

Walking To Gibraltar, Chapter 7: In Which Pictures Were All He Could Feel (First Musical Interlude)

by Frank Indiana

"The Impossible Dream." That time they drove to North Carolina and Ellen threw up and nobody but Dad felt like eating, so Dad stopped at McDonald's and the smell of hamburgers made Ellen throw up again. This time, on Frank.

"Crocodile Rock." On the bus on the way home from the basketball game at Ridgewood. Both teams lost. Chuck Carnahan joked it up anyway. Coach Bernard told the bus driver to pull over. He stood. His forehead practically glowed red. "I don't want to hear one word on this bus," he said. "Not one fucking word."

"Girlfriend is Better." Just after Max was born, their first drunken bacchanal in a year. Astrid grilling his gay art director friend about homosexuality. Frank drinking his face off. He spent the whole next day in bed. Astrid breastfed. Drunken little Max slept all day long.

"Pictures of You." Astrid hated him.

"A Good Year for the Roses." Astrid hated him.

"Moby Octopad." On a fall evening, after school, going to the movies with Max to see The Fifth Element. The cool air, the stars.

"Reminiscing." Astrid loved him.

"Sweethearts." Driving across northwest Illinois. Realizing the song was about Ronald Reagan and they were about ten minutes

*outside of Dixon and shouldn't they go see where ol' Dutch grew up?
And there it was: big and white and stately.*

"Sara Smile." Freshman year. He didn't know Astrid yet.

*"Safety in Self." When his Uncle Wayne died. AIDS. Grandpa
pounding on the coffin. Blaming himself. Unable to distinguish
between homosexuality and a crazy disease.*

*"Norwegian Wood." The girls in their jeans and sorority dance t-
shirts. Astrid Lindeman in particular.*

"Norwegian Wood." Astrid hated him.

