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Werewolves of London

by BRIAN LOCKHART

?I saw a werewolf with a Chinese menu in his hand,

Walkin' through the streets of Soho in the rain,

He was lookin' for the place called Lee Ho Fooks,

To get a big dish of beef chow mein.?

That's the opening verse of the song ?Werewolves of London,? released in 1978, by Warren Zevon.

Ya gotta love a good werewolf song.

Warren's biggest hit was a song that repeated the same eight chords throughout the entire song.

There have been a lot of songs that ranked high in the music charts that have ridiculous or hard-to-hear lyrics.

Randy Newman's hit, ?Short People,? recorded in 1977, ranked pretty high on the charts in several countries. However, a lot of people, mostly smaller people, didn't appreciate the lyrics, which at one point say, ?Short people got no reason to live,'

?They got little hands, little eyes,

They walk around, telling great big lies,

They got little noses, and tiny little teeth,

They wear platform shoes, on their nasty little feet.?

The song actually points to prejudice against any kind of person, but most people don't hear that. These days, the song rarely, if ever, gets any radio play.

?Louie Louie? was a hit by the Kingsmen in 1963. It has a catchy tune, but it is impossible to sing along with it because the lyrics are garbled and nonsensical.

Other than ?Louie Louie,' it's hard to understand anything vocalist Jack Ely is saying. It was a combination of a badly placed mic, the band playing too loudly, and the fact that Ely was wearing dental braces that produced a recording that sounded like it was recorded on a cassette player in someone's garage.

It has been reported that the song and the band were investigated by the FBI for violating some kind of obscenity laws, but since the FBI couldn't figure out the words, the investigation was finally called off.

The Beatles were one of, and possibly the greatest pop band of all time.

Consider some of the lyrics from the song ?Come Together.?

?He bag production, he got walrus gumboot,

He got Ono sideboard, he one spinal cracker,

He got feet down below his knee,

Hold you in his armchair, you can feel his disease.?

I think Lennon and McCartney were getting a little bored over the weekend they wrote that.

Elton John is a legendary performer with a huge catalogue of music. Unfortunately you can't understand what he is saying half the time.

His song, ?Bennie and the Jets,? is one of my all time favourites, but try asking someone to sing along. Most of the lyrics just can't be understood. It took me years to realize he was saying, ?She's got electric boots, a mohair suit, You know, I read it in a magazine.'

Singer and songwriter Jim Stafford got his 15 minutes of fame when he released a few humourous songs.

?The Streak,? contained the lyrics:

?And here he come, running through the pole beans,

Through the fruits and vegetables, nekkid as a jay bird,

I yelled, ?Don't look Ethel!' But it's too late,

She'd already been incensed.?

Stafford also had a song titled, ?Wildwood Weed,? about two farm brothers who found that chewing on this new weed they found on their property allows them to ?take a trip and never leave the farm.'

You don't hear those songs on the radio any more.

The song, ?Walk Like an Egyptian,? was a big hit for the band, The Bangles. The lyrics don't make a lot of sense, but when you see the video, you've got to laugh.

The video features apparently random people in a big city posing like the depiction of human figures in ancient Egyptian tomb paintings.

Liam Sternberg, who wrote the song, said he was inspired while on a ferry crossing the English Channel. When the ferry hit choppy water, the passengers were all walking with their arms out to balance themselves.

He said they looked like those oddly shaped figures in the Egyptian tombs.

Writing a song isn't easy. You have to have a talent for it.

I've written plenty of music over the years, mostly instrumentals on my keyboard or guitar.

Lyrics are difficult to write unless you don't mind writing really sappy stuff.

Let me leave you with a couple of the best songlines ever written.

?I saw a werewolf drinking a pi?a colada at Trader Vic's,

His hair was perfect.?