







1. *Pure Comedy*

The comedy of man starts like this:
Our brains are way too big for our mother's hips
So nature she devised this alternative:
We emerge half-formed and hope whoever greets us on the other end
Is kind enough
To fill us in
And, babies, that's pretty much how it's been ever since

Now the miracle of birth leaves a few issues to address
Like say that half of us are periodically iron deficient
So somebody's gotta go kill something while I look after the kids
I'd do it myself, but what, are you gonna get this thing his milk?
He says as soon as he gets back from the hunt we can switch
It's hard not to fall in love with something so helpless
Ladies, I hope we don't end up regretting this

Comedy
Now that's what I call pure comedy
Just wait until the part where they start to believe
They're at the center of everything
And some all powerful being
Endowed this horror show with meaning

Their religions are the best
They worship themselves but they're totally obsessed
With risen zombies, celestial virgins, magic tricks
In these unbelievable outfits
And they get terribly upset
When you question their sacred texts
Written by woman-hating epileptics

Their languages just serve to confuse them
Their confusion somehow makes them more sure
They build fortunes poisoning their offspring
And hand out prizes when someone packed insecure

Where did they find these goons they elected to rule them
What makes these clowns they idolize so remarkable
These mammals are hell-bent on fashioning new gods
So they can go on being godless animals

Comedy
Their illusions that are all that they can see
Their horizons that just forever recede
How's this for irony:
Their idea of being free
Is a prison of beliefs
They've every right to never leave

Comedy
It's like something that a madman would conceive
The only thing that seems to makes them feel alive
Is the struggle to survive
But the only thing that they request
Is something to numb the pain with
Until there's nothing human left

Just random matter suspended in the dark
Hate to say it, but each other's all we've got

2. *Total Entertainment Forever*

Bedding Taylor Swift
Every night inside the Oculus Rift
After mister and the missus finish dinner and the dishes
Now the future's definition is so much higher than it was last year
It's like the images have all become real
And someone's living my life for me out in the mirror

Can you believe
Just how far we've come
In the New Age
Freedom to have what you want

In the New Age
We'll be entertained
Rich or poor
The channels are all the same

You're a star now, baby
So dry your tears
You're just like them
Wake on up from the nightmare

Na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na
C'mon

No gods to rule us
No drugs to soothe us
No myths to prove stuff
No love to confuse us

Not bad for a race of demented monkeys
From a cave to a city to a permanent party
C'mon

When the historians find us we'll be in our homes
Plugged into our hubs
Skin and bones
A frozen smile on every face
As the stories replay
This must have been a wonderful place

3. *Things It Would Have Been Helpful to Know Before the Revolution*

It got too hot
And so we overthrew the system
'Cause there's no place for human existence like right here
On this bright blue marble
Orbited by trash
Man, there's no beating that
It was no big thing to give up the way of life we had

My social life
Is now quite a bit less hectic
The nightlife and the protests are pretty scarce
Now I mostly spend the long days
Walking through the city
Empty as a tomb
Sometimes I miss the top of the food chain
But what a perfect afternoon

Industry and commerce toppled to their knees
The gears of progress halted
The underclass set free
The super-ego shattered with our ideologies
The obscene injunction to enjoy life
Disappears as in a dream
And as we return to our native state
To our primal scene
The temperature, it started dropping
And the ice floes began to freeze

From time to time
We all get a bit restless
With no one advertising to us constantly
But the tribe at the former airport
Some nights has meat and dancing
If you don't mind gathering and hunting
We're all still pretty good at eating on the run
Things it would have been helpful to know before the revolution

Though I'll admit
Some degree of resentment
For the sudden lack of convenience around here
There are some visionaries among us
Developing some products
To aid us in our struggle to survive

On this godless rock that refuses to die

4. *Ballad of the Dying Man*

Naturally the Dying Man wonders to himself
Had his commentary been more lucid than anybody else?
And had he successfully beaten back the rising tide
Of idiots, dilettantes and fools
That were on his watch
While he was alive
Lord, just a little more time

Oh, in no time at all this will be the distant past

So says the Dying Man once I'm in the box
Just think of all the overrated hacks running amok
And all of the pretentious, ignorant voices that will go unchecked
The homophobes, hipsters and one percent
The false feminists he'd managed to detect
Who will critique them once he's left?

In no time at all this will be the distant past

What he'd give for one more day to rate and analyze
The world made in his image as of yet to realize
What a mess to leave behind

Eventually the Dying Man takes his final breath
But first checks his newsfeed to see what he's about to miss
It occurs to him a little late in the game
We leave as clueless as we came
From the rented heavens to the shadows in the cave
We'll all be wrong one day

We'll all be wrong someday

5. *Birdie*

Take off little winged creature
It's nothing but teens in ravines
And antiques on concrete down here
Are you really as free as all the great songs would have me believe
Well, let me tell you why someday, birdie, you're gonna envy me

Some dream of a world
Written in lines of code
Well, I hope they engineer out politics, romance, and edifice
Two outta three ain't bad

Some envision a state
Governed by laws of business
Merger and acquisition
Instead of violence or nations
Where do I sign up?

Take off little winged creature
It's nothing but falling debris, strollers and babies down here
You may be up in the sky but our paradigms are just as deep and just as wide
What with all our best attempts at transcendence
Something's bound to take

Soon, we'll live in a global culture
Devoid of gender or race
There's just one tiny line
You're either born behind
Or you're free to peak inside

Life as just narrative

Meta-data in aggregate
Where the enigma of humanity's
Wrapped up finally
That as they say is that

Oh, that day can't come soon enough
It'll be so glorious
When they finally find out what's bugging us

6. *Leaving LA*

I.

I was living on the hill
By the water tower and hiking trails
When the big one hit I'd have a seat
To watch masters abandon their dogs and dogs run free
Come on baby it's time to leave
Take the van and the hearse down to New Orleans
Leave under the gaze of the billboard queens
Five foot chicks with parted lips selling sweatshop jeans

2.

These LA phonies and their bullshit bands
Just sounds like dollar signs and
So reads the pull quote of my last cover piece
Entitled "The Oldest Man In Folk Rock Speaks"
You can hear it all over the airwaves
The manufactured gasp of the final days
Someone should tell them bout the time that they don't have
To praise the glorious future and the hopeless past

3.

A few things the songwriter needs
Arrows of love, a mask of tragedy
But if you want ecstasy, or birth control
Just run the tap until the water's cold
Anything else you can get online
A creation myth or a .45
You're going to need one or the other to survive
Where only the armed or the funny make it out alive

4.

Still I dreamt of garnering all rave reviews
Just believably a little north of God's own truth
He's a national treasure now and here's the proof
In the form of his major label-debut
A little less human with each release
Closing the gap between the mask and me
I swear I never do this, but is it okay
Don't want to be that guy but it's my birthday
If everything ends with a photo then I'm on my way

5.

Mara taunts me 'neath the tree
She's like "Oh, great, that's just what they all need
Another white guy in 2017
Who takes himself so goddamn seriously"
She's not far off, the strange this is
That's just what I thought when I started this
It took me my whole life to learn to play the G
But the role of Oedipus was just a total breeze

6.

I watch my old gods all collapse

Whoa way more violent than my cartoon past
It's like my father said before he croaked
"Son, you're killing me" and "That's all folks!"
So why is it I'm so distraught
That what I'm selling's getting bought
At some point you just can't control
What people use your fake name for

7.

So I never learned to play the lead guitar
I always more preferred the speaking parts
Besides there's always someone willing to
Fill up the spaces that I couldn't use
Nonetheless, I've been practicing my whole life
Washing dishes, playing drums, and just getting by
Until I figured if I'm here then I just might
Conceal my lack of skill here in the spotlight
Maya the mother of illusions, a beard, and I

8.

2000 years or so since Ovid taught
Night-blooming teenage rosebuds dirty talk
And I'm merely a minor fascination to
Manic virginal lust and college dudes
I'm beginning to begin to see the end
Of how it all goes down between me and them
Some 10 verse chorus-less diatribe
Plays as they all jump ship, I used to like this guy
But this new shit makes me want to die

9.

My earliest memory of music's from
The time at JC Penny's with my mom

The watermelon candy I was choking on
Barbara screaming "Someone, help my son"
I relive it most times the radio's on
That Tell Me Lies, Sweet Little White Lies song
That's when I first heard the comedy won't stop for
All the little boys dying in department stores

10.
So we leave town in total silence
New Years Day at 6 o'clock am
Never seen Sunset this abandoned
Reminds me predictably of the world's end
It'll be good to get more space
God knows what all these suckers pay
I can stop drinking and you can write your script
What we both think now is

7. *A Bigger Paper Bag*

Dance like a butterfly and drink like a fish
If you're bent on taking demons down with only your fists and
I've never known anyone who could lose himself in a bigger paper bag

The weaker the signal the sweeter the noise
Hunching over an instrument that you now employ like the
Starvation Army needs a marching piano in the band
Are you feeling used?
I do

I was pissing on the flame
Like a child with cash
Or a king on cocaine

I've got the world by the balls, am I supposed to behave?
What a fraud
What a con
You're the only one I love

It's easy to assume that
You've built some rapport
With a someone who only likes you for what you like yourself for
Okay, you be my mirror
But always remember
The only a few angles I tend to prefer
I'm only here to serve

I was dancing round the flame
Like a high wire act
With a "who, me?" face
I was living on nothing but water and cake
What a fraud
What a con
You're the only one I love
One I love
One I love

8. *When the God of Love Returns There'll Be Hell to Pay*

When the God of Love returns
There'll hell to pay
Though the world may be out of excuses
I know just what I would say

Let the seven trumpets sound

As the locust skies grow dark
But first let's take you on a quick tour
Of your creation's handiwork

Barely got through the prisons and stores
The Pale Horse looks a little sick
Says "Jesus, you didn't leave a whole lot for me
If this isn't hell already, then tell me what the hell is"

We say, It's just human
Human nature
This place is savage and unjust

We crawled out of the darkness and
Endured your impatience
We're more than willing to adjust

And now You've got the gall to judge us

The spider spins his web
The tiger stalks his prey
And we steal fire from the heavens
To try and keep the night at bay

Every monster has a code
One that steadies the shaking hand
When he's determined to accrue more capital by whatever means he can

It's just human

Human nature
We've got these appetites to serve

You must not know the first thing
About us human beings
We're the Earth's most soulful predators

Maybe try something less ambitious the next time you get bored
Oh my Lord

We just want light in the dark
Some warmth in the cold
And to make something out of nothing
Sounds like someone else I know

9. *Smoochie*

When my personal demons are screamin'
And when my door of madness is half open

You stand alongside
And say something to the effect that
"Everything'll be alright soon"

Smoochie

When chaos attends to creation
And when the shadows inside me vie for attention

You stand alongside
And say something perfect like
"Concealment feeds the fear"

And hand me a sea-peach
And say "Come over here"

Smoochie

10. *Two Wildly Different Perspectives*

One side says:
“Y’all go to hell”

The other says:
“If I believed in God I’d send you there”
But either way we make some space
In the hell that we create
On both sides

One side says:
“Kill ‘em all”
The other says:
“Line those killers up against the wall”
But either way some blood is shed
Thanks to our cooperation
On both sides

One side says:
“Man, take what’s yours!”
The other says:
“Live on no more than you can afford”
But either way we just possess
And everyone ends up with less
On both sides

11. *The Memo*

Gonna steal some bed sheets
From an amputee
Gonna mount them on a canvas in the middle of the gallery
Gonna tell everybody it was painted by a chimpanzee

But just between you and me
Here at the cultural low water mark
If it’s fraud or art
They’ll pay you to believe

Gonna take five young dudes
From white families
Gonna mount them on a billboard in the middle of the country
Gonna tell everybody
They sing like angels with whiter teeth
But just between you and me
They’re just like before
But with their standards lower

No: the concert-goer
Will pay you to believe

Caffeine in the morning
Alcohol at night
Cameras to record you and mirrors to recognize
And as the world is getting smaller, small things take up all your time
Narcissus would have had a field day if he could have got online
And friends it’s not self-love that kills you, it’s when those who hate you are
allowed
To sell you you’re a glorious shit the entire world revolves around
And that you’re the eater, no, not the eaten, but the hunger will only cease
If you come binge on radiant blandness at the disposable feast

Just quickly, how would you rate yourself
In terms of sex appeal and cultural significance
Do you usually listen to music like this
Can recommend some similar artists?
Are you feeling depressed?

But your feedback's important
To us

I'm gonna buy myself a sports team
And put them in a pit
I'm gonna wage the old crusade against consciousness
All I need's a couple winners to get every loser to fight in it
Keep the golden calf, just need the bullshit
They won't just sell themselves into slavery
They'll get on their knees and pay you to believe

12. *So I'm Growing Old on Magic Mountain*

That was the last New Year I'll ever see
But I want to stay on that magic mountain
With lost souls and beautiful women
I drank some of Farmer's potion
And we were moving in slow motion
And the slower, the better
The slower, the better
'Cause there's no one old on magic mountain

And
That was the very last barn I'm burning
So for now everyone is dancing
As if it's any time but the present
For now any young thing in my path
I'll hold their face so long inside my hands
And the longer the better
The longer, the better
'Cause there's no one old on magic mountain

The wine has all be emptied and smoke has cleared
As people file back to the valley
On the last night of life's party
These days the years thin till I can't remember
Just what it feels like to be young forever
So the longer I stay here
The longer there's no future
So I'm growing old on magic mountain

13. *In Twenty Years or So*

What's there to lose
For a ghost in a cheap rental suit
Clinging to a rock that is hurtling through space?

And

What's to regret
For a speck on a speck on a speck
Made more ridiculous the more serious he gets?

Oh
It's easy to forget

I read somewhere that in twenty years, more or less, this human experiment will reach its violent end, but I look at you, as our second drinks arrive (the piano player's playing "This Must Be the Place") and it's a miracle to be alive

One more time

There's nothing to fear

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Pure Comedy

Performed by Josh Tillman, Jonathan Wilson, Thomas Bartlett, Elijah Thomson,
Daniel Bailey, and Keefus Ciancia
Horn arrangement by Gavin Bryars
Additional horn arrangement by James King and Josh Tillman
String arrangement by Paul Jacob Cartwright

Total Entertainment Forever

Performed by Josh Tillman, Thomas Bartlett, Elijah Thomson, Daniel Bailey,
Jonathan Wilson, and Keefus Ciancia
Horn arrangement by James King and Jonathan Wilson

Things It Would Have Been Helpful to Know Before the Revolution

Performed by Josh Tillman, Jonathan Wilson, Thomas Bartlett, Elijah Thomson,
Daniel Bailey, and Keefus Ciancia
String arrangement by Paul Jacob Cartwright
Horn arrangement by James King

Ballad of the Dying Man

Performed by Josh Tillman, Thomas Bartlett, Keefus Ciancia, Elijah Thomson, and Daniel Bailey
Vocal arrangement by Josh Tillman and Chavonne Stewart
Additional vocals by George Potts Young, De'Ante Duckett, Ryan Stewart, Tiffanie Cross,
Vanessa Grundy, Chavonne Stewart, Shanika Bereal, Celeste Young, and Dominique Dubose

Birdie

Performed by Josh Tillman, Jonathan Wilson, and Daniel Bailey
String arrangement by Tom Lea

Leaving LA

Performed by Josh Tillman
String arrangement by Gavin Bryars

A Bigger Paper Bag

Performed by Josh Tillman, Jonathan Wilson, Thomas Bartlett, Keefus Ciancia,
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When the God of Love Returns There'll Be Hell to Pay

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Pedal Steel by Greg Leisz

Two Wildly Different Perspectives

Performed by Josh Tillman and Jonathan Wilson
String arrangement by Paul Jacob Cartwright

The Memo

Performed by Josh Tillman, Jonathan Wilson, Elijah Thomson, and Daniel Bailey
Cello by Kelsey Lu

So I'm Growing Old on Magic Mountain

Performed by Josh Tillman, Keefus Ciancia, Jonathan Wilson, Elijah Thomson, Thomas Bartlett, and Daniel Bailey
Vocal arrangement by Josh Tillman
Additional vocals by Chavonne Stewart
Lap Steel by Greg Leisz
Vibraphone by Gavin Bryars

In Twenty Years or So

Performed by Josh Tillman, Thomas Bartlett, Jonathan Wilson, Elijah Thomson, and Daniel Bailey
String arrangement by Nico Muhly

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