Atom And Evil

This gospel song worries about the potential misuse of atomic power by an undefined 'Evil.' While The Golden Gate Quartet was no doubt referring to a global, metaphoric 'Evil,' one without geographic borders, the U.S. government was busily anticipating the inevitable goal of the nation it believed to be the true evil, the USSR. And on that day when the Russians tested their first bomb (August 29, 1949), 'evil' would be defined for us by politicians...repeatedly.

The Golden Gate Quartet was formed in 1934 in Norfolk, Virginia and is best remembered for popularizing the 'jubilee' style of black gospel. The original line-up for The Gates, as they came to be known, was William Langford (first tenor), Henry Owens (second tenor), Willie Johnson (baritone) and Orlandus Wilson (bass). The Gates first found success on the radio, especially on WBT in Charlotte, North Carolina. Their first recording session for the Bluebird label in 1937 produced such songs as Jonah and Bedside Of A Neighbor. In 1939 the group appeared at Carnegie Hall in John Hammond's 'Spirituals To Swing' concert which led to their broadcasting several times a week on the CBS radio network in New York. In 1940 the group teamed with Leadbelly for a session, and, in 1941, the group signed with Columbia. In the '40s The Gates appeared in a number of films including 'Star Spangled Rhythm,' 'Hit Parade Of 1943,' 'Hollywood Canteen,' 'Bring On The Girls' and 'A Song Is Born.' In 1948 the group left Columbia and signed with Mercury. In 1955 they toured Europe and in 1959 the group moved permanently to France, where despite various changes in composition, they are still active to this day.

Atom And Evil

Now brothers and sisters,
I'm troubled to say
Brother Atom is gone astray
Listen, listen, listen, listen
This is the story of Atom and Evil

Their courtship is causin' a great upheaval
Now Atom was a sweet young innocent thing
Until the night that Miss Evil took him under her wing

Now Atom was an honest, hard workin' man
He wanted to help out the human clan
But Evil got him drunk on prejudice and hate
And she taught him how to gamble with Humanity's fate
(So true!)

I'm talkin' 'bout Atom, and Evil
Atom and Evil
If you don't break up that romance soon
We'll all fall down and go boom, boom, boom!

Now if Evil gets Atom, 'twill be such a shame
Because a-plenty of big shots are playin' that dame
Now his sleep will be troubled, and his life will be cursed

Lord, if Atom plays with evil, Jack, he won't be the first!
(So true!)

I'm talkin' 'bout Atom, and Evil
Atom and Evil
If you don't break up that romance soon
We'll all fall down and go boom, boom, boom, boom!

Now Atom is a youngster and pretty hard to handle
But we better step in and stop that scandal
Because if Atom and Evil should ever be wed
Lord, then darn near all of us are goin' to be dead!
(So True)

I'm talkin' 'bout Atom, and Evil
Atom and Evil
If you don't break up that romance soon
We'll all fall down and go boom, boom, boom, boom!

Atom Bomb Baby

A pop country, accordion-driven number (not to be confused with The Five Stars' song of the same name) that serves as another hummable guilty pleasure. This tune likens the destructive energy of an atomic bomb to that of a temperamental, conniving (and redheaded!) woman.

Dude Martin was born on his father's cattle ranch near Plainsburg, California in 1915. As a child he learned how to play his father's banjo and by the age of 15 playing that instrument and competing in rodeos were Martin's favorite pursuits. It was in high school that he started a band, The Nevada Nightherders, in order to take part in a school show. The band continued to play as an act after the school show and before they knew it, they were offered a slot on KLX in Oakland. By 1939 the band had increased to ten members and was known as 'Dude Martin's Roundup Gang.' At this point they moved over to KYA in San Francisco where they performed for approximately ten years. In 1949 Martin decided to make the transition to television and for two years starred on KGO's 'The Dude Martin Show.' In the early '50s he moved to Los Angeles and re-started his TV show on KTTV (where he would also become station Program Director for a period). After he recorded for RCA Victor, Martin cut sides for Mercury including Pistol Boogie, Tennessee Wedding, I Was Sorta Wonderin', Mosey On, Strange Little Girl and I've Turned A Gadabout. In addition to recording and performing, Martin was a talent scout and manager. He helped guide the early careers of singers Guy Mitchell, Rusty Draper and Sue Thompson.
But the atom's international, in spite of hysteria
Flourishes in Utah, also Siberia
And whether you're white, black, red or brown
The question is this, when you boil it down
To be or not to be
That is the question
Atoms to atoms, and dust to dust
If the world makes A-bombs, something's bound to bust

Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Alamogordo, Bikini

No, the answer to it all isn't military datum
Like "Who gets there firstest with the mostest atoms"
But the people of the world must decide their fate
We got to stick together or disintegrate
World peace and the atomic golden age or a push-button war
Mass cooperation or mass annihilation
Civilian international control of the atom — one world or none
If you're gonna split atoms, well, you can't split ranks

Hiroshima, Nagasaki...

It's up to the people, cause the atom don't care
You can't fence him in, he's just like air
He doesn't give a darn about politics
Or who got who into whatever fix —
All he wants to do is sit around and have his nucleus bombarded by neutrons

Hiroshima, Nagasaki...

So if you're scared of the A-bomb, I'll tell you what to do
You got to get with all the people in the world with you
You got to get together and let out a yell
Or the first thing you know we'll blow this world to Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Moscow, too
New York, London, Timbuktu

Shanghai, Paris, up the flue

Hiroshima, Nagasaki
We must choose between
The brotherhood of man or smitherinees
The people of the world must pick out a thesis
"Peace in the world, or the world in pieces!"

Jesus Is God's Atomic Bomb

Jeorge Perkins, the otherwise unknown composer of Jesus Is God's Atomic Bomb, takes the atomic divinity metaphor that is prevalent in some other Bomb songs to the next level (or one might even say, the highest level) and in so doing provides this box set with one of its most memorable titles. For a person of faith, and clearly this song was originally intended for a gospel audience, the metaphor is certainly an apt one.

The seemingly eternal Swan's Silvertone Singers was a gospel group originally formed as The Four Harmony Kings in Coalwood, West Virginia in 1938.

The name was changed to The Silvertone Singers in 1942 to avoid confusion with another group called The Kings Of Harmony. The word 'Swan' was added to the name by the 'Swan Bakery Company,' the sponsor of a radio show that the group performed on that was broadcast on WBIR in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The original line-up of the group was comprised of four coalminers led by Claude Jeter (who possessed a powerful falsetto singing voice), Eddie Boroughas, John Myles and Leroy Watkins. In 1946 The Swan Silvertone Singers signed with the King label where they recorded a 'jukebox' style of gospel until 1951. The group's most popular record during this period was their debut, I Cried Holy/Go Ahead. Between 1951 and 1953 the group recorded four singles with Specialty before being dropped. It was toward the end of their Specialty tenure that new member, Paul Owens, who joined in 1952, modernized the group's sound. After a stretch in the wilderness of touring and appearing on the radio, the group signed with VeeJay in 1956 where they found a home for the next nine years. Their biggest hit during this era was 1958's Oh Mary Don't You Weep which contained Jeter's improvised lyric "I'll be a bridge over deep water if you trust my name" which reportedly inspired Paul Simon's Bridge Over Troubled Water. The Swans experienced much turnover during their long career, but in 1963 Claude Jeter retired from the group to become a minister; his departure forever changed the Silvertone sound. In 1978 the only remaining original member John Myles left the group.

Jesus is God's Atomic Bomb

Have you heard about the blast in Japan
How it killed so many people and scorched the land
Oh, yes
Oh, it can kill your natural body
But the Lord can kill your soul
That's why I know Jesus
Oh, Jesus is God's— I declare— atomic bomb
Oh, yes

Jesus is God's atomic bomb
Proudest papa that ever was
Jesus is God's, His atomic bomb
Shook the grave, causing death to rise
Yes, God shook the grave, child
Put old death on a rock
Through trials and tribulation
Lord when it was done
That's why I know Jesus
Yes, is my God, His atomic bomb

Atomic Baby

A re-worked, jazzy take on the song previously recorded, but unreleased, by R&B artist Amos Milburn. In this version Linda Hayes is "the atomic baby that's raising all the sass" which only serves to increase the sexual dimension of the track. The song is sung with a delicious taunting quality that makes it a worthy companion piece to Milburn's record.
Harlingen, Texas in 1981.

**Thirteen Women (And Only One Man In Town)**

Last night I was dreamin'  
Dreamed about the H-Bomb  
Well the bomb-a went off and I was caught  
I was the only man on the ground  

There was-a 13 women and only one man in town  
Thirteen women and only one man in town  
And as funny as it may be  
The one and only man in town was me  
With 13 women and me the only man around  

I had 2 gals every morning  
Seein' that I was well fed  
And believ-a you me, one sweetened my tea  
While another one buttered my bread  

Two gals gave me my money  
Two gals made me my clothes  
And another sweet thing bought me a diamond ring  
About forty carats I suppose  

Well, 13 women and only one man in town  
There was-a 13 women and only one man in town  
It was something I can't forget  
Because I think of those 13 women yet  
Well-a 13 women and only one man around  

I had 3 gals dancin' the Mambo  
Three gals ballin' the jack  
And-a all-a the rest really did their best  
Boy they sure were a lively pack  

I thought I was in Heaven  
And all of these angels were mine  
But I woke up and I ended the dream  
'Cause I had to get to work on time  

Well-a 13 women and only one man in town  
There was-a 13 women and only one man in town  
No I can't tell where I've been  
'Cause I kinda think that someday I'll go back again  
To those 13 women and me the only man around  

Well-a 13 women and me the only man around  
Well-a 13 women and me the only man around  

**Fujiyama Mama**

This blistering, take-no-prisoners rockabilly tune is one of Wanda Jackson's best loved recordings and a song that hits the unprepared listener like a concussive device. Jackson told country music expert Rich Kienzle that she first became aware of the incendiary tune when she heard R&B artist Annisteen Allen's 1954 version playing on a juke box when she was still in school in 1955. Jackson recalled for Kienzle that she "just flipped over it."

Earl Burrows' lyrics demonstrate that the bombings in Japan a decade earlier were still viewed as being an impressive display of American might without any consideration given to the moral implications of the wholesale destruction unleashed on the enemy. The atomic bombings serve here as metaphor back-up to the Fujiyama Mama's unpredictability, sexual voraciousness and potential for violence.

Ironically, the song was a major hit in Japan and Jackson was treated like a dignitary when she toured there briefly in 1959.

Female rockabilly pioneer Wanda Jackson was born to Tom and Nellie Jackson in Maud, Oklahoma in 1937. Tom Jackson had been a fiddle player with local bands in his youth and taught his daughter a few chords on the guitar he bought for her in 1943. With family encouragement Wanda also learned how to play piano at an early age.

In high school in Oklahoma City, Jackson entered a talent contest at radio station KLPR and she proved to be so popular, management gave the young performer her own show. Country artist Hank Thompson heard Jackson and in 1954 helped get her a deal at Decca. During this early period Jackson recorded seven singles including a duet with a Thompson band member, Billy Gray, entitled You Can't Have My Love.

A&R man Ken Nelson signed Jackson to her second label, Capitol, in 1956 and it was around this time that Jackson decided, with the encouragement of Elvis Presley, to embrace rock 'n' roll and rockabilly. In between long stretches of touring Jackson recorded her classic LP 'Let's Have A Party' featuring support from a mixed race rock 'n' roll band, The Poe-Kats. Jackson spent much of 1959 at home pondering her next career steps.

In 1960 as a result of popular local reaction to a Des Moines, Iowa DJ playing the title track off Jackson's 'Party' LP, Capitol released the song as a single and it went to number 38 on the charts. Jackson seized the momentum of this success and recorded a follow-up album entitled 'There's A Party Goin' On' featuring a new band with guitarist Roy Clark. Later in the year Jackson was playing dates in Las Vegas where she would frequently return over the rest of her career. In 1961 Jackson scored two top 30 country hits with Right Or Wrong and In The Middle Of A Heartache both of which she wrote.

Jackson married in 1961 and eventually had two children. She remained a fixture in the world of country music for the remainder of the 1960s and into the 1970s releasing a number of LPs including 'Reckless Love Affair' (1967) and 'Please Help Me I'm Falling' (1968). In the 1970s Jackson became sober and a born again Christian and began focusing on gospel recording with such LPs as 'Praise The Lord' and 'We'll Sing In The Sunshine' (both 1972). Jackson, however, did not turn her back on country or rockabilly and still performs and records in all her guises for a devoted legion of fans.

**Fujiyama Mama**

I've been to Nagasaki, Hiroshima too!  
The things I did to them baby, I can do to you!  

Refrain: 'Cause I'm a Fujiyama Mama  
And I'm just about to blow my top!  
Fujiyama-yama, Fujiyama!