog is next, which was rightly released as a single. It’s a catchy tune based on an acoustic guitar riff which recalls earlier Fall song M5. Can’t see it bothering the charts though, but that has never mattered where The Fall are concerned! The final two tracks are headlong sprints which bring the album to the close on a high. I’ve Seen Them Come is another long track, over 6 minutes, and is the most repetitive thing here (lacking the stops and starts of Monocard), based on a fantastic Greenway riff which starts the song, then gets buried in the production, only to emerge triumphant in the final two minutes. It’s a timeless piece of Fall which could fit into any era. Age of Chang (formerly Age of Change) is okay, but is rather a mangled version of what was a tight and disciplined tune live. A minor criticism as further listenings reveal bits and bobs of business and hidden layers in the track – something which is true for the album as a whole. So – better than YFOC? And up among the best? Impossible to tell, probably pointless to try, but to my inexpressible joy, Ersatz G.B it is yet ANOTHER excellent Fall album, the fourth such in a row since 2007, and they show no signs of slowing down. All hail The Fall, the best band ever to exist.

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Nice one Nick

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By: **PitbullHarry** on November 24, 2011  
at 7:32 pm

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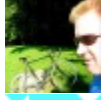
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