



Repeat Til Fade

Gillian Reynolds
Daily Telegraph, 22 April 2001

... That is why popular music is radio's mainstay. We hear a song, fix our hearts within it, hold the memory. There was a series on Radio 4 last week that showed brilliantly how this works. *Repeat 'til Fade* took a different song each day, making a collage of versions and memories with each. On Monday it was Jeff Beck's *Hi Ho Silver Lining*, the one that even boys get up and dance to; on Tuesday Bob Marley's *No Woman No Cry*; on Wednesday the first of the power ballads, *If You Leave Me Now* by Chicago; on Thursday Rose Royce's weepie *Love Don't Live Here Anymore*; on Friday, *Stairway to Heaven*, the ultimate hippy chanson, sturdy enough even to withstand Rolf Harris' wobble-board version.

I heard the first and was hooked thereafter. This was strange as, with one exception, I hate all the songs. I mean *hate*, too – of the instant switch-off, rising gorge, creeping flesh kind. Yet there in these little aural essays were all the reasons they had instant effects and enduring power.

In the taut way of the *Radio Times* these days, only one producer was credited, Alan Hall. So I apologise if there were other hands at work, thinking up the clever edits and the ingenious double-trackings, gathering up the right quotes, searching out the variant versions, but thank you, Alan Hall, for opening five unexpected doors on to long corridors of memory.

