

YOU KNOW MY NAME

CHRIS CORNELL 1964-2017

The facial appearance of Chris resonates purity, as if he just bathed and has a halo on top. His Greek-y curly coiffure and wondering eyes behind pale blue shades affected a whole generation in clairvoyant proportions.

by: Ashraful Khan & Faizul K Tanim



There rose a grunge-looking man in the early 90s that a whole generation would follow. Today, there is so much power in his silence! Christopher John Boyle aka Chris Cornell may be contemplating 'heaven beside you, hell within' with buddy Layne Staley or 'smelling teen spirit' with Cobain - but here on ground zero, his demise on 17th May 2017 was loud and making a lot of chaos.

Chris was last seen in the land down under playing solo acoustic gigs on December 2015 and as Faizul reckons, he couldn't attend the concert due to financial restraints, and it aches every moment after May 17th. Born in Bangladesh we have had less live experiences with rock artists of the West although the country has a massive underground scene which is influenced by the early 90s grunge and Seattle rock revolution. Our exceptions happened when we, in our teens and twenties, would migrate to Western countries as students. There, we would work ungodly hours just to save enough to secure a ticket

for a great gig, be it in a mosh pit or straight at the back.

Our mind is capable of extraordinary things like hallucinating love turning into hate, peace vaporized or effervescence in blood beyond comprehension, and these images were getting a rational recognition, thanks to the Soundgarden music videos "Black Hole Sun", "Blow Up the Outside World", and more. And the creative man behind these poignant feelings on the screen was Mr. Chris, a baritone vocalist but someone who was able to pull off tenor ranges and high notes with extreme ease.

The year was 1996 and our Dad had just got promoted in office and we moved to a better house with better amenities, which included a cable connection on TV. We watched Cartoon Network all day but would casually sneak out of bed past midnight to catch a glimpse of Baywatch beauties and submerge in thoughts from mind's elation. When nobody was home, we would

sometimes switch to MTV (or the more engaging channels). One day MTV played a video. The backdrop was dark and the music seemed depressing. Depressing, yet oddly satisfying. Musically, it was a new territory for us because we were mostly listening to Ace of Base, Nirvana and local bands like Feedback, Miles, etc. For Ashraful, the experience can be best compared to experiencing joy for the first time - he had no idea something so alien to him would give so much satisfaction! The guy singing looked like a gentleman (almost James Bond-ish). It also looked like he didn't open his mouth much, yet generated intense, loud and melodic notes. Ashraful remembered music teachers who would say, "Don't open your mouth too much when singing, it looks rude." So here, he was witnessing this guy, followed this very 'grammar', yet sounded like a... Monster! He shouted, "I wanna know, that this could be my..." And he was hooked. We were both hooked for the first time, and truth to be

told, hooked for life.

Back in the heyday of Breach, the rock band from Bangladesh and their notorious yet exhilarating live acts, Ashraful would get asked about his song writing process. He would answer, "I pick a difficult progression to sing on, and try to come up with a catchy melody on top of it. That's my biggest challenge." There were days I would elaborate on my styling. Other days, I would play out the progression of "Pretty Noose" by Soundgarden. Really easy to play, almost sounds gibberish because it looks like you're playing 20 bar chords randomly, and then I'd say, "If you haven't heard this song, then great! Because I challenge you to write a melody on top of it."

We usually mourn family members and friends. Here we mourn a man we've never met, like we knew him forever. We felt silly, wiping tears off our faces. "Come on, I don't even know this guy", is what we felt. Such was the impact made by Chris. Rest in Peace, Mr. Cornell.

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