

'Now, who will be the witness/When you're all too healed to see?'¹

The Sad Demise of Nick Cave

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Ian Johnston, writer of *Bad Seed*, the biography of Nick Cave, adamantly denies that the music of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds is Gothic. He cites Bad Seed Mick Harvey's low opinion of the Goth band The Sisters of Mercy, The Birthday Party's (former incarnation of the Bad Seeds) loathing of Peter Murphy and Bauhaus, Mick Harvey's descriptions of the Birthday Party track 'Release the Bats' as a 'comedy number'² and a 'complete send-up'³ as evidence for his case, and as rebuff to the 'Gothic groups who completely misunderstood the band'.⁴ For Johnston, humour and parody are not part of the Gothic repertoire. However, the Bad Seeds' opus is Gothic in a stimulating profusion of ways which create a new dimension to the Gothic aesthetic.

The subject matter of the band's work is of course Gothic. There are songs about serial killers, a whole album of Murder Ballads, songs about medieval saints, veiled women, demon women, child women, mutilated female bodies, tattooed males, songs with sadistic hero-villains, doubles, outcasts, men on the run. There are songs set in macabre fair grounds, in the American South, saturated in Bible-belt religious imagery. They draw inspiration from a recognisable Gothic tradition, from films such as Charles Laughton's *Night of the Hunter* (1955) and they use the film allusions with a startling cross-generic theatricality.

It is not merely in the realm of the verbal or the consciously literary that the work of the Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds is Gothic. The very performativity of the band is Gothic. The band, and especially Cave, do not only sing of the fractured Gothic self, they also stage the fracturing of the Gothic self as event. This event does not only take place within the characters of the performers themselves, but is also played out through the complex dynamic between the band and its audience. As with the work of many Gothic bands the audience relation is charged with a fraught dynamic. Spectatorship of an overwrought theatricality is combined with an empathetic identification with the fractured personae. Fractured and fracturing, the Gothic singer and audience stage the roles of spectator, witness, narrator, penitent, confessor, victim and murderer.

More than this, the very music of the band is Gothic. The songs are belied by a merely literary analysis; the experience of the music is integral to the song. The music is not something separate, although the separation of music and lyric, the Bad Seeds and Nick Cave is something that seems to have happened in the band's last three albums, to disastrous effect.⁵ In the work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds pre-1997 the music is part of the very dialogics or polyvocality of the band.

Gothic music has a distinctly conceptual metalevel. Its apprehension depends on the ability of the listener to identify other imported musical styles, to conceive the music in terms of spaces, places and their significance, in terms of a variety of temporalities, summoning up Gothic pasts; it is a music which also contains many references to cultural phenomena outside the realm of the strictly musical, to film, actors, image and literature. The Bad Seeds are no mere backing group but actors in the songs. The construction of the Bad Seeds' music is based on voices which must not only be understood musically but as speaking voices, overlaid with cultural significance. As much as the Gothic personae that Cave adopts this is a music riven with tensions, evoking archaic echoes, the folk-ballad, the industrial, the nostalgic, the lyric, the cheesy, the filmic. It is a music that thrives on these juxtapositions and lets them speak, undercut, ironise, separate, clash, join and create strange new alliances and meanings.

I will be considering the work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds through the focus of the 1998 video collection, *Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds: The Videos*, which provides a useful overview of the band's career. The opportunity to consider the process of visualisation in relation to the songs helps clarify the specifically liminal nature of the Bad Seeds' use of other genres in a way that illuminates the process of Gothic multi-genericity in general. In some ways video would seem to provide a perfect complement for a band so based on performance (in both literal and metaphorical senses), so inherently theatrical and whose music contains so many film allusions. Yet many of these videos do not work. I am using the videos as indirect witnesses to the nature of these songs; the very tangentiality of this approach is suggestively akin to the qualities of the music I am considering. Some of the videos are unsuccessful specifically because of their overly crude understanding of the nature of Gothic literality, or the phenomenon of staging, or the relation of performance to song. There are others which are not effective in the same way that the songs are not. These too have a valuable part to play in charting the sad demise of Nick Cave.

In the last sections of this article I want to consider the recent change of aesthetic which has characterised the last three albums – *The Boatman's Call*, *No More Shall We Part* and *Nocturama*. The change of aesthetic is very much due to Nick Cave rather than the Bad Seeds, and very much a result of Nick Cave's recent rise to critical acclaim, a phenomenon I discuss below. In the recent work there has been a turning away from the theatricality and the savage irony that characterises so much of the earlier work. The sense of splitness and fragmentation has also been lost – in terms both of the music and the lyrics – as Cave has embraced a new aesthetic. In this new work, voice is no longer something that is explored Gothically, in terms

of Gothic personae, instead the voice has become that of 'authentic' Cave, crudely determined to express himself according to a half-baked understanding of the imperatives of the Romantic Lyric.

In 1999 Nick Cave was invited to curate Meltdown on the South Bank. It was a gesture that pointed to his mainstream critical acceptance, and suggested that, like David Bowie, the curator of another recent Meltdown, Cave is supposed to have come of age. Perhaps more alarmingly, *The Independent* issued a free Nick Cave CD in 2001, and Cave performed one of his most recent songs on Radio Four's *Loose Ends* in January 2003.

In February 2003, Nick Cave was the image on the cover of the first number of a new magazine, *Word*, which featured an article on Cave entitled 'Renaissance Man'. He has become something of a phenomenon, a cultural icon; a man of letters, not just a singer/songwriter. In 1995, Ian Johnston's biography appeared. 1996 saw Cave write a lecture for Radio Three's Religious Services, 'The Flesh made Word', and in the same year he wrote the introduction for Canongate's *The Gospel According to Mark*. In 1998 Cave wrote a lecture on 'The Secret Life of the Love Song' for the Vienna Poetry Festival, also giving workshops on the subject, and performing the lecture at the South Bank Centre in 1999.⁶ Penguin published his *Complete Lyrics* in 2001.

Johnston's biography – *Bad Seed* – makes a curiously effective contribution to the Nick Cave myth, not despite of, but because of the fact he tackles his subject from the outside. We are not let into the mind of Johnston's subject. The death of his father, which Cave has referred to as his Auden-esque traumatic experience, the incident which led to his birth as an artist, is related by Johnston in a single disconnected paragraph.⁷ Johnston did not interview Cave for the book, though he interviewed Mick Harvey (staple Bad Seed and one of Cave's earliest collaborators), Jessamy Calkin (music journalist), Rowland Howard (former Bad Seed) and Lydia Lunch amongst others, and, most notably, gives selections from Cave's almost always disastrous interviews with the music press. By not being interviewed for this work, Cave is depicted with a lack of an accessible interiority. He assumes mythic shape before his awestruck biographer, in a manner akin to Cave's own writing of 'God into existence' in his love songs.⁸ Cave has declared 'Language became the blanket that I threw over the invisible man, which gave him shape and form.'⁹ This indirectness of approach, this obliqueness is what characterises the best work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, and appositely, seems to be what gives the biography its power, as it stands before the myth-making, allowing the Nick Cave/Bad Seeds phenomenon to be its own performative.

The 1998 video compilation released by Mute Records charts the work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds from 1984 to *The Boatman's Call* (1997). Each video is prefaced by a few words from the band. 'Stagger Lee' from *Murder Ballads*, the first on the collection, is disarmingly introduced by Mick Harvey's words 'we don't really like doing videos'¹⁰ – a statement which rings truer and truer as the video progresses.

There is a variety of directors featured (Emma Davis, Roddy Schenck, Angela Conway, Jesse Dylan, John Hillcoat, Christopher Dreher – member of the German band Die Haut – and a couple by Mick Harvey himself) and an enormous disparity in the quality of work. Even work by the same directors can vary wildly. John Hillcoat, who so successfully directed Cave in *Ghosts of the Civil Dead* (1988), produces both one of the best in the collection ('Loverman') and one of the worst ('Ship Song', one of Cave's most memorable songs). Hillcoat's words on the subject are informative. He declares in Johnston's biography that he wasn't happy with the video, citing the constraints of the video formula, Cave's concern with his physical appearance in video – 'generally with video it's back to how he looks, vanity and image' – and also commenting on Cave's wrong choice of style: 'I've noticed with his videos that he's either got to be the loud, aggressive, passionate performer, or he's got to be the ironic humorist.'¹¹

One problem with the video compilation is the preponderance of songs from the tail end of Cave's career. Early Bad Seeds work is not represented because there wasn't the money around to make the videos, or because, when it was, the band preferred to spend the money on 'other things'.¹² Cave's career has carved a familiar trajectory which the video collection charts; his recent popularity has made available greater amounts of money to make videos for bad songs. In Cave's case, accession to critical acclaim seems to have coincided with a loss of irony. Whereas there is no video for the Birthday Party's superbly blackly humorous 'Release the Bats' there are, unfortunately, videos for the songs 'Into My Arms' and '(Are You) The One That I've Been Waiting For'.

The best videos effectively present Nick Cave as the quintessential performer he is. When he sings he is not just balladeer, but all the characters in his songs: villain, victim, commentator. He plays the role of the eternal outcast, the Wandering Jew figure, the villain and victim rolled into one. 'Song of Joy' (which went under the working title 'Red Right Hand II') on *Murder Ballads*, plays with horrid ambiguity on a situation where the supposed desperate bereaved man begging for entry into the family gathering is possibly the murderer of his own wife and children.¹³ The narrator of 'When I first came to town (Henry's Dream)' with its refrain 'There is always one more town a little further down the track' resembles the protagonist of American TV series *The Fugitive*.¹⁴

The more perceptive of the videos pick up on the filmic references which saturate the work of Cave and the Bad Seeds. One important source is Charles Laughton's *Night of the Hunter*. Echoes of the film can be found on the video for 'Where the Wild Roses Grow' when the 'Wild Rose' character played by Kylie Minogue lies in the swamp and the camera pans down a river, recalling the scene of the children's night escape by boat. The wildlife recalls the bizarrely unreal animals on the riverbank, which are all the more beautiful for looking false, posed and frozen into an aesthetic that sears beyond realism. Both 'Red Right Hand' (*Murder Ballads*) and 'The Mercy Seat' (*Tender Prey*) draw on the film, especially on the Robert Mitchum character, the sinister, charismatic, misogynistic, would-

be child-murdering preacher, with 'Good' and 'Evil' tattooed across his fists.¹⁵ 'The Mercy Seat' has its schizophrenic protagonist waiting in his cell for death in the electric chair, 'My good hand tattooed E.V.I.L. / Across its brother's fist/ That filthy five! They did nothing to challenge or resist'. The video by Christopher Dreher visually puns on the written body by splashing the words, 'DIE . . . JESUS . . . SICK' over the screen. Fittingly the video is bi-partite. One part takes place in the cell of the condemned man, the muffled sound quality matched by the grey and white filming. The other part enacts Gothic veiling and the exposure of device by showing the string trio, who play an endlessly circular and frantic motif behind a green screen. Many of the videos have a bi-partite structure, for the most part being divided between live performance and some level of narrative enactment.

With the blonde mother, her eyes occluded, the murder of the innocents and Cave as the madman in the attic of the American mid-West house, the video to 'Red Right Hand' (dir. Jesse Dylan) is one of the most deliberate in evoking Laughton's film. Cave stands gaunt, arms outspread, combining the iconography of Christ and the Devil. All is split in this song exemplifying the fragmentation that characterises so much of the band's work. The video employs split scene-setting – alternately focussing on Cave in the attic, and the murder enactment taking place below. Cave's voice too is split: he is villain, narrator, appalled observer – that part of the villain that is victim. There is a cleavage of personality – a fact which fragments the listener and gives the song a kind of hysterical power.

In many of the videos we witness various stagings of Cave's encounter with his Double. In 'Henry Lee' (*Murder Ballads*) (dir. Roddy Schenck) there is an astonishing erotic and narcissistic encounter with P. J. Harvey, Cave's murderous female Double. Identically dressed and similarly fascinating in their ugly beauty, Cave and Harvey dance in a single-take shot – the slightly amateurish feel enhancing the sense of vulnerability and revelation. 'Weeping Song' (dir. Angela Conway) stages the question and answer confrontation of Cave and Blixa Bargeld, where the Son/Father role playing is confused, as, in the refrains, each takes the other's words, and clerical garb is adopted by both. Both become spiritual fathers and sons to the Father of the other. The song itself with its disingenuous vibraphone, its melodramatic timpanis, medieval church harmonies and clapping draws on the genres of the ballad, the children's rhyme and liturgical chant whilst the guitar evokes a musical terrain reminiscent of the Shadows.

Many of the videos reflect the aspects of performance and theatricality that characterise much of Cave's work. 'Weeping Song' is mesmerisingly staged on a sea of black plastic. 'In the Ghetto' (dir. Paul Goldman and Evan English) (the earliest in the collection) and '(Are You) the One I've Been Waiting For' (dir. Angela Conway) (one of the latest) are both staged in a theatre, deep red. The performance and the music itself are theatrical, but theatricalisation in the work of Cave and the Bad Seeds is a guarantee not of insincerity or falseness but passion. One of the best videos on the compilation, John Hillcoat's 'Loverman', allows the music to speak through the process of *mettre en scène*, and builds the music into the narrative (the ringing of the bells, etc.). Significantly, this is one of the few videos on the

collection that moves beyond the bi-partite structure, containing the scene of hypnosis, the performance and then the motif of flaming writing. Cave's lyrics irreverently and cleverly pun ('R is for RENDER unto me, baby/M is for that which is MINE/ A is for ANY old, how, darling/ N is for ANY old time'). In Hillcoat's video, the words leap from the page, burn the page, and are written on the body – an assembled image that combines the deterministic, the violent and the transcendent. The video features a scene of hypnosis in an early twentieth-century setting, where the implements of science have been Gothicised, the material spiritualised, and the spiritual materialised in the phenomenon of ectoplasm. The band viewed as historical narrative and scientific experiment are (actually) hypnotised and then asked to give 'the performance of their lifetimes'.¹⁶ The performance is in colour, rather than black and white. The theatrical setting has been a mode in which to reach that which is outside the mundane; it is the stuff of transcendence.

'Straight to You', Cave tells us, is one of his 'gloomy, violent, dark-eyed children', his elite who 'sit grimly on their own and do not play with the other songs'.¹⁷ It manifests a Gothic duality of elegiac lyric and rapturous submission. The instrumentation and the unrooted, mediant minor tonality of the first two lines give them their low autumnal tones and sense of restraint. In the third line the entrance of percussion and the tonic major conjure up the brightness and rootedness of the pop ballad. The final verse musically effects the joining of these modes. As Cave sings, 'Now Heaven has denied us its kingdom/ The saints are drunk and howling at the moon', the joyous rhythmic dynamic merges with the mediant tonalities; rapturous submission becomes one with dark elegy. 'Straight to You' transforms the pop genre in its dark affirmation of what Cave calls 'the terror of love'.¹⁸

The video of 'Straight to You' plays on the joint aspects of theatricality and performance, the band performing the verses of the song on yet another stage with the curtains drawn for brief intermissions as stripper, strong man, etc., appear. Throughout the video key images of the song are relentlessly visualised. The apocalypse of the final verse ('For the sea will swallow up the mountains/ And the sky will throw thunder-bolts and sparks') is projected as a storm on the backdrop; the lines 'The saints are drunk and howling at the moon/ The chariots of angels are colliding' are rendered through the image of a mediaeval plaster angel. Perhaps it is that the completeness of this song is not friendly to complementarity, but it seems more likely that the director, Anton Corbijn's conception of the theatrical is too unmoving – it is a conception, a frame – and his understanding of Gothic literalisation is without the ironic awareness that in *The Bad Seeds'* oeuvre becomes transcendence. In this video the stage has swallowed up the band and the theatrical swallowed the actual.

By contrast the responsibility for the videos of 'Into My Arms' and '(Are You) The One That I've Been Waiting For' seems not to lie with the directors Jonathan Glazer and Angela Conway but with Cave's new aesthetic, to which they are remarkably faithful. 'Into My Arms', which purveys a succession of weeping faces in black and white, both suffering and ripe for conversion, has placed itself almost beyond parody. Not surprisingly, perhaps, being directed by one of the most

acclaimed directors of TV advertisements as well as music videos, it deals in the visual currency of advertising – the supposed uniqueness of the individual placed in the belying context of the series – and the pornography of emotion. The expressions of sincerity are on display; we are asked to appreciate the wonderful variety of a God-created humanity, and to be touched by the flowing tears, face on. '(Are You) The One That I've Been Waiting For' has the surface content of irony with none of the irony. The appeal is unrefracted. Both song and video have become reduced to pure content.

'Witness Song' from *The Good Son*¹⁹ provides a good contrast to the humourless monovocality of 'Into my Arms' and '(Are You) The One That I've Been Waiting For'. Where the latter songs are situation-bound utterances, one-way in their address, 'Witness Song' uses situation, its sense of time and place to create tensions, to undermine and to question. What we might call the musical locale of the song is the Gospel Mission Hall. It is a witnessing song of testimonial Gospel – the opening riffs and grooves, once established, provide a backdrop which has no tonal imperative, though it is possessed of great rhythmic drive. The track has all the reverb of the live performance, and particularly in the middle testimonial sections captures the sense of place and occasion: the intimacy of the stadium preacher with the congregation, the public face of the confession. Nick Cave is preacher, asking 'who will be the witness?', the Bad Seeds are the Gospel choir percussively chanting the refrain, Mick Harvey's Hammond is the church organ. Yet, this is not all: this is also a ballad and a love song whose lyrics stray both within and without the locales of the Gospel song, moving from the fog-bound winter port to the walled garden with the 'fountain with the healing waters'. The place and form of the musical world complements, contradicts and contrasts with those of the lyrics.

The song begins as a straightforward Gospel/Soul groove, in the blues scale. By the time it gets to the testimonial passage the musical language has begun to fragment. The bass is sliding up and down, the whispered voices are chanting, there is brushwork on the drums as the Hammond swells, slowly building up a major chord. The instruments are in waiting, held back, the fretting of the guitar merely acting as indicators of the sense of place, organisation, suspense. Up until this point the song has operated within a blues scale with the use of both major and minor thirds. By the time the song climaxes and the narrator asks the woman 'Well, are you healed?' the Hammond has established the major chord. At the moment when the words 'Babe, you are a liar' resound, the piano briefly and dissonantly superimposes the minor third. The blues has fragmented into a clash between the major and minor – it is the moment of emergence of potential, a moment of decision, of dissonance and of opposition. The song ends with a series of questions.

In the earlier work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds theatricality is that which refracts. The music achieves a particularly postmodern sublime, reaching for passion through irony, posturing and pastiche; a re-hash of Romanticism where Romanticism itself becomes the state to be aspired to, the experience of transcendence. Like 'The Cure's Catch' or 'A Thousand Hours',²⁰ the undercurrent of Cave's

'The Ship Song' or 'Sad Waters'²¹ or 'Straight to You' is that of a compelling and impossible mixture of distance and desire, a kind of Keatsian negative transcendence, a yearning which itself is that which transcends, and which Cave more recently has chosen to theorise in terms of Lorca's '“Saudade . . . the desire to be transported from darkness into light, to be touched by the hand of that which is not of this world.”²² In their recent work on Bataille, Fred Botting and Scott Wilson comment that in Cave's 'Deep in the Woods', 'Swampland' and 'And the Ass Saw the Angel', 'the laughter elicited by this belated romantic attitude is never interior enough in its communication to that attenuated outside. Or able to sacrifice itself in sovereign expenditure.'²³ These works of Cave's, for Botting and Wilson, succeed in expressing 'the evacuated inner exteriority of all being'.²⁴ Hence, the predominance of desire itself and the sense of fragmentation as well as the creative possibilities attending the disjunctions between form, content and voice.

Irony in the music of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds is not a device that undermines. It is part of the emotional repertoire, encouraging a fractured multiple awareness. It sets emotion against cerebralisation, identity against awareness and nourishes an aesthetic of longing and tenderness. The savagery of the irony encourages the sado-masochistic self-scrutiny of the Gothic consumer. The Gothic audience is its own tender prey. In the earlier work of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds passion is reached through conceptualisation, irony and parody. Hysteria and conscious theatricalisation are as essential to Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds as Maturin and Lewis.

In recent interviews Nick Cave avows his divorce from his former aesthetic. This has created somewhat of a breach between him and the Bad Seeds. Cave has detailed the band's distance from what he called his 'polemic' or 'his statement'.²⁵ 'I know that there are things which I say in these new songs which some of the band just don't believe. I've had to persuade them to stand by the songs'.²⁶ Blixa Bargeld wanted to know why he was playing on 'The Boatman's Call'. The question is impossible to answer convincingly. This is music without musicians. The chord sequences (based on Cave's school hall piano playing) are banal; gone are the interesting sounds and the polyvocality. On earlier albums Harvey's Hammond organ gave a sense of temporal dislocation, of ironic nostalgia, and added to the almost tangible sense of the variety of texture. Bargeld's wringing of non-guitar noises from his guitar gave the music the industrial edge which rubbed so well against the folk-mythic tendencies of Cave's songwriting. The Bad Seeds' music was dense and yet each voice could be distinctly heard. In its sense of massiveness and pared-down-ness, and the sense of the ensemble composed of distinct individuals it was Mahlerian. As much as Cave's songwriting – perhaps more – the Bad Seeds' song writing signified – it was a music very conscious of what it said and how it said it – nurturing its own dynamics of internal, formal opposition. Now Cave has forgotten he is a musician and that songs are composed of both lyrics and music. By muting the Bad Seeds he has said goodbye to music.

When it comes to analysing why so much of Cave's recent work is so bad there

are many easy answers. It is easy to blame the Dylan factor – Cave’s new-found existential Christianity albeit, as he swears, founded on doubt – or his self-avowed turn to the New rather the Old Testament as inspiration for his songwriting. It is easy to blame the ageing process, hitting forty, his new identification with his deceased father (‘I’m a slightly refined model of my own dad’²⁷) or his self-identification as a father, for the recent disasters of his song writing. However, Cave seems very deliberately to have adopted a new aesthetic, and worse, a new psychology of songwriting. An interview with Jennifer Nine which appeared in the now defunct British music magazine *Melody Maker* (May 1997) gets to the heart of the matter. He repudiates his former writing as ‘an incredible amount of bluster, and a way of using words in order to hide behind them, to obscure what I was actually saying.’²⁸ ‘The Boatman’s Call’, on the other hand, is ‘just making a record about the way things are and have been over the last couple of years.’²⁹ Cave has entered the world of ego-psychology, concerned with personal expression rather than the art form, concerned with message – and sending ‘private messages’ through his songs. He now thinks purely in terms of content. Nick Cave, by this point has ceased to be interested in, and no longer plays with genre. He has fallen prey to a badly understood, and worse realised, aesthetic of the Lyric. He has commented that whereas before he employed other voices now he can trust his own voice (which is a mistake – Cave can’t sing in tune). He has abandoned ‘voice’ as persona, as a contingent, expressive device and embraced ‘voice’ as individual authenticity, claiming that he now writes ‘Without hiding behind metaphor.’³⁰ His new aesthetic is anti-Art. It is the opposite of Emily Dickinson’s dictum, ‘Tell all the truth, but tell it slant’.³¹

Nick Cave has fallen prey to sincerity. The more sympathetic Cave seems to be in interview the worse his art becomes. He has swallowed the myth of wholeness. He considers himself healed. He has failed to divide artist and man; abjuring splitness and embracing unification. He has substituted the myth of self for the myth-making and myth-abusing of the band. As *The Good Son*’s ‘The Witness Song’ asks: ‘Now, who will be the witness/When you’re all too healed to see?’

Notes

Thanks to Robert Lee for many stimulating conversations which have contributed much to this essay.

- 1 Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, ‘The Witness Song’, on *The Good Son* (Mute Records, 1993).
- 2 Ian Johnston, *Bad Seed: The Biography of Nick Cave* (London, Abacus, 1995), p. 80.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- 5 *The Boatman’s Call* (Mute Records, 1997), *No More Shall We Part* (Mute Records, 2001), *Nocturama* (Mute Records, 2003). This article was written before the release of *Abattoir Blues/The Lyre of Orpheus* (Mute Records, 2004).
- 6 The lecture has since been released on CD by the King Mob label (*The Secret Life of the Love Song, The Flesh Made Word: Two Lectures by Nick Cave* (King Mob, 2000) as well as printed in Penguin’s *The Complete Lyrics 1978–2001*.

- 7 Nick Cave, 'The Secret Life of the Love Song', in *The Complete Lyrics 1978–2001* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 2001), p. 6.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Introductory words to 'Stagger Lee', *Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds: The Videos* (Mute Records, 1998).
- 11 Johnston, *Bad Seed*, pp. 270–1.
- 12 Introductory words to 'In the Ghetto', *Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds: The Videos*.
- 13 *Murder Ballads* (Mute Records, 1995).
- 14 *Henry's Dream* (Mute Records, 1992).
- 15 *Tender Prey* (Mute Records, 1988).
- 16 Introductory words to 'Loverman', *Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds: The Videos*.
- 17 Cave, 'The Secret Life of the Love Song', p. 13.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 19 *The Good Son* (Mute Records, 1990).
- 20 *Kiss Me, Kiss Me, Kiss Me* (Fiction, 1987).
- 21 *Your Funeral, My Trial* (Mute Records, 1986).
- 22 Cave, 'The Secret Life of the Love Song', p. 7.
- 23 'Acephale' in Fred Botting and Scott Wilson, *Bataille* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001), p. 125.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- 25 James McNair, 'Return of the Saint', *Mojo*, March 1997, <http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Towers/5248/mojo.html>.
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 Jennifer Nine, 'From Her To Maturity', *Melody Maker* (May 1997), http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Pit/6714/ca_intv1.html.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 Emily Dickinson, no. 1129, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (London, Faber, 1975), p. 506.

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