

## Fill in the Angst

# Things that go BUMP BUMP BUMP in the night (Except during quiet hours...)

"You are a worthy foe! I shall sing a dirge in your honor and wear your skin with pride!"

—Get of Fenris motto

There were dorm wars at St. Andrews long before Domino's sanctioned any. These battles persist in the halls today. Speakers are howitzers, volume is ammunition, and communal peace the casualty. It's not so much a "musical" combat but a contest of who's bass is turbulent enough to intimidate all other CD players on campus past their shock absorber limits. The concept of music doesn't enter the tournament. Music is incidental. Sonic intensity is the point.

I exaggerate. It's not the community that's in unrest. It's me. I can't get rest anymore. The community can snooze whenever they please. They have the power to turn off their churning sound cannons when they feel the need. I have no control over their disturbing devices.

I thought I had escaped enlistment in the musical jihad when I switched dorms last year. I fled a 24-hour shrine to Pearl Jam and 311 to a suite with "Do not bring your evil music here" chiseled over the entrance. My biggest

problem in my new location was avoiding a meeting in the suite bathroom with The Guy Who Would Not Cover His Area.

That eyesore did not return to St. Andrews this semester, and though I rejoiced at his passing, I dreaded the unknown evil that would ascend to fill the void his absence created. Soon enough, an ancient enemy came to haunt me...again. The noise was back and more powerful than ever before. I was drafted into the stereo wars for a second tour.

Now it's up me to prevent the gradual destruction of the human race. Well, our eardrums, anyway.

OK, I'm not entirely alone in this battle, but my allies are few and far apart. My roommate's behind me...waaay behind me, as they say. Our suite leader, happens to be my roommate. Other non-offending suitemates have been hiding in the trenches since

the guy in the room between mine and the Audio Atrocity had the flesh shaken from his bones like Jell-O off a stick by shock waves.

When a complaint was lodged to

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the RA's, they explained a concept called "Quiet Hours." Non-designated hours can be as audibly abusive as possible. There are no limits to keep someone's souped-up system from shifting tectonic plates during free time.

I have heard rumor that there are others who face problems similar to mine. The only solution I can volunteer is to get a girlfriend in Concord. Since I wouldn't dare condone such "co-habitation," the best I can suggest

are tactics to avoid.

1. Do not try reasoning with the enemy. Any attempt to bargain with the offending party will ultimately end in them throwing crushed beer cans at you. (They'll just crank up the bass immediately after your departure anyway.)

2. Subtlety won't work. Even if those at the epicenter of your resident seismic evil could hear you playing "Enjoy the Silence" unabated, they still wouldn't get it.

3. Sometimes the noise leaks from a room whose occupants consistently leave their door open, not from an abominable speaker system. Asking those residents to close their door is a very bad idea. They see themselves as great suitemates in that they are considerate enough to share their music with you. Such people offend easily and should not be taunted or fed.

4. Turning on the popcorn maker and the microwave to blow the fuse for your half of the suite may sound like a good idea, but what are YOU going to do without power? Sleep?

Wow. I've gotta go make popcorn.

—Greg Chatham

This skit illustrates the futility of Strategy to Avoid #1. It is absolutely not based on personal experience so please don't hurt me.

**YOU:** (Make knob turning motion. THEY feign confusion.) Could you turn it down?

**THEM:** (Lower the stereo volume to hear YOUR complaint. They like to hear YOUR suffering so they may laugh about YOU later.) Why? We don't have to until 1.

**YOU:** I woke up when I heard my roomie scream. Your bass caused my loft to creep across the room and...well, one of its legs is in his chest. I wouldn't complain but it makes this sucking sound every time the rumbling causes the loft to bounce.

**THEM:** Heh. What were you doing asleep? It's 9:30.

**YOU:** I couldn't sleep through your Yanni-fest this morning and I was up late last night... That's not the point. I couldn't go back to sleep anyway. It's just now I can't hear my TV.

**THEM:** Scoff. Don't you have volume on your TV?

**YOU:** I do, but your stereo is too loud.

[It's not that THEM don't understand, THEM just don't care. After all, why shouldn't THEM be able to play their thousand dollar stereo system at its fullest potential? Despite the fact that I would love to see something horrible happen to it, something involving a crowbar or a pack of rhinos in heat, I can't think of a single reason.]

**THEM:** Hmm. Why don't you go back to your room and turn up your TV? We'll increase our bass and you can tell us to stop before you can't hear your TV anymore.

**YOU:** (Leave just before the beer cans hit their mark.)