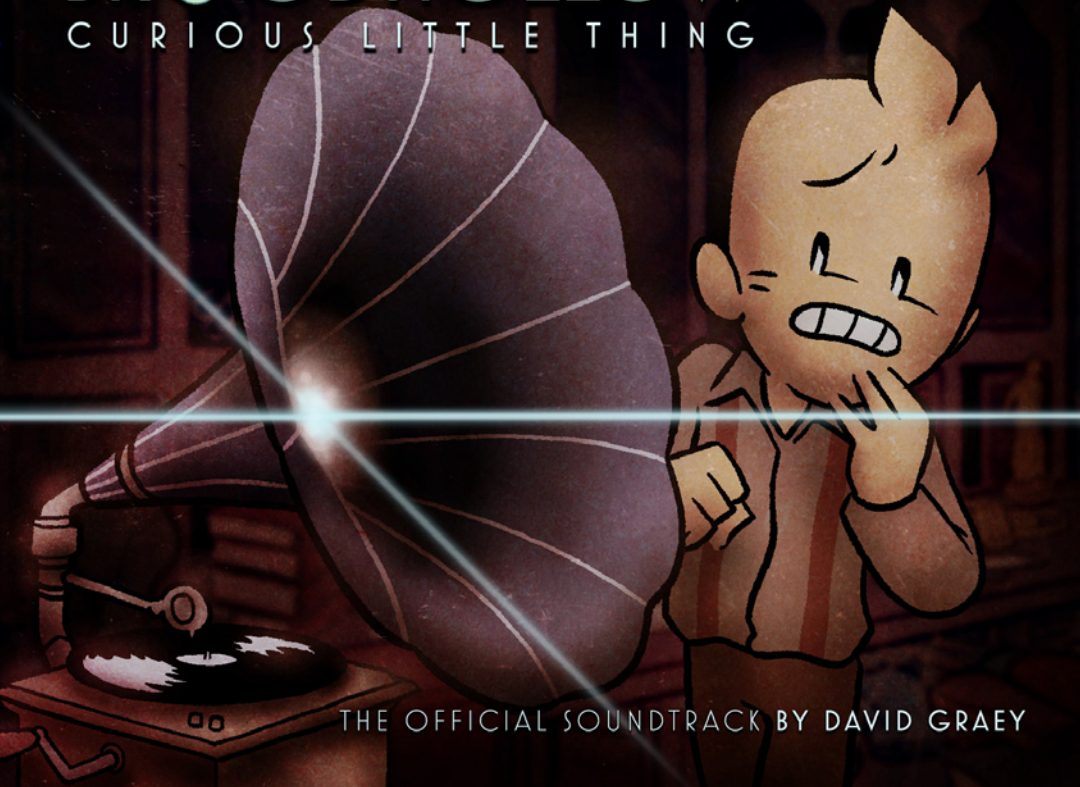


BROODHOLLOW

CURIOUS LITTLE THING



THE OFFICIAL SOUNDTRACK BY DAVID GRAEY



BROODHOLLOW and CURIOUS LITTLE THING are © 2014 Kris Straub.
Music is © 2014 David Graey. All rights reserved. Unlicensed duplication or modification,
whole or in part, is prohibited.

DAVIDGRAEY.COM

BROODHOLLOW.COM

FROM THE COMPOSER

BROODHOLLOW IS LIKE A PERFECTLY TAILORED VENN DIAGRAM. It sits at the intersection of unnerving cosmic horror, clever character driven story, and textural *ligne claire* art. I've always been a fan of contrasting elements; in skilled hands the differences make each aspect shine the brighter. And I don't know of anyone in comics who handles such contrasts with the deftness and emotional impact that Kris Straub does.

Reading the first few panels, I was hit with a major dose of creative catalyst. I was inspired. I work as a composer for film, and when your day job relies

on creativity, you come to value genuine inspiration very highly. I wrote some rough drafts, and toyed with the setting in my spare time. When the Kickstarter came around and Kris announced stretch goals, including an album, I wrote him directly and told him I'd been writing music inspired by *Broodhollow* since that first strip. He kindly asked to see some of what I'd done, and this album came about. I can't say thank you enough, Mr. Straub, for letting me visit your world.

When it came time for recording, I made an effort to get my hands on as many period-appropriate instruments as possible. I think it contributed substantially to the authenticity. I borrowed some, bought others, and ended up with a surprisingly eclectic and beautiful bunch of instruments. One in particular is worth a side note. My paternal grandfather bought a guitar while he was serving in the South Pacific and Australia during or before WWII. It's a beautiful Armstrong Orchestra archtop f-hole guitar, and sounds so jazz age. I never met the man. He died when my father was eighteen. My dad can't remember his father's voice, but he can remember him playing this guitar.

This album is a bit unusual. It's somewhere between program music (a musical illustration of a narrative) and soundtrack (music underscoring or accompanying visuals), with a few dashes of period-pieces thrown in for good measure. We cover a lot of stylistic ground, from folksy rambling to impressionism to modern soundtrack composing, and plenty in-between. It's difficult to write directly "scary" music when you're not scoring to picture for, say, a scary movie. It's also difficult to do without resorting to cliches. It's even more difficult to represent the kind of slowly building, dawning-realization-horror that Kris does so well.

I've done my best to create a backing track to the story, and to do *Broodbollow* justice. There are some pieces here that are discordant, chaotic and that you may find unpleasant. They're supposed to be.

Thank you so much for listening, and I hope you enjoy.

DAVID GRAEY



7:28AM
SHT.

ABOUT THE BACK ROOM,
WHERE I KEEP THE BOOKS.



LEARN SOMETHING NEW
ABOUT YOUR GREAT-
UNCLE'S ROOM?

NOT REALLY.

OF THE TWO ROOMS IN THIS
SHOP, TURN OUT THE ONE WITH
HIS BLOOD IN IT IS MY LEAST
FAVORITE.



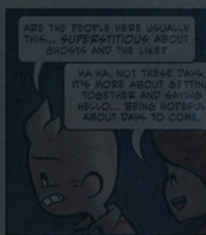
SO WHAT? DUSTY
I'VE ABOUT 16 ANYTHING
CLOSED TOMORROW?

NO, NO, IT'S THE
CELEBRATION TO
IT'S AN OLD, OLD
IN BRUCE HO...



SAD WHAT?

SAD BEING EVIL,
ALL THAT, AND THEN HE
CELEBRATES THE GOOD
IN THE YEAR AHEAD.



ARE THE PEOPLE HERE USUALLY
THAT... SUPERSTITIOUS ABOUT
GHOSTS AND THE LIKE?

HA HA, NOT THESE DAYS.
IT'S MORE ABOUT GETTING
TOGETHER AND HAVING
HELLO... BEING HOPEFUL
ABOUT DAWN TO COME.

© 2011 KRII STRAUS



I'M GONNA FETCH CHIEF BELKNAP!
SUPPOSE THESE CREATURES CARRY
MALARIA OR SOMETHING!

WHERE?
IRISH!

AREN'T A SMART GIRL
PROBABLY SENDS INSIDE! YOU'D
BEST GET TO WHEREVER YOU
CAN - HOME AS WELL!

AAAA! GET AN
GET AWAY



WE DIDN'T DO A VERY
GOOD JOB, DID WE?



NO...
THIS WASN'T
POSSIBLE

FROM THE AUTHOR

WHEN DAVID CAME TO ME ASKING IF HE COULD PLAY IN MY PLAYGROUND, I SAID NO. *Maybe not “no” outright, but there was more than a little no in it, I’m certain. I am very precious about my worlds. I hadn’t expected to be so precious about Broodhollow, a comic strip that was designed to work as a single story — were it to fail completely.*

*My long-running sci-fi webcomic effort *Starslip* was wrapping up after seven years, and I had been looking for my next project. For a while I was sure it’d be fantasy — it seemed like a challenge, because I never liked fantasy*

but could never figure out why — but the longer I spent on it, the more I realized my heart wasn't in it. I was looking forward to drawing some horrible monsters for that project, and turned my attention there.

I hadn't expected to love *Broodhollow* as much as I do. The main character, Wadsworth Zane, is just me shifted down and to the left. His OCD-adjacent fears are taken straight from my own, and it made writing *Curious Little Thing* an oddly personal affair. I think that feeling of authenticity made it connect with readers in a pure way: I wrote what I knew.

Curious Little Thing, the first book, is a fairly open-and-shut story intended to stand on its own. I was ready for *Broodhollow* to be met with an emphatic “that's cool, I guess” and that would be the end of it. At least I'd get a complete volume out of it that I could be proud of. (I'm very happy to have discovered that was not the case.)

David appeared out of nowhere and asked me to listen to something he'd done for *Broodhollow*. I was very skeptical! And cranky! *Broodhollow* was my playground, after all! But I was a little intrigued.

After hearing the first few tracks, I went from precious to impressed. He had my approval, and continued to nail the mood with each track he sent along to me. David eventually succeeded — he had forced my door from closed to open.

Broodhollow is a nice little playground, but it's more fun when you invite others in. Thank you, David, for your talent and your care. It shows.

And if I were you, I'd check my closet door before listening.

KRIS STRAUB

CAN'T FIND A DOOR.
CAN'T FIND ANYTHING. IT'S ALL
SEALED. ALL CLOSED.

WHO'S
THERE?

WH-WHERE
AM I??

A PERFECT 6 PAGE
FOR HIS WORK

AUUGGHHH

WHO ARE YOU?

LET ME GO,
YOU MONSTER!

NO MORE TIME
NO MORE TIME
DROPPING
OF A
MOM
FIRE

THIS POGT!
THE WOOD W...
WEAK!

WH-WHAT ARE
YOU GONNA DO
WITH ME

HHHSSSS

EEEEEEEEEE

BRAREN

1

WELCOME

DAVID. *Found in a bulk purchase of '78 records, most of them unwritten blanks, from the estate auction of the late Walter Earl Elliot. The disc bears no labeling aside from the Victor brand label and patent info. Elliot Records was one of the only recording centers in West Virginia, and began producing one-off pressings in 1918. This disc is thought to have been made between 1918 and 1920, while Elliot was documenting local folk musicians and was still unfamiliar with the complexities of recording.*

KRIS. I thought it was odd to start the album off with 2:51 of static, but it sets the mood pretty well.

2

THE PATIENT IS IN

DAVID. I wanted this piece to capture a bit of the self importance and bombastic nature with which Angstrom conducts himself, and a touch of the Germanic psychologist he frequently refers to. At the same time, much of the humor hinges on his personality; he often serves to lighten the mood and creates some of that wonderful contrast. This piece outlines the events in one of Zane's sessions.

KRIS. What a powerful theme to start the album with! I can clearly see Angstrom strutting in his library, pacing along rows of books as he explains to Zane exactly what's wrong with him.

3

THE PATTERN

DAVID. *The Pattern* is a reflection of early 20th century impressionism, with a focused theme and variation that I could use as the glue of the soundtrack. Nearly every phrase in *The Pattern* is manipulated, twisted or somehow spun to form all of the thematic content in this album (excepting period pieces). I wanted to mirror the story; to create a cohesive, thematically driven whole that always connects back to *The Pattern*.

KRIS. This is one of the first pieces I heard and one of my favorites. I love the idea of music that contains a phrase that gets used in different ways to suggest various meanings. Zane's *Pattern* crawls around the borders of this musical space. At times it even seems uplifting, as though it's offering the answer he desperately craves.

4

DOOR-TO-DOOR ENCYCLOPEDIA SALESMAN

DAVID. *Another treasure found in the estate auction of Walter Earl Elliot, this peppy ukulele recording is hand-labeled with the following lines: 'Door To Door Encyclopedia Salesman', 'Eugene Henry', 'BH4'. The record is in unusually good shape, leading one to assume the audio anomaly heard was present at the time of recording.*

KRIS. A jaunty bit of hat-doffing fluff to accompany Zane's beflopped attempts to sell a trunk of encyclopedias. You can almost hear when the door slams shut. But something follows after.

5

ARRIVAL

DAVID. This piece was inspired by the opening strip; the image of a train passing under the BROODHOLLOW title. I really, really love this image. It so effortlessly encapsulates the feel of a very nuanced story. I tried to replicate that representation with this piece.

KRIS. Interestingly, the overlaid BROODHOLLOW text on the opening scene of the story is one of the elements I worried about the most. I was hesitant to even use traditional sound effect words — anything that would pull the reader out of the story's visuals. At any rate, what a lovely and dark piece this is.

6

CURIOUS LITTLE THING

DAVID. A quiet, sleepless hotel room. Something comes to visit. An auditory scene, rather than a traditional composition.

KRIS. Great use of roaring room tone, one of the great and secretly unsettling audio elements in a musician's toolbox. Wonderful ending.

IRIS

DAVID. I wanted Iris to be musically represented by one of those heartbreaking celtic folk tunes; the kind that has a simple, lyrical melody and isn't directly sad, but carries a profound capacity for gettin' folks all misty-eyed. This is my best effort at distilling that emotion.

KRIS. This lends so much depth to poor Iris. She manages a smile despite everything that's happened to her, including the things she's forgotten. Really wonderful.



ANTIQUES AND ANTIQUITIES

DAVID. This represents a cluttered, discordant and quite menacing environment. I envisioned sitting in silence surrounded by all the items in the antique shop, with the steady ticking of an old clock, while the ghosts of objects come into perception as your hearing focuses.

KRIS. There's nothing more unpleasant than an old piano trying to sound pleasant.

9

LOCAL FLAVOR

DAVID. *Eugene Henry's last known recording, made in 1932 in Los Angeles, CA. One of a very few musicians born in the municipality of Broodhollow to find a career outside the state. Henry died less than a year after this record was made during an uncharacteristic trip back to his hometown. He was at the height of his commercial success thanks to the popularity of his short-lived musical comedy radio program "O, Henry!". Henry plays a Banjolele and leads a small band in this damaged recording.*

KRIS. Something must have called to Mr. Henry. It seems like all Broodhollow citizens' successes are short-lived.

10

OUSTER EVE

DAVID. *Zane's* melancholy is a core component of his character, and this piece opens with his theme. Things quickly go south as leathery wings flutter closer.

KRIS. This was *the* first piece David let me hear, and I loved *Zane's* theme phrase as the opener. There's so much polite hesitance in it.

11

SWITCHWATER

DAVID. *Recorded at Nobles, a Bar and Music Venue in Charlottesville, VA, in 1959. It is likely that this is an adaptation of an older song, as the subject matter would place the original writing during prohibition, and references Broodhollow's own Switchwater, including many of the phrases used in advertising the drink. The multiple solo breaks and trading back and forth was not common practice for that time, so it is assumed that these were added during the adaptation.*

KRIS. This recording reminds me a lot of the psychedelic rock band H.P. Lovecraft which formed in 1967. Odd to hear that type of sound in 1959...

12

STITCHES

DAVID. Looming, monumental fear is revealed as something strange, ungainly and just a little bit pitiful. But every bit as dangerous. This piece features strings played with a variety of unusual objects, from razors to paperclips. The second half is a lurching, vaguely ragtime theme for the antagonist.

KRIS. Let's take a moment and feel sorry for this wretched figure. It spent so much time in the dark with only a twisted, hate-born immortality to reflect on. I love that the piece is every bit as strung together as its focus.

13

DUST AND BONES

DAVID. Dawn breaks, bringing sweet relief. Nightmares are banished back to the dark and fears put to rest. But victory can fade quickly. And night falls again. This piece is grandiose and sweeping modern soundtrack music with a slavonic choir.

KRIS. In the end there is triumph! A fitting climax to the story. I feel like the camera is soaring above the town, leaving our heroes behind, just starting to fade to credits — then rushing back in on the last scene a final time, as though it had forgotten something.

BROODHOLLOW.COM



PUBLISHED BY CHAINSAWSUIT STUDIOS, LLC