

*Veedon Fleece* - Was a favourite of mine simply because it bears the the most resemblance to *Astral Weeks* (which means not much), but it has a fair amount of forgettable material. Though Van often doesn't make sense lyrically, he goes way off the deep end here. "Fair Play," "Linden Arden Stole the Highlights," "Cul De Sac" and "Who Was That Masked Man" are heart breakingly gorgeous. Combine half of this with half of *St. Dominic's Preview* (that's what home taping is for) and you have a flippin' masterpiece.

*Wavelength* - A sell out, but fans may actually enjoy hearing Morrison do pop - it's refreshingly unpretentious. Completely listenable, if not particularly moving.

*Into the Music* - The last blast of transcendence from Morrison. One of his most consistent efforts, though the voice has declined slightly. There's not much to say about his great stuff, it's just... great. Ah, but I won't have to worry about that soon enough.

*Common One* - Closer to *Into the Music* than one may be led to believe. His babblings about poetry are truly wacko ("Did you ever hear about/ Wordsworth and Coleridge, baby). Two songs clock in at a sleepy eyed fifteen minutes each. Nonetheless, it is a subtle and fairly lovely work.

*Beautiful Vision* - His last great album. Disturbingly, female back-up singers carry the bulk of the vocal weight. Nonetheless, the title is apt.

*Inarticulate Speech of the Heart, Poetic Champions Compose, No Guru, No Method, No Teacher, Avalon Sunset, Enlightenment* and *Hymns to the Silence* - I refer to this stage as post-orgasmic Van (whether that's because this stuff sounds limp or satisfied of what is for you to figure out). The cold hard truth is that I just don't give a good goddamn about this stuff one way or the other. I mean, they're all good, but you only need one. These albums even look boring - anything with a fuckin' swan on the cover can't be too thrilling. Also disconcerting are his constant ramblings about poetry and philosophy; he used to make the art, now he hails others'. After getting through all of one of these albums (probably an hours worth of muzak), I feel like hurting someone. Van Morrison can grind this stuff out in his sleep, as his exhausting prolificacy proves.

*No Professor* is often seen as his best album of the

eighties, but its virtues are lost on me (though hearing him sing about "gardens all wet with rain" again was nice). *Enlightenment* is one of his better marshmallow efforts, and contains the minor hit "Real Real Gone" (hearing the man get up over twelve beats per minute is downright exhilarating nowadays). His latest, *Hymns to the Silence*, is too much of a dull thing.

Phew, that came out a little harsher than I'd intended. Maybe I demand too much from Van. After all, he consistently puts out quality, light music. Guess I'm just too damn macho.



*First Things First*  
The Headhunters  
(Eureka)  
By Kirby Ferguson  
  
Bleah.



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