

New Rock  
Sampler / The First 11  
Chapters

By: Ryan Herrin

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For Suzanne, who can fill a room with a laugh that makes it all worthwhile.

Author's notes...

Before each chapter there is a playlist for the fictional college radio station that the novel is set in. I created all of these from memory of songs that was played back in 1999-2000. I incorporated them with the novel to give a sense of setting. You completist types could listen to the playlists as you go through the novel. I wouldn't recommend it though. There was far too much Limp Bizkit and Korn being played in 1999 for my taste now. Exact dates of release for the songs on the playlist are fudged, so if you see a song that was released in 1997 in a category for new music, good for you. That being said, these playlists are pretty close to the types of music played on college radio back then. Each page of a playlist mean one hour of radio. Take note that the playlists are by no means necessary for understanding the novel and can be skipped. However, they are pretty easy to read and could make it a better experience, so try something new for once huh? Here is a sample of the first half of the first playlist with a breakdown after to understand it:

New Rock 90.3 Playlist

Date: 9-12-1999

DJ(s): Tom the Bomb

Time: **6:00 am**

	Cat.	Artist	Song
1.	<b>P</b>	Marilyn Manson	I Don't Like the Drugs
2.	<b>M</b>	Stabbing Westward	Save Yourself
3.	<b>G</b>	Better Than Ezra	Good
4.	<b>H</b>	The Whitey Herzogs	The Dog
<b>DJ Choice</b>		<u>Pain – Midgets with Guns</u>	

\*\*\*\*\*Break\*\*\*\*\*

**PSA:** Babies in Buckets

**Spot:** Whirlydude Records

**Promo:** The Metal Zone

1. Look for who is the DJ(s): Each of the DJs in New Rock have small clues to their personality by what they write in the blank lines, but don't read that much into it.
2. The music is broken up into different categories at a radio station. At the college radio station I worked at, WVUA, we had five main categories of music rotation:
  - a. (P) Power- More mainstream songs from mainstream bands that are new. These songs were roughly played 20-30 times a week
  - b. (H) Heavy – New songs from a more traditional college band. Local bands with a following pop up here as well. These songs were played 20-30 times a week.
  - c. (M) Medium – Popular songs that have been out for a few months, could be mainstream or underground, or they are songs not popular enough to warrant more plays. These songs got 10-15 plays a week

- d. (L) Light – Songs that were almost cycled out of rotation; they could be up to a year old or not popular enough to warrant more plays. Light rotation meant 1-5 plays a week
  - e. (G) Gold – Gold songs are the ‘goldie oldies’ equivalent in college radio, which is any song that is at least five years or older
3. DJ choices are songs picked by the on-air DJ or requests from listeners taken over the phone.
  4. PSAs are public service announcements. PSAs were required by the FCC as part of the station’s commitment to serve the public over the airwaves. Over the four years I spent at the radio station, we probably only did about ten different announcements, and they were all pretty stupid. This was done intentionally because we were dumb college kids and thought announcing UFO hotlines and Babies in Buckets was more entertaining than blood drives and cheerleader car washes.
  5. Spots are basically advertisements in the not-for-profit world. This is actually the most effective training for someone that wants to make any real money in radio. If you can sell the hot mess that is college radio, you could sell anything to anyone. Shout out Mike and Haley!
  6. Promos are promotional spots for shows at the fictional radio station the book is set in. They are based on some of the shows that I worked with and on when I was a DJ in college.

Happy reading...

Ryan Herrin

New Rock  
by Ryan Herrin

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DJ Choice Pain – Midgets with Guns

\*\*\*\*\*Break\*\*\*\*\*

PSA: Babies in Buckets

Spot: Whirlydude Records

Promo: The Metal Zone

5.	H	Marcy Playground	Sex and Candy
6.	L	Wesley Willis	Mojo Nixon
7.	M	Alanis Morrissette	Thank You
8.	P	Tool	Sober
9.	M	Metallica	Fuel

DJ Choice Pantera – Cemetary Gates

\*\*\*\*\*Break\*\*\*\*\*

Concert Calendar

Spot: Hanson Beverages

10. P U2 Lemon
11. M Everclear Santa Monica
12. G Weezer Say it Ain't So

## 1 Cameron

It wasn't exactly high noon. Sure there was tension and a stare down, but this was not one of those life and death situations. Which wouldn't be readily apparent by looking at Tom. He spoke with the energy of a methamphetamine addled duck in heat. He ran his hands through his greasy hair and pushed his glasses back. Then he pretended not to notice the smudge that he left on them. Tom spoke in loud obscenity to strangers that he was trying to impress desperately. This was his first job interview.

"You don't understand; when I fuck a chick, she stays fucked. Last summer I was with this bitch in Canada and she was screaming 'Oh Tom, oh Tom you're the bomb!' and my buddies heard it in the next room, and that is how I got my nickname, Tom the Bomb. Boom."

Cameron studied Tom the Bomb closely. He wondered if this freshman that looked like Rick Moranis in *Ghostbusters* had actually ever been with a girl, let alone made her scream, let alone that he had the plural of 'buddy' in his life. Still, Tom seemed eager and maybe Cameron could get him to fill the dreaded 6-9 shift in the morning. Peak time in the morning for radio DJs, a death sentence for college students that wanted to party with their parent's money for four to six years. But the kid was clown shoes, his clothes were old and hand me downs from his father that definitely watched Nova. Ogre from *Revenge of the Nerds* would have screamed 'Nerd!' at this kid; there was no way that Cameron would trust this him to navigate a four way stop on the road, let alone a radio station. He looked like a complete yutz, not that Cameron or Jimmy were exactly the Abercrombie & Fitch model cool types themselves. They were radio nerds. They wore ratty old t-shirts of obscure college rock bands that they got for free in the mail every month. Cameron was definitely not a fashion plate; he had worn the same pair of camouflage shorts for three months, and Jimmy smelled like cigarettes and fried dough.



Cameron looked over to the desk across from his at Jimmy, his best friend and program director. Jimmy, wearing a blue t-shirt that reads 'The Force is Strong With This One,' gave a slight nod, seeming amused by Tom the Bomb's obvious fabrications. "Good news Tom, we have an opening in the mornings. It's prime time for radio, and I think someone with your skills would be a great fit for that slot."

"Fuck yeah, I'm going to play a shit ton of Metallica." Tom the Bomb then unleashed the devil horns hand signature. Cameron looked at Tom and wondered how short he actually was. He was shorter than Cameron, but most people are. Cameron had been taller than almost everyone he met since the eighth grade. He was six foot six, but he was not Ichabod Crane tall and thin. His height just made him look thinner than he should be. He knew that the way he ate and the beer he drank would eventually catch up to him, but that would be a problem for a future most likely chubbier burdensome version of him.

"Uhh yeah, about that, you'll have to play the playlist, but you can sneak some of your own picks in here and there," piped in Jimmy. Cameron studied Tom and decided that he was shorter than Jimmy, who was a pretty average height, somewhere under six foot tall, a little doughy, and paler than a fan club president of The Cure.

"What about some hard-fucking-core shit man? I've got to blast some Metallica."

"Playlist."

"Aight, but I'm definitely going to jam some ICP because I'm down with the clown until I'm dead in the ground."

Jimmy stared blankly at Tom until he said, "I have no idea what you are talking about, but don't play any of that weird shit that you and your idiot friends listen to. Follow the playlist I give you."

Cameron also pretended not to know what or who Insane Clown Posse was. It seemed like an admission of a white trash upbringing or that you were the type of music fan to really really like Weird Al past the age of thirteen. Cameron looked at the greasy standard number two haircut and ant torturing glasses on Tom and decided it was more likely that he had spent many Friday nights singing 'Dare to be Stupid' in high school than huffing paint outside of a Powerman 5000 show.

"That's cool, I just don't know how to do any of this radio stuff."

"Don't worry about training and running the board, Jimmy will meet up with you for your first shift and show you what you need to do. And Tom...." Cameron watched Tom squirm a little, fidgeting with his coke bottle glasses. Cameron wasn't sure if he really wanted to be around Tom the Bomb for the rest of the year, but waking up early was out of the question.

"Yeah?"

"Watch your language on the air, if the FCC comes after us for you, you'll be kicked out of school."

Tom brightened, "No fucking problems there."

"Alright Tom, Jimmy and I need to talk for a few minutes before the staff meeting."

"Sure, no problem." Tom said blankly, staring at Jimmy and Cameron.

"Get out you Fuckgoof!" shouted Jimmy.

Tom, realizing that he was being kicked out, "Okay..."

"Welcome to the radio station Angel Eyes!" purred Jimmy.

After the door shut, Jimmy turned to Cameron and both shared a knowing look. "Fuckgoof? Now you're just making them up? Fuckgoof isn't even a thing; no one says that."

“What? He’s fucking goofy. I believe that is a moniker that suits him perfectly.” Jimmy said with pride, knowing that he had used the word moniker correctly. Cameron thought that Jimmy was insecure about his vocabulary around Cameron. He didn’t see why that mattered; they drunkenly slurred most of their time together. “Speaking of monikers, we’re not really going to call him Tom the Bomb are we? He’s more likely to be called Tom the Assistant to the Assistant Manager of the Night Shift at Wendy’s.”

“He’s not so bad, don’t you remember how obnoxious we were as freshmen?”

“I was obnoxious, you were born uptight and old. That kid is more than obnoxious. He’s a menace. How many people do you know that drop fifteen f-bombs and tell an obvious lie about a sexual experience in a job interview?” Jimmy argued.

“First of all, who are you to get tight about someone dropping f-bombs? You had like fifty on the air last year, and relax, it’s not like we’re exactly a Fortune 500 company. We are a 300-watt college radio station and one of the bosses interviewing him is wearing a ‘Star Wars’ t-shirt. And so what if he told an obvious fabrication of his sexual conquests? I seem to remember a certain somebody that would pad his numbers and tell a few hyperbolic tales his freshman year as well.”

Jimmy, realizing that he had been caught, reverted to argumentative Jimmy, Cameron’s favorite version of his friend. Argumentative Jimmy would become wide-eyed and present in the moment. He would also have a bizarre grin leading others to believe that he was lying or kidding. Jimmy didn’t handle his anger correctly and generally would stream together obscenities, weakening his case. Cameron thought that coupled with the bizarre smirk on his face made his friend look batshit crazy.

Jimmy picked at the loose strings from the hole in the knees of his jeans, a grunge look that had fallen out of style a few years back, but was perfectly acceptable at the radio station. “Okay, so it’s that again. You don’t believe me about the sorority girl that I slept with my freshman year that liked to be choked. So what is the problem this time? Is my time line off? Are there continuity issues? What

makes me such a notorious liar this time? What is it Professor?" Professor was Jimmy's first line of defense against Cameron. Later he would call Cameron lanky, goofy, and most likely would die a virgin, despite the fact that Cameron lost his 'V-card' six months before Jimmy. Cameron looked at Jimmy, calculating a decisive blow to end the conflict.

"What was her name?"

"What was her name? Who cares Sherlock? Quit being a dick lint."

"C'mon Jimmy you were intimate with this girl, you choked her in coitus. You may not know her life story, but I believe you should at least know the name of anyone that you have consensual attempted murder sex with. So what's her name?"

Cameron watched Jimmy's eyes dart up looking for a lie somewhere in his head. Failing to find one, he resorted to memory loss, a scoundrel's tool. "I don't know I can't remember her name."

Cameron smiled; he knew that he had bested Jimmy again. Just then, Craig, the station's music director and Cameron's housemate, entered the office getting ready for the first staff meeting of the year. Craig, who was sweating and harried and tan, was running late and would never catch up. Cameron didn't think he could help it; Craig helped run the radio station, occasionally attended classes, had a full romantic schedule, and most nights drummed for his band after his shift on the radio. He was also busy being a full time alcoholic, of course he was late to most things. All of this he did while traveling through campus on a rusted out old brown Schwinn girl's bike that he had 'found' one day his freshman year. The three of them made an unusual group, Craig was athletic and tan, where Cameron was fluorescent light pale and thin, and Jimmy was turning gray with a burgeoning paunch due to his complete aversion to doing things outside.

Cameron, never to miss the opportunity to further put the boots to Jimmy said, "Hey Craig, if I'm not mistaken weren't you entertaining a young lady friend last night."

“I was indeed Cameron, I was indeed.” Craig smiled; he had earned his reputation as being something of a ladies man. A former marine with a confidence that age, experience, and a house with a bar in the back will give you, Craig was a hopeless cheater and routinely brought girls to his and Cameron’s house to avoid his fiancée, Christine. Craig liked Cameron because he paid his rent on time and never lectured him about his infidelities. Cameron roomed with Craig because he hoped that rooming with him might help him meet more girls, plus having a bar in your house helps too.

“Tell me Craig, have you ever been with a girl that liked to be choked?” Cameron asked, smiling as he enjoyed dragging Jimmy through his obvious lie for the five hundredth time.

“That proves nothing!” interjected Jimmy.

Craig smiled, this not being the first time that he had walked in on Cameron and Jimmy busting each other’s balls and inviting him to join in. “Why yes I have, and fellas, you know her.”

“Who!?” This snapping both Jimmy and Cameron out of their antagonizing duel.

“Big Tuck.” Craig said nonchalantly.

“Big Tuck...” Jimmy and Cameron both chanted mesmerizingly staring at the lights. This routine had almost started immediately the last two weeks or so since April Tucker started at the station, earlier than usual for a freshman. Cameron always thought there weren’t enough girls that would hang around the station as it was, so when an attractive eighteen year old shows up wearing no bra, she was immediately accepted into the group.

Jimmy asked incredulously “Seriously do you have to ruin every girl that comes through here with your drippy puss dick?”

“Well if you ever wanted to suck out the poison, we could make arrangements,” answered Craig. “Hey it’s time for that meeting, what are we going to go over? Is the schedule full?”

“Nothing new, same stuff this year as last year and the year before. Before that you’ll have to ask one of the guys that don’t ever seem to leave this place.” Cameron was referencing Mike and

Cubby, who were in their late twenties, ancient for college radio, and still were at the station. Cameron looked down at the fall schedule and it was full, a luxury for any college radio station. "Yeah, the schedule is full right now until Jimmy sexually harasses all of the girls away and the new morning guy comes in drunk and gets kicked out of school."

"So you did fill the morning slot?"

Jimmy brightened, "Yeah, and he's a real cocksman like you Craig, so you better watch out."

Cameron gathered his papers, "Let's not let this meeting drag on too long. I have to student teach later this afternoon."

New Rock 90.3 Playlist

Date: 9-12-99

DJ(s): Cam and Jimmy

Time: 4:00 pm

	Cat.	Artist	Song
1.	P	Ween	Voodoo Lady
2.	M	Devo	Head Like a Hole
3.	G	Blues Traveler	Hook
4.	H	Tuscadero	Kathy Ray

DJ Choice Rancid – She’s Automatic

\*\*\*\*\*Break\*\*\*\*\*

PSA: UFO Awareness

Spot: Hanson Beverages

Promo: New Wave Wednesdays

5.	H	Self	Trunk Full of Amps
6.	L	Vanilla Ice	Zig Zag Smoke
7.	M	Oasis	Acquiescence
8.	P	Nine Inch Nails	The Day the World...
9.	M	Neutral Milk Hotel	In the Aeroplane Over....

DJ Choice RHCP - Warped

\*\*\*\*\*Break\*\*\*\*\*

Concert Calendar

Spot: Gentry Carwash

- |     |   |                           |                            |
|-----|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 10. | P | Flaming Lips              | The Gash                   |
| 11. | M | The Donnas                | Take it Off                |
| 12. | G | Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds | 16 Feet of Pure White Snow |



## 2. Ben

Two weeks into his eighth year of teaching, Ben Rogers felt himself starting to hate the kids already. Through his career there had always been one or two kids that Ben didn't care for. But this year was different. He had an entire bushel of rotten asshole kids raised by obnoxious sitcoms. Ben was fed up. If he wasn't being bombarded with paper work from the county dealing with unfair expectations based on the desire of teenagers to learn, he was attending meetings that would require him to shave at least three times to not have a full beard by the time they were done to discuss the new programs sent down from the county that were only slightly different from last year's programs, but with an entire new lexicon of abbreviations for him and his colleagues to pretend are really important. Ben supposed that every job was like this. The people actually doing the work are always being slowed down by the people that have to justify their non-jobs that paid better than his. High school was really no different from a big corporation in that way.

It wasn't that Ben really hated all of the kids this year; he knew that deep in his heart it was really only two or three or thirty that truly vexed him, but they were really annoying. That wasn't really new; what felt different was the inordinate amount of hangers-on and lackeys to those two or three or thirty that wouldn't be so bad on their own. Unfortunately, the county would not build a high school with three thousand individual classrooms, so the students would have to be grouped in twenty to thirty. Thus insuring a healthy ratio of assholes to toadies for each teaching period. Ben sat at his desk preparing for the next period, 9<sup>th</sup> grade language arts; he had graded their papers yesterday and had considered driving off the bridge on his way to work this morning. They were awful. The majority of kids couldn't put together a sentence, never mind an original or interesting thought. Early in his career, he would include creativity into his rubric for grading. This led to lower grades because kids generally just repeated what they heard on television or read on the internet or fashion magazines. He supposed that they learned it from their parents, except for the reading. Very few of Ben's students would ever

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