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## Tim & Jeff Buckleley

A State Of Grace

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SEPTEMBER/  
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# State Of Gra

It's 40 years since Tim Buckley died of a heroin overdose. And 18 years since Jeff Buckley was swallowed by the Mississippi River. *A State Of Grace* is a world-premiere tribute concert to the Buckley's' music, curated by guitarist Gary Lucas. Lucas was there at the beginning of Jeff Buckley's career and wrote the memoir *Touched By Grace*. The concert will see Lucas and his band Gods and Monsters backing a cast of distinctive singers: Martha Wainwright, Cold Specks, Casper Clausen, Willy Mason, Camille O'Sullivan, and Steve Kilbey.

In *Touched By Grace*, Lucas describes his first meeting with Buckley, at a Greetings From Tim Buckley Concert at Brooklyn's Church Of St Ann in 1991:

Suddenly, this skinny, longhaired kid who had been lounging against the wall inside sprang forward to confront me, rolling and popping his eyes, intensely vibing me with his own personal voodoo.

He looked electric, on fire - as if he was about to jump out of his own skin. He was the very image of the young Tim Buckley - same sensual, red-lipped mouth, same sensitive, haunted, blazing eyes. He was a beautiful boy: so charismatic, so handsome, his chiseled face, both angelic and demonic.

This was obviously Jeff Buckley.

He spoke first, in a soft but excited and intense high register: "Hey man, I'm Jeff... Jeff Buckley! And you're Gary Lucas! Really glad to know you - I'm a HUGE fan of yours - I read all about you in *Guitar Player* - I know your work, man! I LOVE what you did with Captain Beefheart and I love what you were doing just now in there!"

Jeff gestured toward the chapel.

"Thanks, Jeff," I said. "You saw us rehearse?"

"Yeah, and it sounded REALLY cool," he replied, in a breathy, intimate tone, like he was confiding in me. "Listen... can we get together soon and work on 'The King's Chain'? Do you know the song? From Tim's *Sefronia* album. Hal thought it would be a really good number for us to do."

He was imploring me with big eyes, like a puppy dog.

"Sure. I know most of your dad's early work - I loved your dad's stuff you know - but I've got to bone up

on this one first. And I have to split now. Why don't you come by my apartment tomorrow after I've had a chance to work up an arrangement of this song? I live in the West Village, we can rehearse there."

"Cool! Sounds good."

Jeff smiled, dazzling me with a thousand-watt grin that lit up the gloomy church. Seducing everybody into his own personal orbit was very easy for him. "How long are you in town for?" I asked.

"Dunno, not sure... maybe just for this one show. Then I've got to go back to LA. I just came here to pay my respects to my dad - but you know, New York is SUCH a cool place."

I gave him my address and set up a meeting for the next day. I really liked the guy on first impression - what was not to like? He had such a sweet intensity. There was a touch of the ragamuffin orphan and the strange foundling about him - kind of like a young Heathcliff.

And I was really attracted to his wiry energy - he was so on, so present - burning with an electricity that was totally in the moment.

His essential sweetness co-existed with an almost demonic intensity. So, with those impassioned penetrating eyes alternately entreating and boring right through me, I felt compelled to ask him a very corny question, superstitious guitar magician that I am:

"So Jeff, uh - what's your sign?"

He smiled that disarming smile again.

"Scorpio - can't you tell?"

He had the reflexes and the lethal sting of the scorpion all right - as I was to find out.

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PHOTO BY MERRI CYR

## GARY LUCAS TALKS ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR A STATE OF GRACE, AND HIS TIME WITH THE BUCKLEYS. By Christopher Hollow

### Has Gary Lucas made his peace with Jeff Buckley?

It's the question that's begging to be asked. Lucas is in his Manhattan apartment, recalling a time in the early '90s when he and Buckley were tight collaborators. He describes the sofa where Buckley sat when they were composing songs. "It's the same sofa," he says. "I'm in the same apartment."

It was Jeff Buckley's first real break - joining Gary Lucas's band, Gods and Monsters, as their singer. Buckley was impressed by the name, he was impressed by Lucas's background that included playing with Captain Beefheart. Lucas was knocked out by that voice.

It was a fabulous opportunity for both musicians. Lucas had a contract with Columbia Records while Buckley was slumming it in LA, unsure of himself and his direction. The only money he was making was as a roadie for *The Commitments*, who were touring the US to play shows and promote the movie. It felt a long way from a career of any kind.

Together they wrote a number of songs including 'Grace' and 'Mojo Pin', songs that would eventually serve as tracks 1 and 2 for *Grace*. The relationship, however, went pear-shaped relatively quickly. Columbia Records dumped Lucas and later persuaded Buckley to sign on as a solo artist. By the time Buckley recorded his debut their relationship was frosty. The songs, meanwhile, remained. Buckley could ill-afford to shed such quality material.

In recent years, Lucas has penned a memoir, *Touched By Grace*, which detailed their relationship. He's released an album - *Songs To No One* - that feature the demos they made together. He's acted as a consultant on the 2012 film, *Greetings from Tim Buckley*, starring Penn Badgley and Imogen Poots. He's also musical director for *State Of Grace*.

### What was Jeff like as a personality? Mercurial is the word we always hear.

That's a good word to describe him. He could be, on any given day, incredibly sweet and charming. When he really turned on the charm, he exuded a charisma that was just infectious. I mean, everyone fell in love with Jeff. Men and women. He was able to gather people around him because of this side of him. There were other times when he would lapse into a moody, brooding side to him. It would just be, 'I wonder what he's thinking?' It seemed like he was carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. So there was a yin yang thing going on there. I have to say, for most of the time that we were partners, we were getting along great. It was just a pleasure to work with him. He was the best collaborator. I mean, the music just really flowed out there between us. We were very simpatico. That's the part I like to choose to remember.

### It sounds like you've made your peace with Jeff?

It's true, we had a wild ride and it was tough after it crashed, for me, in particular because it was so good. I felt sad about the separation and, after he died, it was really, really tough for me. We'd just started back collaborating. He'd asked me for music for his follow up album to *Grace*. I sent him some stuff and he said, "It's beautiful, send me some more." I didn't know what was going to become of that, but I was hoping for the best. Then he invited me to sit in at a party that was in front of a lot of great people in New York. Lou Reed, Laurie

Anderson, Tom Verlaine was there, Lenny Kaye. We did 'Grace' and everyone went crazy. I was feeling, like, "Wow, I still really love this guy plus I feel like we've got this telepathy on stage." I didn't have to look at him, he didn't have to look at me. We were just rocking and rhythm and the audience went crazy. That was the last time I saw him. I went into the dressing room to shake his hand and thank him and he was off to Memphis. I was just thinking, "I know I'll be working with this guy again because we've got a thing and it's really obvious to him, too." He knew it. So, when I heard about his death, I was shattered. It wasn't just the loss, personally, of a great friend and creative partner, but it was like, "what about all those great songs we could've done?" I felt robbed of this.

### Tom Verlaine told me Jeff was a "great singer, great songwriter. I thought he was the one guy of that generation that was really super-gifted, to tell you the truth. I don't know anyone else that was like him."

Oh, yeah. He was just the greatest young vocalist, ever. I heard him sing and I was like, "Wow, this is something else". Where it was coming from was a level above anything that I'd heard previously with other vocalists. I mean, I've worked with a lot of great singers and a lot of idiosyncratic singers. Captain Beefheart, Lou Reed, Nick Cave. Great vocalist who all have their own trademark stylistic thing going on. With Jeff it's just pure. What he was able to do vocally was like a beautiful waterfall. It was a cascade of silvery notes that could pour out of him. He could do amazing achievements with it. It was like working with a great opera singer, but it was never forced. I agree with Verlaine, he was in a class by himself, vocally.

### 'Mojo Pin' and 'Grace', the tracks you co-wrote, are obviously centrepieces for the *Grace* record. Tracks 1 and 2. These were written when Jeff joined Gods and Monsters?

I assembled two instrumentals and I gave them the titles - 'Rise Up to Be' and the other one was called 'And You Will'. They were both little titles to encourage Jeff to join me in New York - "And you will become the rock star of your dreams. Rise up to be and join me in this band." It was also a message to myself, too. So I sent them on a cassette, he got them and said, "Great, I'm working on them". Then he came to New York soon after and he was in town working on a band doing the songs from the film, *The Commitments*. He was playing parties to promote that movie. He stopped over at my apartment and said, "You know that song 'Rise Up To Be'? Now it's called 'Grace'." He whipped out this book that he carried around with him, one of those blank artistic notebooks with a black cover and it had unlined paper. He had all his dreams written down and poetic imagery, lyrics he'd written, poems and little doodle sketches. He sat on my sofa and said, "Okay, start playing". I have a tape of this. I started the riff that started 'Grace'. These are my riffs and the harmonic structure of these things are mine. So, he started to sing: "There's a moon asking to stay, long enough for the clouds to fly me away." I'm like, "Wow". He stopped and said, "I want you to repeat that section because I have some lyrics here and it sounds like a verse." Repeat that section was the only modification he made on this instrumental I'd given him. 'Mojo Pin' was the same thing. He had different lyrics for that, which he then refined.





GARY LUCAS BY JESSE WINTER

**Was it frustrating for Jeff to have the voice and the talent but to know the songs were a collaboration and not his alone?**

Yeah, I think it was. I mean, I can't speak for him and it was never discussed, but I personally felt that I got written out of the narrative, unless you read the fine print in his special thanks on the *Grace* album. I got thanks for "magical guitariness". If you saw that, you wouldn't know what I contributed to the session. The songwriting credit is G. Lucas but there are people to this day who think, "Oh yeah, Jeff wrote those riffs and they're his songs". This has bothered me to a degree over the years because I felt when the record went out, there was this press release where they talked about everyone who had anything to do with the record. It was in *Billboard* magazine, it was an article by this guy I know and I was the only one not mentioned. That really bugged me. It felt like they wanted to minimize my contribution. Similarly, they filmed much of the *Grace* recording sessions, some of it is coming out soon with an album of covers that he did up at Bearsville studio. Actually, when he got up there they weren't sure whether they were going to do an original album. He was sold to everybody on the strength of his Sin-é shows and they were pretty much wall-to-wall covers. They didn't know if he had enough songs. Well, anyway, when I was up there for the two and a half days, I was not photographed nor was I filmed. I was whisked in to play guitar on these sessions and add my magical guitar touches and double the guitar lines that Jeff was playing. But it wasn't documented in a visual way. Subsequently there are no photos of me. [Photographer] Merri Cyr has reams of stuff that were done at the session. I always felt really bad about that. Credit is very important, as you know. Maybe even more important than getting paid half the time. They did pay me well to go up there, I won't quibble about that. The reviews, there were a couple where the writers knew me and knew of my contribution, so there I got credited. But, mostly, the review copies went out without my name being played up and that always bothered me. His manager said to me

once, "Oh, we just had this big gig in England, at a festival, Glastonbury, and a mighty cheer went up when Jeff went into the 'Grace' riff and that's you, Gary, thank you." I thought, "How many of those people that were cheering knew it was my riff?" Anyway, what the heck. It is what it is and I've tried to redress the balance by documenting my contributions in my book. And doing tributes to Jeff, I continue to actively play the music and speak about how great an artist he was. If there's karma, I should be okay. No sour grapes on my part.

**What hope have other people got of doing versions of these songs that do them justice?**

I feel really lucky and blessed with this group of people they've assembled. They've got some excellent singers who are quite skilled with their interpretative ability. I'm also blessed to have Gods and Monsters here, my band, supporting the vocalists as the house band. They bring a certain sensibility that has improvisational flourishes to it that makes it fresh for us to be playing this music. We're going to change it up a little bit every night. They'll never be played the same way twice.

**What about your favourite Tim Buckley song?**

There's so many great songs there. 'Morning Glory' touches me every time I hear it, I get shivers. There's an ache in Tim's voice that's beautiful. I have the same reaction to 'Buzzin' Fly'. We're going to do both of them. He really had an ecstatic quality about his singing that I find so satisfying. I mean, soul satisfying. I was a fan as a boy. In the summer that *Sgt. Pepper* came out in '67, I read about this amazing album that he'd done called *Goodbye And Hello*. I sought it out, purchased it and I wasn't disappointed. I thought this guy was doing amazing, high level music. It was a wonderful era. That summer the *Bee Gees' 1<sup>st</sup>* album came out, I thought that was a masterpiece. Pink Floyd's first album came out. It was a golden age in retrospect and Tim was riding the crest of the wave. He was right up there with the greats.

## PHOTOGRAPHER'S NOTE

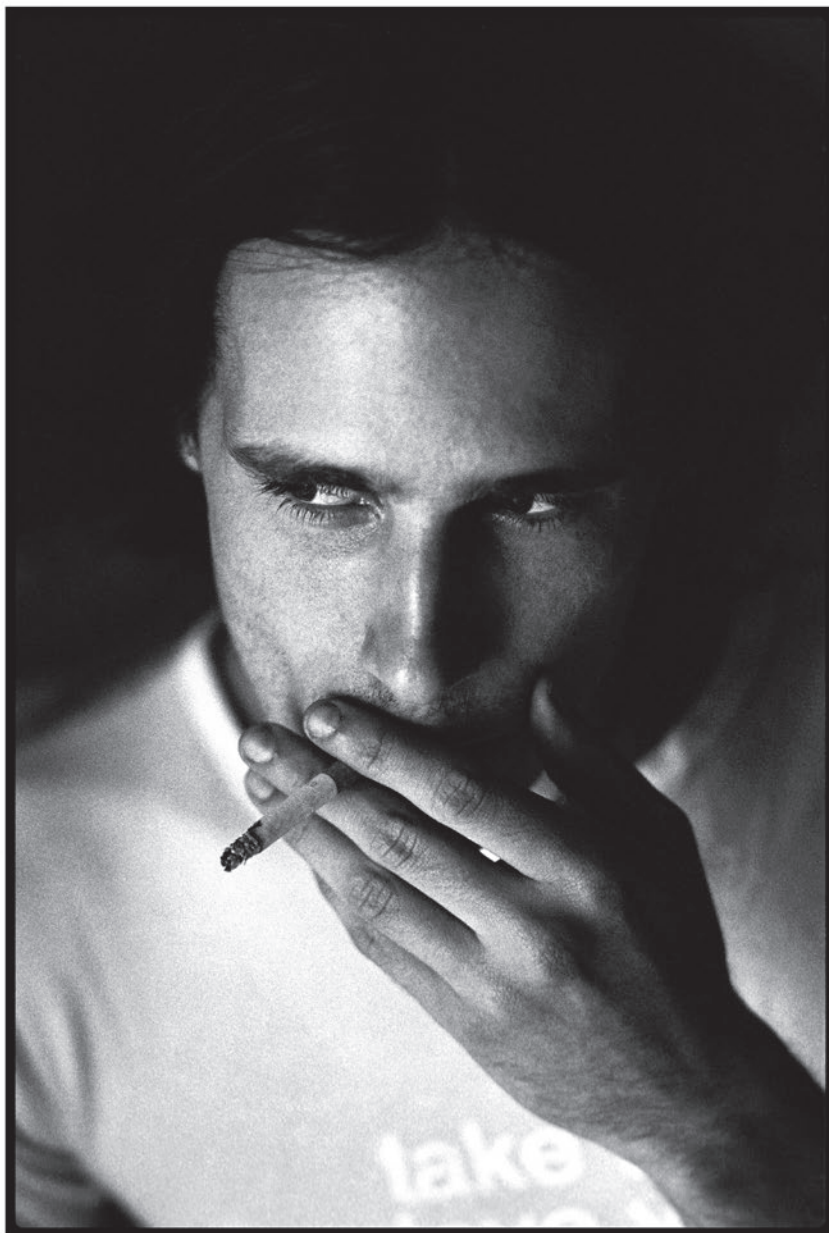
By Andrzej Liguz, [moreimages.net](http://moreimages.net)

On the afternoon of Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 1995, I made my way to the Ritz Carlton in Double Bay, which is known by Sydneysiders as Double Pay because it's the seriously rich part of town and everything costs twice as much. That particular hotel also happens to be where Michael Hutchence from INXS subsequently died two years later. But I think that was in a different room.

I was shown into Jeff's suite by his road manager, Gene Bowen. Jeff appeared tired but was sweet and accommodating. He'd played a show at The Metro two days earlier, but I suspect the jet lag was getting to him. When I mentioned that I'd listened to his dad a lot it seemed like it was something he was tired of hearing. Which was fair enough, so I didn't pursue that line of conversation any further. What nobody realised at that time of course was that his influence has far surpassed the impact his father had.

I was surprised to see he was wearing a pink Take That T-shirt as they were not the kind of band I would imagine he'd listen to, but I didn't comment on it. He'd already done the interview, so we went out on the balcony and I started to shoot some pictures with him.

The brief was to get colour pictures to go with the article *Who Weekly* were going to publish. Magazines always need more than one background / set up as they need a picture to lead with and also a separate image to go within the story, so after shooting on the balcony I also took Jeff back into the hotel room and did some more pictures with him in the hotel room.



©Andrzej Liguz/moreimages.net

Even though I knew the magazine wouldn't run them, I also decided to shoot some black and white pictures for myself. Which I am now deeply grateful for that foresight as the image [on the cover of this issue of *Rhythms*] came from those pictures.

The following Wednesday, on 6<sup>th</sup> September, I made my way to the Phoenician Club, which was a rundown former cinema turned Maltese bar. Expectant faces that were turned to the stage burst into applause when Jeff and his band walked on.

He opened with 'Dream Brother' and played most of the *Grace* album, only leaving out 'Corpus Christi Carol'. Highlights were the new song 'What Will You Say?' which subsequently appeared on the *Live at L'Olympia* album in 2001, 'Vancouver' which showed up on 'Sketches...', a killer cover of 'Kick Out The Jams' by the MC5 and a beautiful rendition of Dylan's 'If You See Her Say Hello', which was recorded as part of the *Grace* sessions, but has still not been released (aside from a live version on the Legacy Edition of *Live At Sin-é*).

One of the pictures from that live show ended up on the cover of *Grace Around The World*, the live album that was released in 2009. Jeff's mother Mary and I started communicating around that time and she also licensed the image to put onto a line of T-Shirts which are still being sold on Jeff's website.

To this day Jeff is still one of my favourite artists and I listen to something by him at least once a week.



respect to the Buckley's do justice to their songs and bring them to life. I think it will be an emotional special night. I love their music so much, there is a mysterious quality and power to what they both created and am really looking forward to sharing the stage with the other performers and having a great night celebrating their work.

**SK:** I am doing 'Happy Time' and 'Pleasant Street' by Tim and 'Forget Her' by Jeff. I hope the audience can feel satisfied that a bunch of singers and musicians from all over the world are gathering together to celebrate the incredible talent of these two tragically doomed and inexorably linked musicians.

**If you could time travel and be a fly on the wall at any of Jeff or Tim's performances or recordings which would you choose and why?**

**CC:** I'd love to be a fly on the wall for the final take of 'Last Goodbye'.

**CS:** I probably would have liked to have seen either of them in concert. That's all really, a live performance anywhere.

**CO'S:** I think the Jeff Buckley gig in Sin É in New York or the Whelans gig in Dublin, it is a much loved intimate venue, and people still talk about it to this day. To have been in a room that close to him singing would have been incredible.

**SK:** Man I would have loved to be there when Jeff first sang 'Lilac Wine'. Breathtaking. I also wish I had been there to talk him out of swimming in the Mississippi River that night!

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:  
MARTHA WAINWRIGHT; COLD SPECKS; CASPER CLAUSEN; WILLY  
MASON; STEVE KILBEY; CAMILLE O'SULLIVAN

**A State Of Grace concert dates: Wednesday September 23 - Melbourne Recital Centre; Friday September 25 and Saturday September 26 - QPAC Concert Hall, Brisbane Queensland; Sunday September 27 - Enmore Theatre, Sydney; Tuesday September 29 - Melbourne Recital Centre**  
More information at [astateofgracelive.com](http://astateofgracelive.com)



# JEFF BUCKLEY

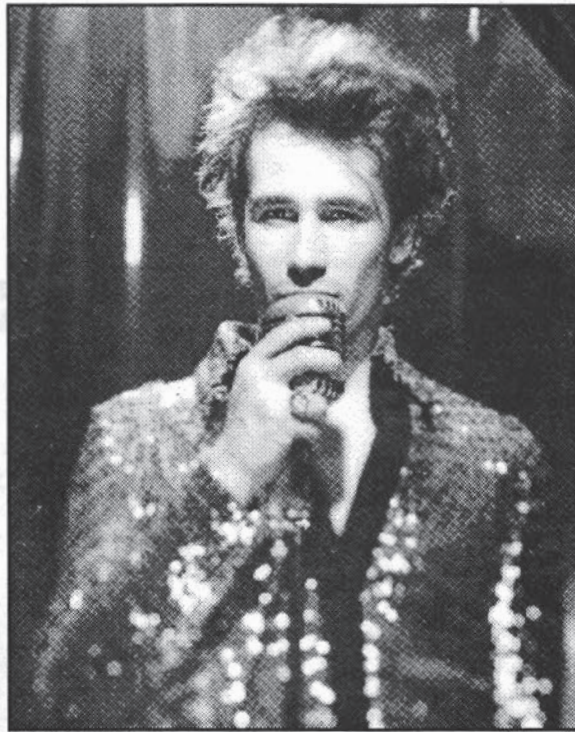
by Christie Eliezer

From  
Rhythms  
July 1995

If you're one of those whose copy of Jeff Buckley's *Grace* is still in the CD player a year after its release, you'd already know about that stunning gorgeous voice, the heart-pounding melancholy of the ballads and the grittiness of the rock-out tracks.

Onstage, Buckley is much more than that. With songs like "Dream Brother" and "So Real" (which, incidentally, have been opening his shows in Europe), it was accepted *Grace* was the sort of album that really come alive in the live context. After touring non-stop with his band for almost a year, the set is crackingly good.

"The Last Goodbye", for instance, is just a bundle of intensity, as Buckley dissolves into a loud "kiss me, ooh, KISS ME!" while the on-stage renditions of "Grace" and "Mojo Pin" acquire a beauty only hinted at on record. A recent addition to the show, "What Will You Say" (written by good friend Chris Dowd, former ivory tinkler and trombone player with Fishbone, who incidentally, was the real inspiration behind "Dream Brother", not father Tim as commonly assumed) breaks away from his image



as the good looking angel les chique tragique.

You ain't heard nothing yet till you hear ol' Jeff take high vocals on "Lover You Should've Come Over", or the way he and his band gleefully punch holes into the lyrics of Big Star's "Holocaust" and come up gasping for air, mouth turned down in junkie chic while dripping with blood. For the final song, Buckley stands alone, turning "Hallelujah" into more of a melodramatic opus than its writer Leonard Cohen intended it to be. Buckley clings to rock music for the same reason Lennon or Dylan grasped at it. It allowed him to reinvent himself and claw himself out of life's claustrophobia. Being part of a band has given him a family for the first time. If you heard the themes behind "Grace" and "Eternal Life" — how music makes him feel so

goddamn good — you'd know that anyway.

"Do you know what it's like when you're having sex and you're about to have an orgasm, and your entire mind and body are concentrating every single molecule on that one thing?" Buckley murmurs. "That's what music is for me. It's a

white light, it's my mother and father, it's my best friend, it's my blood.

"Nothing else matters. When I'm working, I'm thinking music. When I'm resting, I'm thinking music. People say I bend my body into the weirdest shapes when I'm singing onstage. I can understand that. When I'm singing, I can feel that force just push my face, my body, everything into all kinds of shapes."

Does that explain the amount of people who've written to him saying how *Grace* saved them from suicide?

"Is that such a big deal? I don't think my music attracts weirdo's. The people at my shows are pretty normal. They're not coming because they want to see some rock god — which I'm NOT! — they enjoy playing *Grace* in their homes and they

want to see the songs delivered in person.

"Maybe if they're feeling kinda down, maybe it's hearing the songs and realising that they're not alone, that other people — a lot of other people — are feeling those things too. Everyone feels like shit. I certainly have. I spent most of my teenage days feeling real empty inside, feeling I had nothing to offer anyone. A lot of people think angst is something to revel in. It's not. You have to contend with it. You can either be self indulgent and boring. Or you can create a masterpiece."

So how would he react if someone in the audience told him they'd come to see a rock god or, travesty, the spirit of Tim Buckley revived?

**"I don't think my music attracts weirdoes. The people at my shows are pretty normal."**

"Yeah, well, the joke's on them. I hardly knew my father. He left my mum when I was six months old. I never saw him again until a week or so before he died. My mum gave me the name Jeff Scott Moorhead. Moorhead was the name of my stepfather. Until my mid-teens, I actually was known as Scott. I changed my name when I was old enough. I don't really know why. Or maybe I do."

It may be significant that Grace made Buckley a star at 28, the same age as when Sr died of an overdose. Jeff spent the last year explaining to people that, no, aside from the name, there's no connection with his father. Now he's changed his tack. At a recent press conference in Milan, when hit with a question about his father's death, he replied, "I dunno, man, maybe I should give you some phone numbers in America and they could help you answer that."

Ma Buckley was a hippie who turned him on to "that real post-Dylan acoustic stuff, marvellous to listen to even today". She was a bit of a gypsy, and the young boy's childhood was spent being the perennial "new kid in class" at yet another Californian school. He made a deal with music: it would become his best friend, and he in turn would listen to everything from the Beatles to Joni Mitchell to classical to '40s soundtracks.

Life was no swing through the Fun House for Buckley. He remembers as a teenager he was "dead inside", writing what he calls "endless poetry and stories, real shit

stuff". It didn't alleviate his feelings of worthlessness. One day he raged, burned all his writings. Symbolically, two weeks later, the riots broke out in L.A.

So nowadays, New York-based Buckley is a bit of a '90s teen idol and "rock icon". He once jammed with Chrissie Hynde and John McEnroe during a visit to London, and is rumoured to have had a fling with Liz of the Cocteau Twins. In interviews, he admits to having some horrific nightmares. Like doing his homework while listening to the radio, and being grabbed by the music and smashed onto the floor until he screams. Or being invited back to an artist's studio to see his work — which turned out to be displays of living things with their vocal chords cut out. So is working on his next album a similar nightmare? "No. It'd be interesting to see if having to project to a large group of people at shows will change the style. You always have this...uh, fear, that people might hate it or the ideas might not come when you're making it. But I figure I'm gonna be doing this for the rest of my life, so I might as well try and enjoy it now while I can."

Does continually being on the road disillusion him?

"No, I was always on the move as a kid. I enjoy it. It can be a bit hard at times, but, hey, the concerts make up for everything. If I get some backlash, that's OK. The more you're attacked, the more you're forced to defend this thing you love."

