Trouble in Dreams, Destroyer

Okay… Susan… Oh… True

Your head gets filled with that stuff. “Trouble” is right there on the cover, but where is it in the songs? Everywhere and nowhere. Seriously, terror advances. Dreams can’t be grasped either. You reach for it with “Foam Hands”: I didn’t know what time it was at all. That’s the fourth song, and the third began when The State cut off my arms, so these Foam Hands may be prosthetic. No wonder we can’t feel anything. You, I, we… are in trouble. True love regrets to inform you there are certain things you must do to perceive his face in the stains on the wall. Part of the trouble seems to be the song sings to us like a dream. We’ve given up seeking Destroyer’s Dan Bejar behind whatever mask he’s wearing, so it might as well be love taunting us with vagary, wagging its Foam Hands at the cum stains on the wall.

You… Caution

Beware the company you reside in many times, a mantra someone’s clearly not listening to. Though, in some small way, we’re all traitors to our own kind. This is certainly the trouble condition, or as George Orwell sang it, Under the spreading chestnut tree, I sold you and you sold me. Or, Destroyer again, Who amongst us has left these things undone? Who let these animals into my kingdom? Indeed, we are drenched in trouble. We’re wet with something… but not tears, we’re too far gone for tears. The problem as I see it, I was messed up on a tangent that was wrong. They mix

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112 these being the first words of each of side one’s songs
113 like Smog’s Callahan (and Cat Power’s Chan Marshall, and The Mountain Goats’ John Darnielle), Bejar essentially uses his band name in place of his own; in the tradition of solo artists, he may or may not play with others, but it’s his vision, his concept and his persona that move through the songs on a Destroyer album
114 according to the lyric sheet, seven times (spelled out) plus one Beware…
115 “Trouble” won’t show, but here’s his troublesome cousin, drunk on excuses.
‘em strong and I was partial to the feeling. Where were we? In the kitchen, making out with someone we'd rather not see. “Shooting Rockets” is borrowed from Swan Lake's repertoire, Bejar’s side project supplying his main vehicle for a change.\textsuperscript{116}

Common… See… The

\textit{A comet of scars} or \textit{A commoner's scars}, as the lyric sheet corrects us: either way we’re in trouble. [A] degenerate drunk on war graves, saying — “Guide me, misty poet!” We all know poets can only lead us astray.\textsuperscript{117} O brave monster! Lead the way, as we've heard it all before. Part of the trouble is all the drinking. Now we know what wets us, or keeps us from being dry. See the rain falling down from the sky to its death, smashed on the street in despair, somewhere over there I swear! Well, maybe it is just rain, says the weeping (drunk) man. But this talk of despair and death, and this ingenuine attention grabbing — it's trouble, I tell you. You always had a problem flowing down rivers is the cousin again\textsuperscript{118} filling in, making excuses. Water everywhere, and nothing left to drink. [S]o we went down to the store in “Leopard of Honor” (having left dry “Rivers” behind), when what do we have here? Remove that wretched writing from the wall. Perhaps the stains our Foam Hands rubbed weren't seminal at all. I didn't know why. I guess I was high. So's that the trouble? Or, no “trouble,” and no language either. The song breaks down to \textit{bah dum bah dah} vocalese that will reappear on the next EP, and the LP after that…\textsuperscript{119} Meanwhile, the side is over.

\textsuperscript{116} As a “secret” member of the indie-pop supergroup The New Pornographers, Bejar has supplied not only some of the more inspired numbers on each album, but he has contributed songs (or song sketches) from the diagrammatic first Destroyer album, \textit{City of Daughters}.

\textsuperscript{117} Poets always lie to you, or I'm tired of poets' lies, or Don't listen to poets, or Don't let poets lie to you, Björk says, clutching a TV in an interview we can no longer locate.

\textsuperscript{118} and Cousin Again

\textsuperscript{119} “Bay of Pigs,” from \textit{Bay of Pigs}, and “Bay of Pigs (detail),” from \textit{Kaputt}, respectively
I... Libby’s

I was high as a kite! I was never coming home! I was... well, you know how it goes. What devilry the source of this screaming? This is, of course, a curse, a whole chorus of them. And I couldn’t believe how loud it was. And here come more non-linguistic vocalizations. The language leaves us as the album spins to a close. If “trouble” represents (and replaces) trouble, “bah dah dum” removes the burden from language. Even the voice is music. But what happens when the vocalese carries the weight of articulation that’s bowed the back of every song on the album? Where has this linguistic pressure come from — as he sings You’ve been wasted from the day of wandering and boozing and sleeping outside... You’ve been fucking around — ? It comes from our dreams of ourselves, and from our selves torn from dreams every day. That’s the trouble. The light holds a terrible secret. Oh, the light!

120 just as the tension and disjunction between intention and action is the trouble; just as language vs. meaning is the trouble
121 another one of trouble’s troublemaking cousins, posing its own problem, less resolvable than “problem,” because less substantial, a mere quality, but, turning back on itself, a terrible one