

SONG OF THE DAY XCVII

We have now turned the corner and are charging down the home stretch. Only three songs to go and each one is a masterpiece! Today's song is proof that you can teach an old dog new tricks... er, something like that. {We'll get to this in a bit} For now, grab your copy of "Led Zeppelin III" and turn to side one, track four, clocking in at 7:23, the amazing slow blues juggernaut, "Since I've Been Loving You."

This was one of the very first tracks to be written and recorded for "III" and was in Zeppelin's live show long before it was released on the record in October of 1970. It does have more controversy swirling around it in that Robert "borrowed" heavily from Moby Grape's "Never" lyrically - Plant is an admitted Moby Grape fan - however this would become another classic in the Zeppelin catalog and a staple on nearly every tour since its early 1970 inception.

Long a fan favorite, when I hear this song two things immediately spring to mind; the first is from the movie "The Song Remains The Same" when the beautiful girl in the audience is watching Robert as he sings: "Yes it's a drag, my it's a drag..." and they show her, with a white hoodie on, her hands folded in a triangular shape near her chin as she is in complete awe and then she suddenly breaks into this gorgeous smile as the blues wash down upon her and she is swept away, completely transfixed in the moment. If you can force yourself to take your eyes off of her - difficult, I know - check out the guy sitting next to her... he is totally mesmerized at what he is witnessing. That is one of the most priceless moments of that film. The second thing... well, I'll get to that a little later.

The song begins with a simple but instantly recognizable five note lick from Jimmy and then Bonham enters, playing a steady slow beat behind him. John Paul adds some hauntingly beautiful organ work as Jimmy takes center stage for one of his finest recorded moments ever.

The notes fly off his guitar like fireworks in the night and emotion drips from the neck of his Les Paul as he works his magic, pulling you, the listener, into a whirlwind of blues, setting a stunning mood for Plant to articulate over.

During this intro, Jimmy's playing is masterful. He squeezes everything he can out of his guitar and does so with the hand of a guitar god. He plays quietly - almost forcing you to lean in closer to your speakers to hear him - then he will explode into a run that, as Jack Black would say, would melt your face!

Working from seven

To eleven every night

Really makes life a drag

I don't think that's right

I feel I've been the best

The best of fools

I did what I could, yeah

'Cause I love you baby

How I love you darling

How I love you baby

My I love you little girl

Little girl

But baby since I've been loving you, yeah

I'm about to lose my worried mind

Ahh yeah...

It should be noted here that Pagey's playing behind Robert is absolutely superb. As Robert sings a line, Jimmy answers, or

responds, with a beautiful lick on the guitar. I know, I know - this is standard blues fair - but my *God* man, the way they did it was just incredible.

The song kicks into its signature lick by Page and Bonham becomes more animated with the drumming, and then we're back to Robert and his story of woe as John Paul and his organ take a more noticeable position.

Everybody tried to tell me

That you didn't mean me no good

I've been trying

Lord!

Let me tell you

Let me tell you I really did the - best I could

I've been, I've been working

From seven ah-to eleven every night

I said it kinda makes life a drag, drag, drag, drag

Lord!!!

Yeah, that's right now, now

Since I've been loving you

I'm about to lose - my worried mind

Gotcha...

As the music builds leading into the chorus, the effect is just spell-binding. Bonham's drums again stand out and Jonsey proves, once more, his massive talent and when Robert belts out "Since..." it sends a shiver down the proverbial spine. They may have been four blokes from England, but they could deliver the

blues when they wanted to and that is certainly evident on this track.

Jimmy then takes off on a ripping solo, using every note in the scale, ranging from low end runs to high bends and flurries of just raw emotion, his use of dynamics in this solo are what make it so special. Everything builds and builds until they come to a complete stop.

Said I've been crying – yeah

All my tears they fell like rain

Bonham brings everyone back in and Plant delivers more chilling vocals, his singing on this, much in the vein of Jimmy's guitar, filled with pain and emotion.

Don't you hear them?

Don't you hear them falling?

Don't you hear them?

Don't you hear them falling?

Do you remember mama

When I knocked upon your door?

I said you had the nerve - to tell me

You didn't want me no more, yeah

I open my front door –

I hear my back door slam

You know I must have one of them new-fangled, new-fangled

Back door mans

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

I've been a-working from seven, seven, seven

To eleven every night
It kinda makes life a drag
A drag, drag
Oooohhhh yeah it makes a drag
Baby since I've been loving you
I'm about to lose
I'm about to lose, lose
My worried mind

Just one more
Just one more
Oooohhhh yeah!
Since I've been lovin'
I'm gonna lose
My worried mind

Bonham slowly brings the song down as Page plays the signature lick and Jonsey's organ and Bonham's symbols take us out. And that, my friends, is how you play the blues. Or at least, how Led Zeppelin attacked the blues.

There's so much good going on in this song that you could sit and listen specifically to each individual member's performance and you would be blown away by how good they were and then, you could listen to the song as an entire entity and see how they merged all their talents into this majestic blues odyssey and the only conclusion one could draw from this is that Led Zeppelin not only knew the blues and understood it, they kicked it in its collective butt!

People wonder what Robert Johnson would have sounded like if he had been around when the electric guitar was invented - well; this is probably your answer to that question.

As I mentioned earlier, this first appeared in Zeppelin's live show early in 1970. It would remain in the set on every subsequent tour, being used sparingly on the 1975 US dates, but was back full time from 1977 on. During the latter versions, after "Presence" was released, Jimmy would sometimes add some licks from "Tea For One" in as the songs were very close to each other in style and tempo.

In 1988, as Robert was touring with his solo band, Jimmy joined him onstage at the Hammersmith Odeon for a run through of this and then Page/Plant played it again on the "Unledded" project and subsequent tour in 1995/96.

And of course, at the O2 reunion in 2007, "Since I've Been Loving You" was performed again.

I stated earlier that there were two things that instantly spring to mind when listening to this track - or even thinking about this track - and I've already mentioned the stunningly beautiful girl in the movie, so now I should reveal the second thing this track does to me... In 1997, at the Zep-Fest in Buffalo, New York, a group of us were hanging out in somebody's room and jamming some Zeppelin songs.

Somehow we got on the topic of "oddities" that were in Zeppelin songs - like ringing telephones, etc. - and that was when J.R. Sröufe asked me if I had ever noticed the squeaky bass pedal in "Since I've Been Loving You." I looked at him in total shock. Squeaky bass pedal? What are you talking about?

Sure enough, he puts on the song and then points it out to me... and today, some 14 and a half years later, I still hear that damn squeaky bass pedal! So thanks J.R. for taking a song I loved and forever reminding me of a squeaky bass pedal when I hear, or think of, the song!

My question is this; was WD-40 not invented yet? Because there are other Zeppelin songs where that squeak can be heard, though I will spare you the torment that J.R. has inflicted on me and I won't mention them here! LOL

There is no question that Zeppelin were huge fans of the blues, particularly Jimmy and Robert, and their sound was based around the blues. "Since I've Been Loving You" has remained a

long-standing classic because, squeaky bass pedals aside, they could deliver a mesmerizing performance playing music that they were so heavily influenced by and they could also add their own twist to it and put their own very identifiable stamp on it.

It's also very apparent that Jimmy is very inspired by the blues as his solo in "Since" is regarded as one of the best of all time, his solo on "Tea For One" is simply amazing and the solo he played on the Coverdale/Page song "Don't Leave Me This Way" was recorded in one take and he was sick at the time with a fever. There's something deep in the blues that touches Jimmy and brings out some of his best performances.

So now... we're down to two. The finish line is in sight and the next one will take us on a wild journey.. hope to see you there!

Until the next time,

Jeff