

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



**An April Fools' Day** by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | APR 2016

We, Monique (Agent 32) and I (Agent 33) slinked into the One Stop (55 College Street) in downtown Asheville at 10:27 PM. It was a cool and refreshing April 1<sup>st</sup> of 2016. Tonight's musical act of our supreme interest was Blackbird Blackbird, aka Mikey Maramag, the Filipino-American musical wunderkind known for lush psychedelic folktronica. [sic]

We handed over our tickets and then stood at the far end of the bar. I ordered two local microbrew IPAs (India pale ales). There were about two dozen people milling about, murmuring about different April Fools' jokes that they had heard over the course of the day. *I wonder if any of them heard the one about the red rabbit that could no longer hop, and just stood with a shocked looked on its face, as it had eaten an Amanita muscaria (fly agaric) mushroom by mistake, became transfixed on a fractal display, and, well, it was just an actor on the lawn, and, yeah ... my oh my, those granules are already grabbing hold.*

Seven minutes later we noticed a shadowy personage on the dark stage. He started to tune his guitar. *That's probably Chad Valley, the opening act. I wonder what tune he will open with.*

While studying the wall ornaments in the bar, I heard: "Hello Asheville. It's good to be back." *Woah! That's Mikey! He's going on first. Maybe Chad's bus was running late. Glad we didn't wait until 11:11 PM to show up.*

"Monique, that's him: Mr. Blackbird Blackbird."

"Yey! Let's move up front!"

We slithered through the beer-drinking, mostly Caucasian, 20- and 30-something crowd to a vacant space, stage right, about twelve feet from Mikey.

Suddenly the first notes of *Keep it Up* rang out as the spotlight came down upon him. *Ah, he got a haircut. / Glad we made it.*

There was a spattering of applause after the initial song. Mr. Maramag then paused to make some adjustments to his laptop and effects boxes. Soon the opening loops of one of my hallucinatory faves, *Tangerine Sky*, reverberated out of the large speaker to our immediate left. *The three-hour wreck-detoured drive from Charlotte was worth it.*

I shouted, “Oh, yeah!” and Mikey nodded.

Monique started to do her ‘pinay [a lady from the Philippines] spider’ dance. It was a kewl [*sic*] scene all the way around, and in the neural interior.

When *Love Unlimited* started, Monique walked up to the stage and encouraged Mikey. “Go pinoy!” [a Filipino man] she shouted repeatedly.

Mikey turned and smiled. Then he refocused on the front audience.

After the song was over, we decided to sit down in some vacant chairs by a small table. I settled my torso in a position where my Sciatica wasn’t too severe. (I blew my lower back out a week prior.) *Ah, this aint too bad. I think I can deal with this. I know Monique is going to want to dance, though.*

The next tune, *Happy with You*, advanced the mood. People were now getting into the groove. *Flip flop, drip drop. Why do I always have to change the lyrics in my head? Endless amusement, I suppose.*

And very soon our unobstructed view was no more. Slow gyrations commenced here, there, and in between. *Well, I knew it was only a matter of time. I think I'm better off in this chair, though / I want to dance, but my bana [Cebuano for husband] is not up to it, I can tell. He needs to stop playing football with Agent 666.*

When Mikey launched into *Pure*, the joint was freed of extraneous thoughts. Well, except for mine. *So sublime. Great stuff. He's sure-really [sic] in the zone. No doubt about that. He's been to knowhere [sic] early and often.*

Then with *Blind*, our inner eyes were opened. It was music for the perfect cosmic trip. *He's certainly tuned in to the astral airwaves. What a succulent sound. What a fabulous frequency he's riding.*

After that tune, I then implored Mikey to play an older, little, two-minute vignette called *Ups and Downs* before he could start his next song.

He just smiled and said, "I only play that one on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>." He let out a slight chuckle.

I quickly thought about the Friday dates in April and May. *Let's see ... 1-8-15-22-29-6-13. Wow! May 13<sup>th</sup> is a Friday! Where will he be playing then? [not playing on that date]*

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