

A Louse Is Not a Home
Peter Hammill

A# F Gm D# D A# F Gm D# D
Sometimes it s very scary here; sometimes it s very sad
D# Gm D# F Gm D# F Gm D# D
Sometimes I think I ll disappear; be_times I think I have
D# F Gm D# D
There s a line snaking down my mirror
D# F Gm D# D
Splintered glass distorts my face
D# Gm D# F Gm
And though the light is strong and strange
D# F Gm D# D
It can t illuminate the musty corners of this place
D# F Gm D# D
There is a lofty, lonely, Lohengrenic castle in the clouds
D# F Gm D# D
[Yes and]I draw my murky meanings there
D# Gm D# F Gm
But seven years dark luck is just around the corner
D# F Gm D# D
And in the shadows lurks the spectre of Despair

Dm
A cracked mirror mid the drapes of the landing
C
Split image, labored understanding
A# A Dm
I m only trying to find a place to hide my home

(Dm C Dm Dm C)
(Dm Dm C D)
(G Am C Am)
(G Am C D Am)

G Am C Am
I ve lived in houses composed of glass
G Am C D Am
Where every movement is charted
G Am C Am
But now the monitor screens are dark
G Am C D Am
And I can t tell if silent eyes are there

G Am C Am
My words are spiders upon the page
G Am C D Am
They spin out faith, hope and reason
G Am C D C D

But are they meet and just, or only dust gathering about my
chair?

A# **A**
Sometimes I get the feeling that there s
Dm
Someone else there
Dm
The faceless watcher [he] makes me uneasy
C
I can feel him through the floorboards, and His presence is creepy
A# **A** **Dm**
He informs me that I shall be expelled

Dm
What is that but out of and into
C
[I] don t know the nature of the door that I d go through
Am **A#**
[I] don t know the nature of the nature that I am inside

G **Am** **C** **Am**
I ve lived in houses of brick and lead
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
Where all emotion is sacred
G **Am** **C** **Am**
And if you want to devour the fruit
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
You must first sniff at the fragrance

G **Am** **C** **Am**
And lay your body before the shrine
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
With poems and posies and papers
G **Am** **C** **Am**
Or, if you catch the ruse, you ll have to choose
C **D** **C** **D**
To stay, a monk, or leave, a vagrant

A# **A**
What is this place you call home?
Dm
Is it a sermon or a confession?
C
Is it the chalice that you use for protection?
A# **A**
Is it really only somewhere you can stay?
Dm
Is it a rule-book or a lecture?
C
Is it a beating at the hands of your Protector?
A# **A**
Does the idol have feet of clay?

Dm
 Home is what you make it, so my friends all say
C **Bm**
 But don't you know I rarely see their homes in these dark days
Dm
 Some of them are snails and carry houses on their backs
C **Bm**
 Others live in monuments which, one day, will be racks
Dm **C** **A#** (G A A#)
 I keep my home in place with sellotape and tin-tacks
A# **Am** **Dm**
 But I still feel there's some other Force here
F **Em**
 He who cracks the mirrors and moves the walls
Dm
 Keeps staring through the eye-slits of the portraits in my hall
F **Em**
 He ravages my library and taps the telephone

Dm
 I've never actually seen Him
 But I know He's in my home
D# **F**
 And if he goes away
Gm **D#** **D**
 I can't stay here either
D# **F** **Gm** **D#** **D** **D#**
 I believe - er - I think - well, I don't know

I only live in one room at a time
 But all of the walls are ears, [and] all the windows, eyes
 Everything else is foreign
 Home is my wordless chant
 Mmmmmaah
 Give it a chance

G **Am** **C** **Am**
 I am surrounded by flesh and bone
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
 I am a temple of living
G **Am** **C** **Am**
 I am a hermit, I am a drone
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
 And I am boning out a place to be

G **Am** **C** **Am**
 With secret garlands about my head
G **Am** **C** **D** **Am**
 Unearthly silence is broken
G **Am** **C** **Am**
 The room is growing dark, and in the stark light
C **D** **C** **D**
 I can see a face I know

A# **A** **Dm**
 Could this be the guy who never shows
Dm
 The cracked mirror what he s feeling
C
 Merely mumbles prayers to the ground where he s kneeling
A#
 Home is home is home is home is home is
A **Dm**
 House is house is house is] home is me
Dm
 All you people looking for your houses
C
 Don t throw your weight around, you might break your glasses
A# **A** **Dm**
 And if you do, you know you just can t see

Dm
 And then how are you to find the dawning of the day?
C **Bm**
 - Day is just a word I use to keep the dark at bay
Dm
 And people are imaginary, nothing else exists
C
 Except the room I m sitting in
Bm
 And, of course, the all-pervading mist
Dm **C** **A#** (**Em** **C**) **Dm**
 Sometimes I wonder if even that s real

D# **F** **Em** **D#** **D**
 Maybe I should de-louse this place
D# **F** **Em** **D#** **D**
 Maybe I should de-place this louse
D# **Gm** **D#** **F** **Gm**
 Maybe I ll maybe my life away
D# **F** **Gm** **D#** **D**
 In the confines of this silent house
D# **F** **Gm** **D#** **D** **D#** **F** **Gm** **D#** **D**
 Sometimes it s very scary here; sometimes it s very sad
D# **Gm** **D#** **F** **Gm** **D#** **F** **Gm** **D#D**
 Sometimes I think I ll disappear; sometimes I think