

THIS

● **BILLY IDOL** has got plastered! He's got God! He's got dead! Rumours about the blond Bromley bombshell blast through the ether of Transatlantic rockgossip! Is Billy a born again boring bastard or is he still the shag-it-if-it-moves sexdevil rockpig we all know and hate? **STEVEN WELLS** went to investigate the legend behind the sneer. **KEVIN CUMMINS** went for that elusive 'Monroe on sleeping pills' look with his trusty telescopic lens

Close your eyes and think the word **SEX**. What do you see? You see a shock of peroxide hair, a curly lip, pert nipples, leather chains and tight black leather trousers mulching with juicy thrustiness. You see a tattoo on a bulging left bicep of the Soviet underground cartoon character Oktobriana. She symbolises **FREEDOM!** And she has massive bosoms.

Think now of Billy Idol and you think of **PASSION!** You think of **ENERGY!** You think of **MOTORBIKES!** NO NO NO NO NO NO NO! SKREEEEEEEEEEEEEE! KERRRRRUNCH! AAAAAAAAAAAGH! Bill lies on his back silently screaming like an aborted fetus in a Catholic horror vid. He looks down and sees a length of white bone protruding from his leg. Ugh!

Everything goes wobbly and his life flashes before his eyes. Like it does when your Harley has just collided with a car and you are lying in a pool of your own blood and gunk and stuff.

YOUNG BILL Broad was a four-eyed fat kid and a teacher once wrote on his report card "Bill is Idle". So he was Bill Idle for a while and then, because he knew that one day he would be a rock star, he changed it to Billy Idol. Just in time for punk rock.

He was a member of the Bromley Contingent which meant that he was mates with Siouxsie Sioux and The Clash and he spent 1976 biting people's ears off at Sex Pistols gigs and spitting. Then he was in the totally crap

punk rock combo Chelsea. Then he and Tony James formed Generation X who took their name from a '60s teensploitation trash novel and were the only punk band ever with sex-appeal.

One day he jumped on the next available Jumbo and hit New York like a blond bombshell fired from an 84-ton Iraqi super cannon. Sugar addicted idiot Yank brats took one look at his pert nips and thought "Ahubba hubba! How totally bodacious — give us some of that please, missus! etc."

'Rebel Yell' was a minor hit and a peanut advert here but in the States it was *the* ultimate f—yoo-mom anthem of alienated Reagan-yoof. Bill was beamed into every American home ten times a minute and became — at last — **A MEGASTAR!**

And did it make him a totally drugged up arrogant little shit who thought he was God? Yes! Bill smacked wankers in the mouth for laughing at him. He stripped off naked and made his goolies bounce up and down on stage for a **LAFF!** He did interviews wrapped around naked ladies in bath water that contained so much sperm it looked like Egg Foo Yung. Then he died — according to the rumours . . .

In 1984 he told a magazine: "Drugs don't really alter your perception or anything that much. I mean they do, but I think if you feel pretty much in control of who you are, then drugs aren't really a problem."

Which is the sort of stupid thing you do say when your left nostril has become a major export target for the El Snorto family, 15A Nose-Wobbler Factory Road, The Jungle, Colombia.

I mean, do we really need to ask exactly *what* Bill is singing about on the track 'Trouble With The Sweet Stuff'? Are we talking sex, snort or sugar?

"I've been into all of them really. I've smashed myself on the rocks of all those things . . ."

You've smashed yourself on the rocks of *sugar*?

"Jim Morrison made me think there was hope for me as a singer because I was never really a Robert Plant."



CHARMING HAM



'I'm going to try 96 leers': Billy Idol on the street in Hollywood. Lauren Bacall looks on unamusedly.

"Oh yeah!"

What? Chocolate was it?

"Booze! Hell of a lot of sugar in that!"

You've been addicted to sex?

"Well I guess I f—ed up the way anybody would f— up, especially if you're in, uh, rock 'n' roll. All that 'on the road' stuff night after night . . . All the sweet things in life can go sour. They can all go horribly wrong and you almost end up getting crucified on your own cross . . ."

He rode around in limos and he snocked more Domestos in a week than your average ten toilets see in a year-long diarrhoea epidemic. In a state of coke-frenzy and ego-rot he flew to LA where he was offered millions of drug vouchers to star in a verish of Nik Cohn's *King Death* as an evil rock assassin whose messy murders are shown live on MTV.

Then the tinsel and the bog cleaner wore off and Bill realised

he was up to his neck in the infamous Hollywood bullbabba and sinking fast.

"I saw all the great things in my life turning to shit! There I was trying to be the star of the whole f—ing thing as if I'd been on the stage my whole life! My life was horribly out of control! I was thinking— Wait a minute, Bill! You've just had your first Top Ten solo album and now you're writing a screenplay for a film! Maybe punk rock is about how you can run the whole thing but it's also about doing it when you're in a sane state of mind!"

Are you a punk traitor?

"Well, I would be if I wasn't writing my own songs. Put it this way, if I was only in it for the bread then wouldn't I put out records a lot quicker than once every three years?"

Yes, Bill regained the eye of the tiger! It was just like *Rocky 3*! He pulled himself together, stopped

being such a big headed wanker, made millions more greenies, and his girlfriend, Perri Lister from raunchy dance troupe Hot 'Oh no Mrs Whitehouse, they're doing it with BLACK MEN!' Gossip, bore him a babe— one Willem Wolfe.

"I was going out for a quick cigarette and F—ING HELL! She didn't take any drugs or anything so she was having a really natural birth. At one point, after seven hours, I started crying because it was watching someone you . . . you . . . LOVE and . . . stuff, um, really in *pain*. And then I thought— what are *you* crying for? You've got to help *her*, mate. I cut the umbilical cord and everything and I suppose you just saw this beautiful, magical side of life, the birth of a . . . a . . . LIFE just so wonderful that it was like, um, YOU that was born again. It was WHOOOOOOOOOAAAR!"

Bill clenches his fist and punches the air. This is the stuff!

"After that was all over I was back to being the Bill that I know and love— if you know what I mean. When you see the video you'll know what I mean. I'm in a state of PASSION! It takes me over! It's pure exuberance— that's what it is! I think some people have taken that as a little bit of a caricature . . ."

Is that really Bill then, in the videos with the make-up on, grabbing his cock and giving it the sneer?

"That's kind of natural. When I get the BLAST of the music— I am that person!"

Are you Billy Idol 24 hours a day?

"Well, no. I'm not sneering at my little kid all day long! I don't sneer in all the videos you know!"

Perri left him for continuing to dip his dick willy nilly but Bill handled it. So he was well on the way to being a more mature and fully rounded human being when

SKREEEE! KERRRRUNCH! AAARGH! Which is where we came in.

Bill was lying on his hospital bed surrounded by millions of balloons sent by his rock-mucker Cyndi Lauper and SUDDENLY he was hit by a blinding white light. He received the TRUTH that completed his transformation from bitchin' hot rock 'n' roll sex pervert to decent clean-living Jesus-head. ELVIS spoke to him!

"I was watching this *Elvis '68* thing on cable or something and I could see Elvis was kinda walking through things like 'All Shook Up' . . . but at the end he sings this song 'If I Could Dream'. He takes this song and he belts it out so f—ing great and when you get to the middle bit I was going WILD! And it's funny, right at the end of it he stands back and instead of being all bravado and— Ha ha ha showed *you!*— he stands back like the little schoolboy who sang 'Old

Shep' in 1952 in Tupelo Mississippi, as if a schoolteacher was going to come on and say— Thank you very much Elvis, you sung that very well. Ten out of ten.

"And even lying there with me old broken leg and everything it made me think— Oh f—ing YES! It's like when I went to see the Pistols and all that! YES! THAT'S WHAT WE WANT! And he gets to the middle bit and he starts to lean into the mic and he gets PASSIONATE! That's all I want to see me getting marks for! GREAT BILL! YES! Huh!"

DON'T MENTION THE CRASH HELMET

"DON'T TELL him he should have been wearing a crash helmet!" I am warned minutes before the interview starts. "He'll just walk out."

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Bill walks in. Uh! I feel faint! He has a huge stonker of a fibre glass cast on his right leg! He is wearing dead sexy shades and a black vest. *I can see one of his nipples!*

"How come you weren't wearing a crash helmet then, you silly sod?" I enquire politely.

WHACK! He impales me on his rigid crutch and throws me through the window to land, dead, in the hotel swimming pool. That's what happened. No it isn't.

This is Bill Idol, dude! He is two metres of flesh-as-offensive-weapon lying on a sperm stained black rubber duvet as a huge motorbike bursts from his groin ridden by seven black clad lesbian go-go Priestesses of Satan with whips! Yeeeeeeeeeah! That's what happened!

Really, what we did was me and Billy got down on and our knees and prayed for all the poor people in the world and then he read to me from his *Bible*.

You don't believe me? Didn't you read the *Daily Mail* where we learnt from Bill's mam:

"BILL FOUND GOD AFTER HE WAS CRITICALLY INJURED IN BIKE SMASH"

Eh? Our Bill—Number One satanic sex pervert (according to the Born Again Mad Bastards of TV Evangelism)—doing a no-shag-situation Cliff type Christ trip? Well, the new album, 'Charmed Life' is peppered with Biblical references. And during out interview he didn't levitate, grow any goat horns or sacrifice a single virgin. Oh no!

Bill says he was never a serious fan of the horned one despite all those banners saying BILLY IDOL IS A SATANIST! that get waved outside his gigs.

"I mean, have you ever seen a pentangle on my albums?"

No, and you can be sure that the upside down video crucifixion of his pregnant girlfriend was done in the best, *possible* taste!

"But I have *been* the devil a few times! Uh huh!"

Bill thinks that banning records is like burning books and if in later years he finds liddle Willem listening to something totally disgusting and mind-rotting like U2 he's not going to kick shit out of the gramophone and smash the record with a hammer.

"If anybody did that to me the first thing I did was go out and get another one and slam it on again just to annoy them. With Willem, obviously this is going to be a problem that I'm going to have to face. I'm probably going to have me thrown back at myself a million times!"

Have you become a Born Again Christian?

"Well, no!"

Hooray!

Bill did Religious Instruction at school so's he could get out of slicing up chloroformed pregnant rats in Biology. The wimp.

"I hated Biology. We had this really good teacher who taught us what the *Bible* was *really* about. I thought—Wait a minute! It isn't

just some bloke going around spouting off a load of garbage all the time! It was like, Hey! There were these zealots who were like f—ing guerrilla rebels who hated Jesus because he was advocating peace! He showed me that *The Bible* was about society! It was really exciting! He showed me the WILD side to *The Bible!*"

Do you worry about dying?
"Well, I came close to it! I like to believe that I'm under the protection of God. I believe that we're all under the same spirit or something. I always liked the pantheists, the poems by Dylan Thomas and Wordsworth and people like that who believed that there was God in everything and things like that but, uh, I've got no basis for my belief so I wouldn't go around shouting them at everybody, you know?"

SPUNKORAMA!

LET'S FACE it, when you think of Bill you don't think of choirboys and angels and stuff, you think of 6'3" of tanned, worked out cock meat. Bill may be getting in touch with his spiritual side but there's no way the raunchy son-of-a-gun is going to stop being the Number One rock 'n' roll sex symbol on the seamy, hot, wet and steamy side of the street. He is the male Madonna, the anti-Jason.

I mean, let's take the album track 'Pumping On Steel'. Is that about having it off whilst weight training or what?

"It's about when you're on your bike and you feel the PUMPING THROB of the engine and you're looking at all these lights in all these houses and wondering what's happening in them. I mean, when they look in your window, what's going to be going on in your home? Are you just going to be watching telly and if you are, are you going to be watching something that's going to be BLASTING you?"

"I wanna see PASSION! I wanna see EXCITEMENT! I don't wanna think that if you look in my window your going to see, y'know, me sitting there VACANT! Even though I bet you can sometimes! But in the end I'm thinking that this song has got to be about a really great f—!"



The Anti-Jason in formative Gen X days

"If I was only in it for the bread then wouldn't I put out records a lot quicker than once every three years?"



As he says this Bill's crutch is pointing straight up at the ceiling, his right fist tightly clenched around its rigid, gleaming shaft. Brilliant! And he hasn't stopped yet!

"The WILDNESS!" he yells in that growly puppy dog cockernee voice.

Yeah!—I think—the WILDNESS!

"The wildness you wanna feel with someone else, someone you're really in LOVE with even, er, if the person you FINALLY

come home to after travelling, after all these scenes from all these millions of years . . ."

What is he on about?
"Like the day you finally arrive home is FOREVER!"

Does Bill believe in LUV?
"Er, I believe in, uh, a certain element of romance. I mean I'm not ringing the doorbell with a load of flowers. I mean, it's kinda like my life. I am the LOVELESS and the LOVELESS was PUMPING ON STEEL for RAW SEX whilst I was really searching for RAW LOVE and I've found it in one sense because I do have this little child who I love and who I see loves me . . ."

How does Bill write his songs?
"I was watching this thing where Hall & Oates were doing this thing and he looks out and he sees a delicatessen and it's got a sign saying Open All Night and he sits down at the piano and he goes 'Open all night! DINK DINK DINK and I thought how the f— does he do that? I can't do that to save me bleeding life!'"

One of Bill's new songs is 'Prodigal Blues'. Is he the prodigal son of Punk Rock?

"Well ahahahahaha hee hee hee! Titter ho! I sorta think everybody's a prodigal son really. If you really want to achieve your dreams then you've got to throw away the past to find them! I've been left

HOWLING! CRYING! SCREAMING! And the only sound that comes back to me is the sound of my own voice . . ."

When Bill gets going he makes the average screaming mad Christian TV preacher sound like Geoff Howe in a coma.

"We've had the world BLASTING OPEN since World War Two! MODERNITY! You can jump on a plane and VOOOOOOM! You're in LA or Thailand or wherever! BOMBARDING you! My son! What's he gonna find? He's gonna face something even WILDER! Unless something more CATAclysmic happens! But if it did! If it did that's going to be the WILDEST THING EVAH!"

The new not-Born Again Bill's film ambitions are now rather more realistic. He was down to play Jim Morrison's mate in a film by Oliver Stone but the SKREEEEEEE! KERRRRRRUNCH! AAARGH! put paid to that. Bill is now going to play a film-maker making a documentary about Jim in a film about Jim made by a man who was a fan of Jim and who used to make documentaries.

"Oliver is pretty desperate to have Bill in the film," a Hollywood insider informed me. "He feels that Bill will attract kids rather than his usual audience of baby boomers . . ."

BATHTIME FOR BONZO

THE FIRST thing Bill did when he moved to LA was slam The Doors on his Walkman and set off on his Harley. His upbeat versh of 'LA Woman'—dreadful, banal and grammatically horrific lyrics left intact—is featured on 'Charmed Life'.

"I really liked 'LA Woman'. And, of course, I was meeting a lot of them at the time, er . . ."

Socially?

"Socially, yeah, right . . . 'LA Woman' really influenced 'White Wedding'. Both songs have that PUMPING rhythm. All the way through there's that same driving . . . thing. Jim Morrison was one of the people who made me think that there was really hope for me as a singer because I was never really a Robert Plant, I could never sing WAAAAAAH!"

"Jim Morrison wrote that song as if it were a microcosm of America, an America he was very, very jaded with. I'm not jaded with it, I'm still discovering it. For me LA had always seemed fantastically horrible. Now it seems horribly fantastic!"

Bill has a horrible fascination for us Brits. In Blighty we have *pop* stars and we have *rock* stars. In the States—where the charts are bloated with 'metal' bands droning through vommy maudlin 'ballads'—Bill is none too weird a fish. They're not really bothered that the living breathing Rock Idol is a total contradiction of both his suburban kippers'n'cola upbringing and his punk baptism of spit. And, to tell the truth, nor is Bill. He loves LA despite the vacuousness, the hypocrisy, the nauseating displays of unearned wealth . . . or maybe that's *why* he loves it.

The only problem he faces in this city of rat infested palm trees is not the bums who sneak in and dump in his swimming pool, but the fact that he finds it extremely hard to score his fave DRUGS.

"Oh yeah, I need my fix of PG Tips and Birds Custard. What I do is I get the pot and I warm it up properly and get the tea cosy and put the tea bags in and I get the milk and I wait a certain amount of time and aaaaaaaah! I *can't stand* the way over here they give you a tea bag . . ."

And warm water!
"That's right! They don't even boil it! Of course there are a lot of shops in LA where you can buy things like fruit gums . . ."

A shadow falls across Bill's lithesome bod. A minder taps her watch. I have time for one last question.

Do you think of yourself as a sex object?

"Oh no!"

No?

"Oh No!"

You don't look in the mirror and go—HUH! SEXY BILL! first thing every morning?

"No—and neither would you if you could see me when I've just got up!"

Sleep well, Sexrock fans, heaven is still missing an angel . . .