

# Rock n roll stars

Imaginary stories of rock music

Enrico Mattioli

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## DEDICATIONS

The events narrated in this book are the result of imagination and love for the characters treated, but exist only in my fantasy. It's all fiction, of course.

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## IMAGINARY STORIES OF ROCK MUSIC

Johnny B. Boogie is the owner of this imaginary pub where he can meet his idols. It's everyone's dream, basically, and Johnny manages to make it happen in his mind.

His name comes from the famous song by Chuck Berry, *Johnny B. Goode*, because according to Johnny B. Boogie, in the rock and roll scene everyone should be called "Johnny something" and this consideration is a tribute to the great Chuck as supposed father of rock music; so, even the waiters are called Johnny B. Strong, Johnny B. Bup, Johnny Stand By, Johnny B. Cool.

Johnny B. Boogie is an eccentric fan, but not a dangerous one, a gloomy guy who has shut down to escape the greyness of life and who loves so much rock stars to accept their limits, excesses, contradictions; even the betrayals: who can show such loyalty?

Johnny evokes their spirit and his idols come to the rescue to shake him, as if they were an inner voice or a speaking soul. Life is hard and often the only thing left is the consolation of a beer.



## 1 MISTER PETE

Mister Pete, the glorious guitarist who smashed guitars, said - I am like a big stone against that everyone is going to piss against, slowly crumbling.

I was a faithful reader of Rockstar, the music magazine created in 1980 and one day I read Pete's interview. I applauded him and made him my second supposed uncle, along with Keith Richards.

I love these people. They were my education. They sacrificed themselves to teach us to stay in the world. Yes, I know I'm exaggerating, but I've already said that they were (and still are) my idols. Now I'm just a little bit more cheeky than before, they'll forgive me, but who doesn't will get it soon and so, it's better to jump over.

I have many things, but they are all imaginary. I have a personal and abstract vocabulary in which I break down some terms by modifying the meanings. And I have an imaginary pub where the beer does not make you sweat after a few minutes like a fountain. And I can smoke cigar or cigarette because it certainly won't do you any harm.

Sitting at my table next to the window, I watch the street go on the street waiting for some of the mentioned men to come and see me. We talk about the times gone by, I can ask every question because in my pub they relax and aren't moody even if this depends on the questions. Rock stars are animals and like beasts have that particular intuition to know when to trust. They trust me, I won't be a prince of the intellect, but I will not betray them.

The fact that some are dead and others are still on this earth is not a strange story because it's not about going beyond time and space and matter. It's about the messages they have left or the things they have said. They talk about life, bullshit, and good moments.

So I said, indeed, I wrote, that I was reflecting on Mister Pete's statement about the stone where he would go to dig. In fact, everything changes. Our body (although we do everything to hide the signs that time leaves), our ideas (not always but sometimes), our personalities (for instinct of defence), but also change things around us. The places we have went, the people, your idols, your customs, your habits and your needs.

One day, referring to the verse of My Generation (I want to die before I'm old) I said to Pete, "Is it really you that talks about the stone that crumbles?"

"Why?" he asked.

"It's a contradiction," I responded. – "First you wanted to die and now you're talking about resisting time?"

"Ah, damn that verse. It only got me a bunch of scratches. Let's go, everyone is trying to resist. What should I do? Kill myself to be consistent?"

"Ah, kill myself to be consistent: beautiful, this could be the verse for another song, Pete..."

"Everyone in rock has written verses on rocks that roll... and mine isn't a verse, but only a damn interview!"

"Everyone who?"

"Well Dylan, and also Muddy Waters, who gave the name to the Rolling Stones..."

"Ah, Dylan..."

"Oh sure, everyone fills your mouth with Dylan..."

"Dylan is Dylan..."

"What do you mean? No, tell me: what are you referring to with this? Am I not at the same level as Dylan?"

"You don't like Dylan?"

"Of course I like Dylan."

"And so?"

"Well, I smashed guitars. Understand?"

"No."

He took a sip and thought for a minute. His lips were shaking while savouring the beer. Then he said, "Me neither. I usually find myself in front of a journalist who says yes. It's a way of turning a page. Clear?"

"Oh yes, now it's clear."

"Good. It's only rock and roll, after all", he said, looking at me cautiously, indicating not to add anything, knowing full well that he had quoted a piece of the Stones. I just kept asking what relationship he kept with them, with the Rolling Stones. He didn't answer straight away, he grimaced.

"I love Mick," he tells to me.

“And Keith?” I asked clumsily. Pete didn’t add anything else, so I explained to him that even Keith Richards considered him unkempt as he did, like Pete, in short. He mumbled a series of epithets in archaic English (I must add, to make it easier to understand, that in this strange place a common language is spoken but insults are in the mother tongue of everyone) of which I only understood the repeated use of fucking and fucking. I thought it would be best to stay silent for a few moments and let him cool down. I changed tactics, trying to flatter him.”

“I like your solo album”.

“Which one?”.

“White City”.

“Ah, to remember White city fighting,” Pete sang, proud”.

“Great album, Pete, well done”.

“Yeah. When you leave a group like mine, all solo projects are claims.”

“As in?”

“Well, it’s like saying, this is me. I’m the best one.”

“My fans love all members of the disbanded groups”.

“I know. But it’s right to reiterate. So much for playing.”

“Do you like this beer?”.

“Yes. I’ll take another”.

Pete stands up and goes towards the counter. He orders and returns to the table.

On the small stage there was a guy playing Billy Bragg's pieces including *Greetings To The New Brunette*. When the verb with *another pint of beer* came, I always moved. It also went that way this time. Pete came over and approached the boy. On the second lap of the piece, when he was about to repeat the verse, Pete joined the choir *another pint of beer*, mimed the guitar solo, finished the drawer and pulled the mug on the floor, splitting it as if it had been his old guitar, as if it was the old times. Then he said goodbye, approached the cashier, paid for what he drank and disappeared with all the answers that time I did not have time to ask.

I went out and saw him moving away. Mister Pete has a unique walk: short steps and then he jumps, like when he’s on the stage in front of the crowd, he twisted his arm on the guitar.

I smiled, fixated on the pub's sign, and I watched the sea which obviously was not there.



## 2 MISTER KEITH

I have many things, but they are imaginary. Rock has meant a lot and continues to represent a lot. I need it, and yet music is not enough for me. I want them, those who made rock and by doing it, they fucked me forever too.

Inventing a place like this was the only way to deal with my beloved ones. It is all in my head; it is just in my imagination. It is just rock and roll.

It is a sacred place, the pub. Holiness and rock and roll: well, you know how it is, right? The benches, the tables, the urban style and its metropolitan atmosphere, this monastic silence that fuels the imagination, or maybe it is just the beer's fault that makes me rave, who cares?

Two guys sit three tables away from mine. The jingling of their mugs awakens me from my considerations. When they recognize the man who enters and sits at my table, the two keep turning around. I am not jealous, I am just annoyed by steady gazes.

- It happens because you're not used to it - the man says.
- Oh, hello uncle. Do you read thoughts too?
- I've seen so many, that I've developed certain skills...
- Oh, without a doubt...
- Well, so, what the hell do you want?
- I read your book.
- Good.
- It's nice.
- Uhm...
- A life as a real scum of rock. Beautiful stone, couldn't miss in my bookshelf.
- Yeah, I think so too, but...
- What?

- Come on, after all these bowing and scraping, you're about to tell me something you didn't like...

- No. I mean...

- So what?

- Ok. Why that chapter on Mick's dick?

- Oh, I didn't spoil the image of anyone. Mick, however, couldn't compete with Hendrix's manhood or the one of Zappa... nor with mine, after all...

- I think it wasn't correct to dwell on the dimensions of Mick's sex...

- Are you kidding? These are interesting things. Fans go crazy, ah, ah, ah...

- I wonder what was the need to dwell on such a question...

- It seems to me that you take it on a personal level.

- Why?

- Yes, it would seem that the matter concerned you: what's wrong, boy?

- Do you think there is something wrong? And then, we were talking about Mick: how would you react if someone speculated on your dick?

- I get it.

- What?

- Oh, forget it...

- No, tell me...

- It does not matter, Johnny!

- Yes, it matters to me...

- Ok. You don't get laid.

- Me?

- Oh, you can tell me. You're a loser, but I'd love you anyway.

- No... well... I... I mean, lately I had a vertical collapse in this sector, I just suffered a serious recession and my quotations are a bit in depreciation...

- Just a bit?

- Well, come on, surely I'm not Mick!

- Why are you interested in Mick so much?

- Listen: I too think Mick is a bit...

- Hey: be careful on what you say. I'm the only one allowed to insult Mick.

His ways are peremptory and convincing, and I am just a guy who shows some respect. Maybe too much. Yes, I am too devoted to all those who have torn my soul off. He wears strange green shoes that look like butterfly wings.

- I didn't mean to insult anyone.

- All right.

- The part about your mother, however, that is moving. Eh, *Malaguena*...

- Yep.
- And then...
- Listen: stop it, Johnny! You broke my balls, you know?
- Well, but I...
- That's beautiful, that other part is ugly... has nothing to do with this shit, you know? That's just how it went. It's not a problem of what you like or not.
- It was just to talk...
- Can they serve a Jack Daniel's in this fucking place?
- Well, really...
- It's just a shithole. Where did you invite me, Johnny?
- Beer is from an excellent workmanship...
- Excellent workmanship... you speak like a tailor, do you know that?
- Eh, a tailor...
- Beer did you say?
- Yes, there's the red ale that...
- Red?
- Yes, red.
- And can they add a little vodka to that red ale in this fucking pub?
- Well...
- Ok. A red ale. Smooth, Johnny, please.
- Fine. You'll have it right away.
- See Johnny, you do not have to be so submissive...
- But for me you are...
- I'm just an asshole like everyone else. I'm just an equation.
- An equation?
- Yes, Johnny. I am a dude who has been elevated to some power, but shortening the basis, he becomes like the other numbers, do you understand? Try to see me without projections. And forgive my whims.

He takes his shoes with butterfly wings off. He puts his tired feet on my legs. He stares at me and lights a cigarette. He blows on my face the smoke coming out of his poor lungs is.

- Do you know Johnny? You're a great boy.

Then, barefoot, he climbs on the small stage and with his acoustic guitar, he plays a piece.

- This is for my friend Johnny B. Boogie.

It's *Malaguena*. In the end, he goes out. He takes the beer and leaves the green shoes. I run after him.

- Hey, Keef: the shoes!

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- They're yours, Johnny. This life runs off quickly, but you put wings on your feet and try to fly!



### 3 MISTER JOHN

The things that I possess are all imaginary and no one can take them away from me. I know two things that fuel the imagination: music and beer. Apart from the sex, which can satisfy (or not satisfy), even if after all, rock and roll is indeed sex, then you return to the starting point.

You cannot say that following the rhythm of someone like the King of Boogie, something does not go off in your stomach that pushes lower, and that then you do not crave fucking. Whether it does it or not, you know that thing can free your inner animal. I know many guitarists who have sex going to the rhythm of someone else's guitar. It is a good workout. What to say? I am short of breath.

*Is it possible to drink or eat something in this place?*

I look at the man. I am paralyzed: he is the King of Boogie! Now it seems to me that just thinking of them, the ghosts materialize.

- I'll take care of it, Mister John: Johnny, bring a beer! - I say to Johnny B. Strong.

- Ok, Johnny - replies B. Strong.

- Johnny, prepare some chips: quick! - I say to Johnny Stand By.

- Five minutes and they're ready, Johnny - answers Stand By.

- What a mess, Johnny: but is everyone called Johnny in this place? - The King asks me.

- Yes, it's because of Mister Chuck. You know, *Johnny B. Goode*...

- Why this homage to old Chuck?

- Because he is the father.

- Whose?

- Of rock and roll.

- I'm sorry to tell you, Johnny, no one knows exactly who the rock and

roll's father is.

- Oh... you don't say it for some loose ends with Mister Chuck, do you?
- No, not at all. And rock, it doesn't even have a mother, son...
- Oh... so, will it be a creation of the Holy Spirit?
- Do not be blasphemous, Johnny. My father was a Baptist preacher.
- Oh, I see.
- So, everyone here is called Johnny.
- Yes, it's one of our quirks.
- Yeah. And what are the others?
- Well ... actually, this is the *only one* quirk.
- Uh, it's a nice quirk.
- Really?
- No... but your beer is fine.
- Rise up your mug, to your health, King of Boogie.
- Yeah, that's how they all called me.
- There's something excellent about this.
- Excellent? You speak like a lord, son...
- You don't agree with me?
- We are all kings, somehow.
- Well, not everyone.
- Why? Are you not the king of this pub?
- In a sense...
- Not "*in a sense*": you are actually the King, in this place!
- You're convincing me - I reply. Then, I turn to Johnny B. Bup: - Hey, Johnny, bring me another draught. Immediately!
- Can't you take it by yourself, Johnny? I have to help Johnny B. Cool to get the beer drums off. They weigh like a damn!
- How dare you, Johnny? It's an order!
- What's wrong with you, Johnny?
- I'm the King of the pub, here's what's wrong!
- Well, so if you're the King of the pub, I'm the King of the beer counter, Johnny. So take it by yourself!

I look at the King of Boogie, astonished. I did not find confirmation of my new, alleged, self-consciousness. He says: - Don't get mad, Johnny. After all, everyone is the King in something. Do you understand?

- I'm afraid so. So it's no use being a king - I answer.
- It's for you, Johnny. It's needed for your self-esteem.
- Well, but...
- Listen, Johnny: I was not the King of Boogie because I was good or for a divine right. It's just that when I sang, I took your pain, I put it on my shoulders and I helped you carry it. In short, it's a metaphor, Johnny. That's why they said I was the King of Boogie.

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- Oh... but nobody tells me I'm the king of this pub!
- I say so, Johnny. This is a wonderful place, where I can come and stay in peace to refresh myself. And for this, you are the king of this pub.
- Oh, thank you very much. Actually, yours is a different vision.
- It's the blues, Johnny, a way of life, like meditation or praying or whatever you believe in.
- I do not have a thing to believe in.
- Well, you believe in blues, in rock, in music, in beer.
- This is true.
- Of course it's true.
- But there's something I don't like.
- And what?
- That sooner or later, a king has to abdicate, before someone takes the throne from under his ass.
- It's not like that, you know Johnny? Not in music...
- What do you mean?
- Well, you think I'm dead, but let me tell you something: it's not like that.
- Isn't it??
- No: I live in the soul of all those who still listen to my guitar playing, do you understand me? So, I'm still the King of the Boogie, despite everything.
- You know why I chose to call me Johnny B. Boogie?
- Of course I know. It is no coincidence that I have come here. This blues is for you, Johnny B. Boogie.



## 4 MISS JANIS

I possess all imaginary things and sometimes I feel I was wrong. I escaped, I isolated myself from the world where I felt inadequate, to take refuge in this place: it is only here that I find my harmony. Loneliness is a drug, I am not able to calmly face the events and so I let nothing happen in my life. I watch it slip away, nothing has changed since I was a boy, is this a good thing?

Everyone has found a way, in one way or another, everyone managed to integrate and grow. There is an irreproachable sentence in the logic of the broadcast, and it is just that I am a good-looking failure, an outcast who tries to hide his condition. Suffering is difficult to manage.

- This world's logic is stupid, Johnny.

- Oh, you girl, yeah you: I have to look like a fool to you, right?

- Can you buy me a red ale, Johnny? I heard it is very good.

- Oh, of course: Johnny - I say to Johnny B. Strong - a beer for her. And one for me.

- Right away, Johnny - he replies.

- We were saying? - I ask her.

- No need to repeat - she says - I listened to you. You have no secrets for me, Johnny...

- Oh God, it's such a relief not to have to repeat... I don't want to bore you...

- Oh, come on, you're my Bobby McGee, sweetie...

- It's an honour...

- Oh, don't be so complaisant though, Johnny...

- Eh, everyone tell me the same...

- I know, the word has spread, Johnny... you are our idol...

- No, do not say that, please...

- *Na nana nana* ... feeling good is easy...
- Oh, yeah...
- This place makes me feel good, Johnny...
- You make me feel good!
- I'm happy, Johnny. Don't pay attention to what people say, let them do it, an it's from the girl one who was elected *ugliest man of the campus*, when I was at university...
- Well.
- Well, it mustn't be easy when you're young...
- No. Well, those memories are bitter... ah, my juvenile acne...
- Yeah...
- Do you know what I envy you, Johnny?
- You to me? And what?
- You are not afraid of loneliness. I was terrified of it...
- I don't have your voice...
- I was afraid it would abandon me, a fucking fear, Johnny...
- Well, it never abandoned you.
- No, it was just a fear. It seems that your head doesn't stop offering you bad thoughts... this is what scared me of loneliness, Johnny... but then I realized that those thoughts were just words. And I used them, singing them out.
- Making love with twenty thousand people...
- Ugh, do not get all moralist.
- It was just to say...
- It's the blues, Johnny, it's all here, there's not much else...
- Yeah, easy to say...
- Ah, how good this place makes me feel!
- You can come whenever you want, do you know?
- I know, sweetie...
- Sure.
- Do you know what we're doing now, Johnny?
- What are we going to do?
- We'll drink another beer!
- Of course!
- But you don't be so complaisant, Johnny!
- No, as if...
- Oh, how I feel good in this place!
- You... you're so beautiful when you're happy...
- You're a good man, Johnny...
- Thanks...
- Now I'll do one thing just for you, Johnny, but you don't think about being a failure anymore.
- All right.

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- Fragility, what is the use of concealing it? Give some punch in the wind, Johnny. It will be like facing life.

- Yeah.

- And remember: every time I'll see a postcard with *Johnny's pub folks*, I'll run to see you, Johnny.

- Good.

- Ok? The next song is a readaptation. It's called, *Me and Johnny B. Boogie...*



## 5 MISTER CHUCK

I have many things but...

- Hey, you: I'm looking for a guy named Johnny.
- Everyone here is called Johnny.
- Yeah, but I'm looking for the most Johnny of all!
- Hey, buddy, try to calm down. Would you mind have a beer?
- Do you think you can buy me with a beer?
- What's the problem, bro?
- I'm not your brother, okay?
- Ok.
- The problem is that there's an asshole who calls himself Johnny B. Boogie, because of one of my songs, which you'll certainly know, *Johnny B. Goode*...
- Oh, Mister Chuck... I'm the asshole!
- Uh, it's you? I'm about to hit you in the face, boy...
- Well, but I thought...
- Do you know what happens to those who think wrong as you?
- Look, Chuck...
- And don't call me Chuck, I already said that I'm not your brother...
- How do you want to be called?
- Mister Chuck it's fine.
- Ok. Mister Chuck, mine is only admiration. For me you are the father of rock and roll...
- What? Don't even try: Chuck has four children but has no heirs, ok?
- The thing is...
- Don't you have a personality of your own, asshole? Didn't your father give you a name?
- Hum, well, I don't know who my father is...

- Uh... and why don't you try to find him instead of pissing me off?
- You're right Chuck... I mean, Mister Chuck.
- You got yourself into a big trouble, boy...
- I'm sorry...
- Ah, are you sorry?
- How can we do?
- Now I have to hit you, do you understand?
- Oh...
- It's for your own good...
- But...
- But first, is it possible to drink something in this fucking place?
- Red ale?
- Ok, red ale!
- Ah... congratulations, uh, Mister Chuck...
- For what?
- Your daughter is a very good actress... and she's also a hot chick...
- I didn't know she was an actress...
- Isn't Halle Berry your daughter?
- Who?
- She's a great actress...
- And why would I be the father of all those called Berry?
- Oh, I did a blooper...
- And anyway, if she had been my daughter, you'd have already thought of taking her to your room, right, Johnny? Is that how you bring me respect?
- Well, you said she's not your daughter...
- What does that have to do with anything? *If she had been my daughter*, I said, and you had the thought anyway...
- Well, but...
- This thing is serious: my daughter, Johnny, do you realize? No, I have to hit you and I'll hit you harder... but after another beer...
- OK, Mister Chuck. Hey, Johnny, another beer for Mr Chuck...
- He's traveling, Johnny - he's Johnny B. Strong.
- For me, everyone should be called Johnny in the rock field - I tell Mr Chuck.
- And why? - He says.
- I told you: for *Johnny B. Goode*. You are the father of rock...
- Ok, all right, Johnny, you understand nothing but I know you're saying certain things out of admiration.
- Of course, Mister Chuck.
- Now, though, the beer is over and I just have to do it, Johnny.
- What?
- Hit you.

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- Well, after all, it's an honour for me...
- Stop that...
- Thanks Mister Chuck...
- Well no...
- Thing?
- You're too complaisant...
- Me?
- Johnny, there's no fun on beating you.
- Don't say that, Mister Chuck...
- You disappointed me, Johnny, you do not deserve my hits...
- Oh...
- I'm going Johnny...
- No, Mister Chuck, I beg you, hit me: it's a great pleasure for me...
- That's enough, Johnny, you're also a masochist: how disgusting!
- Ok. Do you know what's up?
- What?
- Mister Chuck looks like a McDonald's sandwich name!

SBRANG!

- Thanks, Mister Chuck, nice shot!
- I warned you, Johnny... and stay away from my daughter!



## 6 MISS PATTI

I have things that are imaginary and I have reached a self-awareness: I am satisfied and did not know it. Yes, it is paradoxical, but only in appearance. When ignorance falls, awareness appears in its right size.

I was standing in front of a clothing store's window looking at sweaters, sweatshirts and trousers with no interest. I thought how long it is since I bought piece of clothing. Years ago, when I did not feel right, I used to spend money buying anything compulsively: clothes, movies, perfumes. I did it a lot, owning my insecurity for a while, but when its level came down, I had to go back to spending. Then, I do not remember when, this process has stopped. I probably bought all the music that was possible and now it is enough for me. I find myself in this place of imaginary things, I do not possess anything concretely, I only have what I need. I do not care about my looking, or rather, I care the reasonable minimum, I am learning to overcome the people's gossips, I am just what I am. It is true that I am alone, I only frequent the world of fantasy and I cannot keep in time with reality. Besides that, I feel good.

- Oh, it's a nice profile, Johnny.
- The great poetess!
- I'm just one who works.
- The only poetess, actually...
- They warned me that you were too complaisant, Johnny.
- I love who overcomes the concept of celebrity to just be a person. And so are you.
- You too, I like who accepts them for who they are.
- You're too complaisant...
- Didn't I hear this already?
- Yes, it's my charge...

- You drink red ale in this place, right?
- Of course.
- One, please.
- Johnny? Red ale at this table.
- It's on its road, Johnny - Johnny B. Strong replies.

Johnny B. Strong, approaches with two pints of beer. He looks at her and says: *it's a real pleasure, Mrs Patti*. She smiles: *the pleasure is mine*. Johnny B. Strong engages in an improbable bow and gets back behind the counter. He puts music on background: *Because the night*, which with all the abundance of available material, it must be the first one he found.

- Oh Jesus: I've never seen him do something like that, to anyone! - I confess to her.

- Complaisance is the parameter by which you choose the staff, apparently! – She laughs.

- It seems so!

- Nice place, it's quiet. The ideal place to sit down and collect notes. I live by words, Johnny.

- Oh, your words... many say that music is important, that it comes first...

- It is not a standard process. And then, for me it's different. I've always loved writing, so...

- You have very powerful lyrics...

- Mmh...

- *People have the Power* is strong, Mrs Patti. The thing of dreaming and hunting the fools...

- Oh Yeah...

- I've always seen rock music as a great international party...

- What party?

- Politic.

- Ugh... I don't know if I agree...

- Why?

- I'm not a politician, I just try to communicate. It is the politicians who manage the resources, even if they also have different balances and interests to deal with.

- So?

- Changes always take place over an extended period of time. Following these plots, the rock musician is likely to end up being the donor of vain hopes, he can convince public opinion and lend his face, but then politic has its biblical times. In reality, human beings love to complicate their lives.

- Yes, this last concept sums up everything...

- We have to go on and don't give up, Johnny ...

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- I guess it was not easy for you...
- Well, I had two children when I lost my husband, a bank account in the red like this beer. I had to work and look after the boys. Daily problems like any other woman. It was not like a star's life, rather it looked like a housewife's diary.
- You are...
- Listen: I'm sorry I can't to respond to the cliché you have of a musician, but...
- Are you kidding? I'm looking for normality in musicians, even if this can disappoint somebody, but not me!
- Good, Johnny.
- Oh, that's right, you can swear.
- This beer is good.
- Well, it's just a normal red ale, like all the others...
- Ah, ah, ah...
- Why are you laughing?
- Oh, don't be offended, but ...
- What?
- *A normal ale like many others*: trying to be coherent to please me again?
- No, it's... well...
- There is nothing wrong with exceptionality, when it is authentic: this beer is really good.
- Exceptionality... like meeting the Pope?
- He is one who carries his cross, for better or for worse. After all, we all carry a cross, right Johnny?
- You are able to simplify everything: it's extraordinary!
- Nice paradox, Johnny, congratulations...
- Oh, I know, sometimes I'm so awkward...
- No, it's fun. Really.
- Thank you.
- Don't you have a girlfriend, Johnny?
- Me?
- Yes you.
- No.
- What's the problem?
- I don't know.
- Mmh...
- I need to feel comfortable, I can not follow the rhythms of life. I observe, but I cannot participate. You know what I mean?
- I think so. Yet, one day you will find a girl, Johnny.
- Oh ... maybe I'll too play them *Because the night!*
- Nice choice, Johnny. Good luck!



## 7 MISTER SYD

Late at night. A man wanders out of the pub, he has a bag of laundry in his hand. He wears a t-shirt with *I am Mister Syd* wrote on it. He seems confused, as if he were lost. He stays still and observes the moon. How many verses have been recited to the moon?

In the world of imagination, there happen most of the things, for the rest we live in a state of generic immobility. Someone said that we use only one part of our brain: what happened to the other?

The man enters in the pub. He looks mild, he studies the environment, and then he looks at me.

- You're a weird guy – he says to me.
- Did you listen to me?
- Yes, you ask strange questions...
- And you could answer me?
- Well, I was just looking for a laundry to wash my shirts.
- At this time of the night?
- I couldn't sleep.
- I see...
- ...and then, I like to stay in the laundry, there smells clean...
- Oh, sure...
- I relax in the laundry...
- Yeah...
- Always better than watching television, right?
- You are right...
- You are very complaisant...
- Eh, everyone says so...
- Nice place: what is it?
- It's a pub!

- Uh... and you don't happen to have washing machines?
- No, we just have some mellow red ale...
- I was looking for a laundry, my friend, however, now that I'm here I'd like some fruit juice...
- I'm sorry. We do not have fruit juices...
- I see...
- What can I give you?
- Oh... so, what could I take? Do you have some water?
- Yes, I would say yes...
- Then fresh water, thank you...
- Good. Johnny? – I say to Johnny B. Strong – a pitcher of water...
- Fresh, please... – Says Mr Syd.
- He's daydreaming, Johnny – Johnny B. Strong replies.
- Dude, so you can't tell me where I can find a laundry to wash my t-shirts?
- No, I'm sorry...
- I'll try to find it by day...
- I'm sure you'll find it...
- Let's hope...
- Here's your water, my friend...
- Thanks, Johnny... it's really cold... and then it's refreshing...
- Yup...
- You know Johnny, I heard you before, while you were thinking... sometimes I happen to dream...
- Uh, come on Mr Syd, tell me about your dreams...
- Well, they're very short dreams...
- Describe them...
- Do you really want to know?
- Are you kidding? Of course...
- Well, so... I... it's kind of an unusual dream, actually...
- Don't worry...
- I... in the dream... I play in a successful rock band...
- And do you like it?
- It's the best thing that can happen... but then I wake up and go back on my feet... it's not easy to be in a successful rock band...
- Why?
- You have to swim forward, I'm someone who needs to float.
- It's a confusing image, but it conveys the idea...
- You know, Johnny, the mind is... a wild animal, most people can tame it... it's an organ inside a case, basically, and it tends to free itself...
- Oh... what you say is deep...
- Thanks Johnny. Can you tell me what time the laundry opens?
- Tomorrow morning, Mr Syd.

ROCK N ROLL STARS – imaginary stories of rock music -

- Do you mind if I wait here?
- No, of course.
- This is a nice place.
- Thanks, Mr Syd.
- Yes, I feel good. It's big but quiet, you can rest... and then, nobody is looking for you.
- Does it bother you when they're looking for you?
- Well, I don't have much to say... I go shopping, I go out for a walk, I take care of the garden...
- A quiet life...
- Yes, a quiet life... do you mind if I take a nap?
- No, here you can rest as much as you wan...
- But you wake me up when the laundry opens...
- Sure.
- Maybe I'll have a good dream...
- Good rest, Mister Syd...
- Oh, Johnny, you're very kind...



## 8 MISS DEBBIE

I have many imaginary things. In this place, I feel at home. I like to sit at the table sipping beer and looking out the window at the afflicted world. I do not have many interests besides music and I only have imaginary things, but maybe I have already said that.

- Hi Johnny!
- Hello Miss Debbie.
- Such a nice pub...
- Oh, it's not like the CBGB...
- I'm telling you it's ok, Johnny, I've been hanging out on many places...
- Well, thank you... well, I'm not Mr Kristal...
- Everyone's what he is, Johnny...
- Yeah...
- Why be another when you can be yourself?
- I don't know where to start...
- You've already started, Johnny...
- You think?
- I trust you.

It is a magic word: no one has ever told me *I trust you*. It instils itself like a mantra. In front of me, the most famous blondie in the *new wave* scene is saying nice things to me. It does not happen often. People rarely say nice things, they rather keep them for themselves.

- Do you like my boots, Johnny?
- Yes, they go nice with leather pants...
- Well, I didn't find these in the trash...
- You are very sexy...
- You say?

- Absolutely...
- You're my baby, Johnny...
- Oh...
- You should distract yourself, Johnny...
- Well, it's not easy...
- You should go out, meet people...
- I...
- What?
- It bothers me to see people...
- And why?
- I don't know, maybe because too many have a high opinion of themselves...
- Is it possible to drink something, Johnny?
- Oh, of course: Johnny – I tell to Johnny B. Strong - two red ales at the table, please.

*They are on their way* - he replies. He is a good waiter, Johnny. It has the ability to forecast the orders, after all it is not that difficult, what can you drink in a pub if not beer? Nevertheless, he really is good. He arrives at the table visibly excited.

- It's a real pleasure, Miss Debbie - he says - you're beautiful!
- Thanks - she replies.
- Oh, I've never seen him do anything like that to anyone! - I say.
- Come on, Johnny, I bet it's a little game you do with everyone...
- I swear not... I mean, not with everyone...
- Do you like sex, Johnny?
- Well, quite enough...
- *Well, quite enough?* It seems like you don't like it at all...
- No... yes, I like it...
- No? Yes? What's the problem, Johnny?
- No problem, Miss Debbie.
- So what?
- In my opinion, too much importance has been given to sex...
- You don't say...
- ... and this is sometimes counterproductive...
- Here it is Johnny and his new punk provocation: *Stop sex!*
- Uh, you make fun of me...
- You really don't want to tell me what the problem is, Johnny?
- Maybe I'm a little numb...
- Numb? I bet the gun you have in the holster could cause a massacre, Johnny...
- You say?

ROCK N ROLL STARS – imaginary stories of rock music -

- Do you know what the problem is, Johnny?
- Which?
- You think too much.
- About sex?
- No, in general... and when you think too much, things appear more serious than they really are...
- Who knows, maybe it's like that...
- A journey begins with the first step, Johnny...
- Yeah...
- You should distract yourself, Johnny...
- I know, but it's not that easy...
- Try to laugh more. Do you never dance, you, Johnny?
- Oh, no, I can't...
- You can't? Anyone can dance, you just have to move a little...
- I feel embarrassed...
- About what?
- Of what I am... I feel uncomfortable when I move...
- You could use a little dance, Johnny...
- I don't know how to do...
- Close your eyes and let yourself go... follow me...



## 9 MISTER CHEETA

I have many things, but they are all imaginary. If the city is a jungle, this pub is an oasis. After all, we are all like pets. Why pets? Because we just adapted to the place in which we were, if we really lived in a jungle, we would get used to the tribal rituals. And to jungle's times.

Rock and roll is the sound of the jungle, but it reflects big cities too. The metropolis and the jungle are different and the same, rock captures both souls. If Tarzan had lived in the city, with his wild screams he would have been the front man of a rock band.

- Hello Friend.
- I'm sorry: monkeys can't stay in this place.
- Do I look like a monkey?
- Well... yes...
- No, man, I'm the father of rock and roll...
- Oh... you know how many monkeys think they're the fathers of rock and roll?
- I not "think I am", I "am" its father...
- Oh, of course... well, what can I do for you?
- I want a beer...
- I can't give you a beer...
- And why?
- Monkeys don't drink beer...
- And who do you think you are to decide what others drink?
- I'm Johnny B. Boogie and I manage this place.
- Johnny B. Boogie... it has a nice rock and roll sound, good!
- Thank you.
- Listen, B. Boogie: who taught Sir Mick the dance?
- Don't tell me it was you...

- Oh yeah!
- Well, Sir Mick, really dances just like a monkey!
- Sure. Ah, but don't think it's easy...
- What: to teach Sir Mick to dance?
- No... to dance like a monkey!
- You say?
- Well, Sir Mick is really good...
- Yes, he gets by...
- Have you ever been in the jungle, B. Boogie?
- Well, I... no, I don't understand much about jungle... the only jungle I've seen is the one of Tarzan...
- Yeah, Tarzan... don't let me start on that...
- Ok.
- No, but I can tell you...
- What?
- No, better not!
- As you want...
- Actually, I want to tell you...
- Let's see...
- Jane...
- So?
- Her and me, I mean... you understand, right?
- Oh, that's good...
- It's the truth...
- Mah...
- I'm telling you it's true! She never had enough... in the end, I had to stop it...
- Really?
- Yes and then...
- And then?
- I was a close friend of Tarzan...
- Yeah, such a great friend that you take advantage of her woman...
- Well, what can I say, when it breaks out, passion becomes an uncontrollable feeling!
- Sure.
- In addition, you could perceive the affair from de TV, so when he was jumping through the lianas to go into the jungle leaving us alone, the audience began to giggle...
- Seriously?
- I'm telling you: don't say you never noticed it!
- Now that you mention, yes, I think you could perceive the affair...
- Of course you perceived it...
- Uh, what can I say? It's life...

ROCK N ROLL STARS – imaginary stories of rock music -

- Hey, B. Boogie...
- What's up?
- Would you buy me a beer?
- Why should I buy you a beer?
- We are friends, I could... offer you protection... you know, sometimes unpleasant things happen, when one is without protection...
- Are you threatening me on the sly?
- No... no threat... I'm just warning you, B. Boogie...
- Oh, thanks...
- And where you at with licences and stuff?
- Which licence?
- The licence for the pub...
- All set, no problem.
- I... I'd like to propose a deal.
- What deal?
- Would you like to become the exclusive retailer of a new product?
- What product?
- Alfalfa.
- What?
- It's a plant that grows back home...
- You want to sell that stuff in my pub? I would get in trouble sooner than now!
- No. You just have to use caution: no names. No Maria or Marianna, only alfalfa.
- You are crazy...
- It's all perfectly legal... it is a plant deprived of its hallucinogenic properties that only offers a relaxing effect...
- Really?
- I'm telling you, it is like an infusion, only that instead of drinking it, you smoke it.
- Well, if you make sure it's legal...
- Of course, my friend, I have a little taste with me... try...
- Yes, after all even cats use catnip, right?
- Yes, friend, no problem, you'll thank me, you'll see...



## 10 SIR MICK

Bad feelings. I talked too much and when you expos, you're vulnerable. I designed this place for not having trouble. Negative vibrations are diseases that should be nipped in the bud to avoid proliferation: some influences take possession of your mind and this paralyses your body leaving you at the mercy of a threat that is only virtual. The succession of your acts, influenced by that state of tension, is such that those feared things actually happen in the end. Or, much simpler, I smoked too much and the alfalfa was not exactly free of hallucinogenic substances...

- Hello Sir.
- May I introduce myself?
- Oh, there's no need...
- I'm a polished man...
- I know well...
- Ok Johnny. Do you like playing with darkness?
- Oh no, I would never dare...
- And yet you did it, Johnny...
- Me? Never, I can swear...
- No, Johnny, don't swear...
- If you're referring to the meeting with Mr Keith...
- Keith is my brother, Johnny...
- Well, of course, I know...
- Oh, play with my fame, Johnny, what a misery: after what I did for you...
- Please: what have you done for me?
- I sing for you too, Johnny...
- Oh, well... this seems a bit speculative...
- Johnny, Johnny... how could you do that?

– Well, there must have been a misunderstanding, and yet, I apologize anyway...

– Johnny: don't be so complaisant...

– I'm duly sorry...

– Look at me Johnny: straight in the eye!

– Oh... oh... uh... ooooo... uuuuh... uah... oh yeah...

– Do you like it, Johnny?

– Oh... Uh...

– Ok, Johnny. You see it? I'm taking advantage of you.

– Oh... oh... by Jove!

– You had your first lesson.

– Which lesson are you talking about?

– An intercourse starts from the head, Johnny.

– Uh... oh...

– Another bit, Johnny?

– Oh...

– No. That's all. So you learn.

– Oh...

– Second lesson: I always decide, how and when; and how much. Ok?

– Ok.

– Do not forget.

– All right.

– Set up a table and bring me food, Johnny. I'm hungry bastard!

– Do you want to drink too?

– What do you think?

– Red ale?

– Red ale is fine... oh, what kind of place have I come to here?

I set the table up and serve him myself. He seems disappointed.

– Anyway, I want you to know, that I never played with your fame...

– Uh, no?

– No!

– And what did you say to Mr Cheeta?

– What a son of a bitch! It was him who said you took his way of dancing...

– Good Johnny. Watch me.

He climbs on the ceiling beams like a real monkey, does all his monkey moves, takes a fake banana from the plastic fruit basket and then throws it at my face, claps his hands like a monkey, and then mumbles (and also sings) like a monkey. Finally it freezes. He stares into my eyes.

ROCK N ROLL STARS – imaginary stories of rock music -

- Have you seen, Johnny? Do I look like a monkey?
- No!
- That's right, Johnny.
- In fact, in my opinion, it is the monkey who copied your way of dancing...
- Sure, Johnny. It's like that.
- Sure. No doubt about this.
- Good Johnny. You had your third lesson.
- Oh...what?
- It is the power of persuasion.
- What is that?
- Oh, let it be. Be a good boy and let me eat...
- All right.
- Hey, Johnny...
- Yes...
- You should stop smoking that junk... you smell like a mess!
- I'm sorry...
- I would appreciate some decency, when they serve me food...



## 11 MR. KEITH, MR. JAMES, MR. JOHN

The things I have are imaginary, but the things that fuck with me are real. The Johnny's pub waiters, Johnny B. Strong and Johnny B. Cool, the two chefs, Johnny B. Bup and Johnny Stand By, join in free association and claim rights: paid holidays and leave, rests.

From this morning a sterile argument continues in which I try to make them reason.

– This initiative of Johnny's pub is like a *mission*, that is, you should feel involved, we are all *Johnny*, am I making my point?

– Yeah, but you want to be boss – says B. Cool.

– No... well, I thought it was implied – I answer – after all, among all of us, I am the most...

– The *most*, what? – Johnny B. Strong asks me threatening.

– ... no, just the most...

– So? – Says B. Cool.

– I am the most suitable to manage... after all, the idea is mine!

– And then don't you dare – B. Bup tops it off – the story of the *mission from God* has already been written!

– We're a big family, Johnny – I say to all four.

– You're good with rhetoric – says Johnny Stand By.

Silence falls on us. Everyone gets a beer to reflect. A white Limo parks right outside the Johnny's pub. Three guys get off and I seem to recognize one. They enter.

– Hello?

– Oh, hello Mr Keith. I'm sorry, it's closed.

– Are you crazy? I came with some friends...

I look at all three of them and I remain dumb.

- Hello, Johnny, are you okay? – Says the black guy.
- Johnny B. Boogie, my friend, we came for a little partying! – Says the robust one.
- Oh, it's such an honour... – I reply.
- Oh, don't be so complaisant – say these two in choir.
- We've known that here you can drink and that... you have some good alfalfa – says the robust one.
- Well, yes, but...
- What's the problem? – Mr Keith asks me.
- The staff is mutinying me... – I reply.
- How would it be? – He asks.
- We want holidays, permit, rest... – says Johnny B. Bup on behalf of all of them.
- It's fair – the black guy tells me – those brothers are right. Don't tell me that you are one of those who exploits other's work or I'll make you reason with some kicks...
- Do you know what the problem is with your place, Johnny? – Says Mr Keith.
- Tell me... – I answer.
- The beer is ok, nice pub, good music...
- ... even alfalfa... – says the robust.
- Yes, everything nice – Mr Keith resumes – but... – he pauses, looks around, baffled and spitting smoke from the nostrils.
- But? – I ask.
- But... you should hire some girl, Johnny – Mr Keith sentences.
- Yeah – says the black guy pointing at us – you're all men.
- Why are you all men? – The robust one asks us.
- *Because we're not women...* but what kind of a fucking question is it? – Answers Johnny Stand By.
- I meant: *why there are no women in this pub*, idiot! - Says the robust one.
- And yet – says Johnny B. Strong – you are all men too.
- And so? – Says the robust man – we are what we are.
- Right – the black man adds – you might not want to make a comparison with us!
- Go take it up in the ass! – The four of them say in chorus.
- B. Boogie – the black one tells me peremptory – you're doing good not granting rights to these four assholes!
- Uh, but we take our rights by ourselves! – Johnny B. Cool shouts.
- Calm down, people... – says Mr Keith. – Ok, Johnny. You need girls in this place. Women improve life, do you understand?

ROCK N ROLL STARS – imaginary stories of rock music -

- Yes, but weed too improves things – suggests the robust one.
- Yes, even weed – Mr Keith grins.
- So? – I ask.
- So – Mr Keith continues, – you have to hire girls, Johnny. Your business will grow...
- Eh, but where do I find girls? – I ask.
- He knows a lot of girls – says the black guy pointing to Mr Keith.
- Oh, I could give you a hand, Johnny – says Mr Keith. – Come with me to see the other rooms of the pub. Hey guys – he says to the black guy and the robust one – I'm around there with Johnny ...
- Good – they say.

We move away and I take him to see the bathrooms, the kitchen and the warehouse too.

- I could organize internships, then you choose the girl – says Mr Keith.
- Well – I answer.
- You know Johnny, I'd put a few more tables, maybe even outside...
- There's no need, Mr Keith...
- Those would be V.I.P. areas, Johnny...
- What do you mean?
- I like to think that when I come to see you, my table is free. It's a whim, Johnny, do you understand me?
- Yes, I think so...
- And then I would renovate the kitchen, Johnny...
- The kitchen is fine, Mr Keith...
- I know it's okay, Johnny, but if I say I'd renovate it, you should not contradict me, if you really love me... I explained myself, Johnny?
- Actually, I too believe that the kitchen must be renovated, Mr Keith...
- Very well, Johnny, as you wish. It means that I will renovate the kitchen...
- OK Mr Keith. I'll have to call a company.
- No, Johnny, what company... I will do it and you will help me.
- Good, but I don't know how to be a bricklayer or a painter...
- I'll take care of it, Johnny, you'll just have to look at me...



## 12 MISTER STUART

I cannot sleep tonight. There is a guy who lives in the apartment above the pub. He always comes back home very late, when my shop is already closed. Oh, you know the slabs that divide places: thin as sheets of paper and you could write all the impressions you feel when you don't get to sleep. Well, this guy who comes back very late and whose face I've never seen, is wearing leather boots that, in the silence of the deep night, make a big hustle on the floor. I follow the weight of his steps as he moves from one room to another and it is as if, in that gait sometimes nervous and sometimes slow, he would claim to exist.

- It's not easy to live in the shadows, Johnny.

The voice I hear comes from the other side of the pub, which is in the dark. I instantly recognize the guy, but I've only seen him on some photos: he didn't have time to show his light. He preceded the greatest musical noise of all time. Never so mocking and indecipherable was fate. Life, in some cases, is so cruel that it is impossible to take stock of any losses. I look at him and smile. He smiles too; He wears dark glasses and carries a sketchpad and a black pencil case that I assume contains crayons and pencils. He is reading a book whose cover I cannot see and keeps closed another book by Gregory Corso.

- Hi Johnny – he tells me.

- Oh, nice to meet you.

- Your place is nice.

- Thank you. Can I... buy you a beer?

- Yes, that's fine.

- Johnny – I tell Johnny B. Strong – two red ales at this table, please.

- They are on their way – he replies.

The guy gets up and takes a look at the walls. He caresses them, and then he stares at me and smiles again. He pulls out the pastels from their case. *May I?* He asks me. *You can do anything you want*, I answer.

- Ok, but do not be so complaisant – he laughs.  
- Oh, you too with this story...

He starts drawing on the only spare wall. He seems possessed. Slowly, the mural begins to take shape: four guys from behind, with insect bodies and human heads, that look at an erupting volcano from where musical notes explode.

- Do you like it? – He ask me.  
- It's nice – I answer.  
- It's the top of the peaks of the great peaks – he replies.  
- Oh... it's nice to have your testimony in my pub.  
- Everyone in their own life is forced to slam their feet to prove they exist. So the question is: why do you have to make all this noise to ask for some love?  
- Yeah. You are right. Unfortunately, I cannot answer your question.  
- Oh, relax Johnny. Neither can I. May we take a sip of your beer?  
- Yes: let's drink!

He takes off his glasses. He wets his lips. He sips, closes his eyes and tastes it.

- Good red ale!  
- Really?  
- Of course! I think we need another one, Johnny.  
- Sure. Johnny? - I say to Johnny B. Strong – Two more!  
- They are on their way, Johnny – he replies.  
- Thanks, Johnny – I say.  
- This is a nice place, Johnny – the painter says, looking around.  
- I put all of myself in it.  
- It reminds me a lot of Jacaranda, you know?  
- Really? Jac...  
- Yes, there is a nice atmosphere.  
- Your words make me really happy.  
- Yes, the words – he says closing the book he was reading.  
- Uh... what is it?  
- Ferlinghetti.

We remain with silence in the air and the fragrance beer in our throats.

- Do you know Johnny? I'm sorry I didn't let you sleep.
- What do you mean?
- I'm the one with the boots.
- Are you the one living upstairs?
- Let's say I was trying to get your attention.
- We're friends now, you can come whenever you want.
- Thanks Johnny. I'll leave you these — he tells me while taking his boots off.
- Well, they look good at the feet of this mural as a sign of your passage.



## 13 MISTER KEITH - TWO

I have many things, but they are imaginary, except music. Every action of my day is influenced by rock and roll, even painting the walls of a kitchen, then there is beer to soothe the low blows and raise the spirit's volume up. It's been a while since Johnny's pub opened, and I did not think it would raise such feedback. Many have come to visit me, some of them has become regular clients.

Mr Keith, faithful to the promise of personally restoring the place, leads the works for the painting of the pub. He got up early this morning, showing up dressed in shorts, a tank top and a newspaper hat.

He took his commitment very rigorously. He was already by the shutters, when the Johnny's boys arrived and he greeted them with a reproach: - We're starting bad, guys: you're late.

I act as a buffer between the aversion of my boys and Mr Keith' inflexibility.

- Are you sure to know what we're doing? - I ask him doubtfully.

- Don't worry, Johnny, I'm used to managing work groups, I have some experience!

- We're not the Rolling Stones! - Johnny B. Bup screams exasperated!

- Really? - Says Mr Keith sarcastically. - I hadn't noticed... - and then a mocking laughter.

- Oh my God: I'm a cook - claims Johnny Stand By - not a house painter...

- A great cook, I have to admit - he replies - but focus on what you're doing now...

- Can we take a break, Mr Keith? - Asks Johnny B. Cool.

- A break? It's not even an hour since we started... - he sentences.

- But...
- Guys, this way is not good. You have to paint vertically, not randomly, you get me?
- We have never painted a wall! – Johnny B. Strong justifies himself.
- I can see it – replies Mr Keith – and now you're doing it. Oh, come on, put more energy, you don't have any rhythm, you're not working on a Paul McCartney album! – Follow another laugh.

The silence of the boys hides a nascent resentment. They whisper to each other, and I think they are angry with me too. Mr Keith calls me aside: – Hey, Johnny, what's going on? These guys are really lazy. If I had known, I would have called Charlie, he is a good worker, other than being tough!

He is alluding to Charlie, his drummer. Of course, he knows how to use drum sticks, but the brush? Oh well... anyway, after a couple of hours of work, miraculously the place begins to take form. Undoubtedly, Mr Keith is a leading man.

- See, guys? All it took was a little effort... now you can take a break.
- Good, Mr Keith – they say in unison.

They go out to smoke. I stay alone with Mr Keith.

- You know what, Johnny?
- Tell me...
- I would paint a big red tongue inside the bathrooms...
- Oh no, Mr Keith...
- What?
- It seems a bit tacky...
- Johnny... you're disrespecting me this way...
- A tongue in the bathrooms, it seems like a slap in the face of the Stones' history... I'm saying it for you...
- Let me decide what a slap in the face is... it's when you contradict me, Johnny. You're working against me: do you realize it?
- Well, but what will Sir Mick think when he comes back and sees the tongue painted on the bathroom?
- Who?
- Sir Mick...
- I don't know him...

It's hard to fight with a star. Hard and useless. As humble as may be, even disposed to paint the walls of a pub, they get lost in jealousy and old spites. In the end, even if unwillingly, I agreed to paint the legendary red tongue, the glorious symbol of the Rolling Stones, on the walls of the

bathrooms.

I look at Mr Keith that looks at the painting, drinks beer and is deeply moved. It takes little, after all, to touch the heart of an old rolling stone.

I approach Mr Keith. He smiles and caresses me on the cheek: – You were good, Johnny. Offer my compliments to all the guys.

- *Oh, it's been a hard day's night, and we've been working like dogs* – I answer without thinking, screwing it up.

He suddenly changes his mood: – Oh, Johnny, after all I did for you... you could at least say you prefer *those* to me... you ruined my day!

– I'm sorry. It just slipped out, I didn't mean it... *I'm so tired...*

– I'd better get off! Ugh... such a shitty pub...



## 14 THE SERGEANT

The things I possess are all imaginary, but today I cannot even *grasp* one. It's just like when you break the clutch of your bike and you cannot change the gears. A day of boredom, I'm sitting in front of the television and I keep changing channels. I turn off the TV and turn on the radio. I tune in to a network that plays music for meditation. I remain in an absurd position with my legs pointed to the right and the rest of my body facing the opposite side. The effect music can have on the psyche and on the body is truly incredible. When the radio passes a piece of Tibetan bells followed by a shower of gongs, I feel vibrations that reverberate from the abdomen to the legs and all this makes me think of the electric shock.

– What music are you listening to?

Now, you will not believe me, but I have never seen the guy in front of me before, at least not in a concrete form, and yet, as soon as I feel his presence, I recognize him.

– Uh, you're Heaven sent...

– Leave Heaven alone, I just went to have a beer...

– Sergeant, I see you're a little tired...

– I am, indeed. Ah, may I have dull days...

– Why: how is your typical day?

– Well... I'm well aware of wearing a crown that's not mine. I'm a wooden head... yes, I'm just a picture without a face, or better: I have so many faces to carry around. Sometimes I feel like a monster with many heads, other times I realize I'm just a pseudonym...

– It's like this for all the fictional characters, after all it's your job. You have widened the horizons of millions of people and everyone has

understood that, in life, going a little beyond their limits is not a problem, especially if then things like this are born.

- You're very kind, Johnny...
- You are the musical transposition of Heaven on Earth...
- They told me you were too complaisant...
- No, I mean, yes... maybe I am, but certainly not in this case...
- What can I say? Thank you!
- You're a fabulous creation...
- Oh, I'm just a lonely heart...
- We are all solitary hearts...
- I just went over to have a beer, Johnny...
- Uh... of course... Johnny? – I say to Johnny B. Strong – Two red ales at the table.
- They're on their way, Johnny... – he answers.

He drinks. He sips. He wipes his lips: – *It's very good, Johnny.*

- Thank you.
- What music were you listening to?
- Oh, nothing, just tunes for meditation...
- I liked them.
- Do you like that stuff?
- I know why you're doing that face...
- They're just rough sounds, bells, sound waves... there's no melody, no plot...
- Everything that makes your body vibrate and captures your mind makes sense. Even a dissonant sound can make you fly away.
- I do not want to fly away...
- And why?
- I'm scared.
- To move away, it leads to understand what is good for you and what is not. Once you've done these things, you need to get moving and it's this thing that scares you. Do you know what I mean?
- ... we were talking about music, what do all these theories have to do with it now? And then...
- We are actually still talking about music, but you are so lacking of reception that you do not perceive it. Do you like living easy, Johnny?
- I...
- You don't understand my message: the limits of objective reality opposed to the knowledge of the world through the extension of the senses. In those times this was due to the use of drugs, but also to important alternative disciplines such as meditation. If you want it, it's still a thing, in the end...

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- I do not feel well, I have to get some air, maybe I drank too much...
- It's the discomfort, Johnny, that's what I was talking about.
- So even this place is a mistake?
- This place is your temple, Johnny, the safe harbour where you take refuge, but it must not stop you from moving and going. You can come back whenever you want.
- Do you mean, are you moving away from me?
- No Johnny, I'm approaching you.
- To what?
- To the real Johnny.

I really cannot understand, at least not now, but knowing that there is a "real Johnny" around, it makes me feel better and helps me to understand how much time I have lost. Because the point is just this: the poorly spent time does not come back.

The real Johnny is waiting for me somewhere in life, and even if I have never seen his face, I already know that when I meet him, I will recognize him, with no doubt about his identity.



## 15 MISTER BOB

I have many things, but they are all imaginary. Although I know I'm on the right way, I also know I still have a lot of things to do. All this makes me anxious. I'd like to fall asleep and then suddenly wake up without problems. In the past years I felt the frustration of being in the wrong place and wasting time. Although in this moment everything's going quite well, I have no more that sensation.

You have to invent spaces in a place that doesn't allow you to do it and then you have to defend them with all your strength because everything is structured so that your vital segments disappear. You don't want to give up anymore, now you understand. It's a bit like *fighting for your rights* on this earth, in this life. A consideration that doesn't concern the fact of believing in a better life in the afterlife: there's nothing wrong with creating a place to be happy here and now, after all.

- No, there's nothing wrong, bro.
- I knew you'd be there someday.
- I'm happy my message is useful to someone.
- You can say that loudly!
- I'M HAPPY MY MESSAGE IS USEFUL!
- Oh...
- I'm joking, friend, don't make that face!
- Ok.
- How's it going?
- Well. Can I offer you a red beer?
- Thank you.
- Hey, Johnny? – I say to Johnny Be Bup.
- I heard, Johnny, – he replies. – He's travelling, as usual.
- Bro: is not anyone playing in this place?

- I have to select some musicians.
- Music is the first thing...
- Sure.
- ... after the rights, of course...
- Eh, the rights... often you fight alone. You're alone in life. You're always alone.
- In fight you find your dignity.
- But reality is not like in the songs. You are good with words, but life...
- ... even if you work in a big office, you have to fight to stay afloat.
- Yes, that's right...
- There's too much competition in the world, bro...
- That's the reason why I invented Johnny's pub.
- It's my favourite pub, Johnny.
- You make fun of me...
- Yes. But this beer is wonderful...
- Thank you!
- I feel good here, bro. This is a nice evening, isn't it?
- Oh yes.
- It's a pity to end it, right?
- That's right. Do you have something in mind?
- Why don't you close the pub and we all go out to play football?
- Magnificent idea!
- Well. There is a magnificent square, out here.
- But we are five: the Johnny's boy!
- It's not a problem. There are always some friends to play...

It's a clear night. The Johnny's boy team tackles the one of Bob's brother. The Johnny's boy prepare to place themselves in the field, but when they arrive on the square they already find those waiting for them.

In addition to Brother Bob, there's the absent-minded with the *I'm mister Syd t-shirt*; also Cheeta plays with them and fortunately we don't use anti-doping; then there's the girl who sings the blues and the unavoidable Mr Keith with a cigarette. I don't understand how he can play smoking a cigarette. My team gets by. Among their ranks, Brother Bob and Mister Syd are good players. The others, well... apart from the girl who, at least, runs as fast as a train, I have too much respect to express my thought, especially about Mister Keith.

The game ends with the result of three to two for us and the other team blames Cheeta who, to be honest, as a goalkeeper doesn't be worth a damn.

I raise the shutter and we come back to the room. We drink something and then they all take up an instrument and play together. Some things happen only here, at Johnny's pub.



## 16 THE DIABETIC GUITARIST

All the things I have are imaginary. And also those I can offer. The initiative of the pub is going well. Unknown musicians ask me to perform in the club, but many of them are not interested to their music. No: they hope to meet some *star who light up their direction*.

But the problem is not meeting or not meeting, but find harmony, connection and empathy. It's about fantasy and imagination. If there's not all this, it's useless to come to Johnny's pub. This could seem a trivial lesson, but if you don't know what to say and what to deal with, you'll not make much in music.

Following these selection parameters, it happens to me to evaluate many bizarre guys, but they are artists, after all.

I drink a red beer and I eat taralli with fennel, watching a guy named Cliff. The characteristic which strikes me is he plays turning his back because he's embarrassed to be seen: a fulminating prerogative for those who want to perform live!

- Can I ask you a question?
- Yes, but don't look at me... I'm ashamed!
- Ok. I don't look at you.
- Thank you. Tell me...
- Then...
- No, a moment. I concentrate...
- Can I?
- One more moment... done. Tell me...
- You played Brown Sugar by Rolling Stones...
- Yes, but I have my version...
- In fact... and you also played Sugar Sugar by Archies...

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- Yes...
- ...finally you played your own song titled Sweeteners for home...
- Yes...
- Why do you play all tracks with references to sugar?
- Well... there's a reason...
- Oh, magnificent. Which?
- I'm a diabetic guitarist and I wanted to draw attention to this social scourge...
- Ah... it's very interesting...
- Really? I thought I said a bullshit!
- But no...
- If you allow me, I could also measure the blood sugar on the stage, piercing my index finger with the string of Mi cantino and collecting blood on the plectrum...
- It would be great!
- Really?
- Yes, and I could perform you Mr Keith in Brown Sugar, when he passes by here...
- Mhm...
- I see you puzzled...
- Mr Keith is fine, as long as he accepts my modification to the song...
- The changes to Brown Sugar?
- Yes...
- Listen Simon: I really don't know how Mr Keith would take it...
- You don't have to worry about this.
- No?
- No. Some things we solve between us guitarists...
- Ah... Simon...
- Yes?
- Where have you been for all this time?
- At home. I was at my home.
- Well, from now on you're a Johnny's pub musician.
- Who? Me?
- Yes.
- What can I say?
- For example... wow!
- Yes... wow...
- Now what should I do?
- Just play like you know...
- You're the only one who believed in me, Johnny.
- You deserve it, Simon. You're a good guitarist.
- No, I really want say you respected my weaknesses, Johnny.
- Of course, Simon...

- One day I can play facing the audience.
- I'm sure, my friend.
- I need a little confidence in life... you're a friend of mine, Johnny,  
you're my friend Johnny B. Boogie...



## 17 THE QUICK TEMPERED GUITARIST

Things I have are all imaginary. People says the true happiness is to free oneself by material goods, but this is a concept out of the logic of our day. The world is structured to accumulate things and happiness is closely linked to this action.

- Hi. Is it here you make auditions?
- Yes. Do you play the guitar?
- I play all kinds of guitar. Do you allow me to unload my stuff?
- Ok.

He looks like a brusque guy. He's forward with age and has dyed hair, but dyed badly with white streaks on the scalp attachment. In his place, I'd be embarrassed. He continues to unload guitars and amplifiers and I suspect he has exchanged my pub for a music store.

- Hear me: are you alone and in a band?
- Why?
- I see so much stuff. You've unloaded a lot of equipment...
- ... and so?
- Nothing, I was expressing a...
- No, it seems to me you're judging me and I don't allow you!
- If you agree to undergo an audition, it's implied someone should judge you...
- No, but you want to judge me as a person...
- You're wrong...
- You see? I still haven't finished unloading my stuff and you already believe I'm wrong...
- How would you not have finished unloading? Believe me, that's

enough: there's no need to show me other guitars...

– I decide when I finished unloading my stuff...

– No, I'll decide it, if you allow me. You've filled my pub with guitar cases...

– You must let me to express myself. I'm the artist...

– And who says the opposite? But that's enough! Take a guitar, attack an amplifier and let me listen to something!

– I don't like the tone of your voice. Do you understand it?

– Friend, you're talking a lot. Too much...

– I don't like people with prejudices...

– Ok. Have you finished the list of things you don't like? I'd like to listen to some music...

– You have too much trouble, boy...

– Me?

– Yes you.

I think. I'm afraid I don't get out of that situation, so I prefer to have a collaborative attitude.

– Ok. We only started badly. Whatever was the problem, I apologize.

– Mhm...

– What's up now?

– I'm trying to understand what's behind your change of attitude.

– What?

– Mhm...you're an unstable guy...I don't like moody persons...

– Oh my God: now stop, for God! If you don't start to play something, I send you away along with all your fucking guitars!

– You are very aggressive, but don't believe to scare me. I'm here, so I'll play.

– Oh, about time too!

– ... and anyway I don't feel at ease!

– You can't always have what you want...

– And you don't stare at me...

– Ok.

– You don't listen to me, then: why are you staring at me?

I keep silent. I get up from my chair, but surely not to shake his hand. Only now this madman in front of me starts playing an acoustic version of We are spirits in the material world of the Police.

A tormenting version. A lived voice. Excellent guitar technique. Even his hair looks less horrifying.

– A sensational test – I admit. – Bravo.

– Mhm... – he says.

– What else did you prepare?

– I only have this song.

- So why did you unload all that stuff?
- It's by scene. Cases and boxes are empty.
- Mean?
- An amplifier and a guitar. That's all I have.
- I understand...
- You know...I don't have a permanent place to stay. Music, my friend...I only have imaginary things.
- Oh, me too...from today, if you want, you're a Johnny's pub musician and this could be your home.
- Well... mmm... okay...



## 18 JOHNNY B. COOL DOESN'T LIKE THE QUEEN

I have many things, but they are imaginary. I can't explain the reason why I repeat this sentence. I think it's an unconscious trademark. And then, somehow, I need it to legitimize our speeches here at the pub.

Here at Johnny's pub we talk a lot about music, but our discussions aren't politically correct and they would piss off hordes of fans in delirium for one artist or another.

Generally, I bear conversations between Johnny Stand By and Johnny B. Bup because they are chefs and they talk inside the kitchen. The problem arises when Johnny B. Cool and Johnny B. Strong argue because, as waiters, they discuss where it happens, therefore, even in the hall in the presence of customers.

– ...I like the sounds from wine cellar, I don't like the regality of the ones that are born in the big spaces like stadiums...

– ... oh, Johnny, I don't understand you. What do you mean?

– I mean...the Queen pissed me off, ok?

– No, no, no, B. Cool, you're cursing...

– How would I be cursing?

– At least tell me why the Queen piss you off...

– They had that stadium sound, but if a band wanna make a cover of them and must propose the Queen in a wine cellar or in a pub, it can't do it. Do you understand?

– No!

– In short: you can play the use of the guitar and songs with those typical stadium choirs only at the stadium. You can't play them at the pub!

– Why?

– Why not!

– Oh...

– And we don't talk about guitar...  
– What's wrong with Brian May's guitar?  
– What's wrong with what?  
– Yes, what's wrong?  
– Oh my God, you can't have a critical thought, my dear B. Strong...  
– I understand you don't love Queen, but it doesn't mean Queen are shit...  
– No?  
– No. And then, dear B. Cool, remember Brian May is the twenty-sixth guitarist of all time, according to Rolling Stone...  
– But please: music magazines like Rolling Stone are no more reliable...  
– Bah ... and then, Johnny, Brian's sounds have characterized Queen giving them that orchestral style, but you judge them only as a stadium group or big spaces...

– Hey, I ordered two beers half an hour ago... – says a customer sits at a table near the window.  
– I know my friend, but I was defending Brian May and Queen... – B. Strong replies.  
– Why, what's wrong with Brian May and the Queen? – The customer asks.  
– That's what I was asking my co-worker... Queen are shit for him... – B. Strong concludes, indicating Johnny B. Cool.  
– Hey, my friend, are you crazy? – The client asks him.

Johnny B. Cool looks up at the ceiling and exasperated but with a wiseacre air, he exposes his point of view to the customer: – Music must be reproducible by everyone and in everywhere. The music of Queen and Brian May isn't reproducible in pubs, so I don't like it.  
– Who says it's not reproducible in pubs? – The customer asks.  
– I say so! – Solemnly replies Johnny B. Cool.

Until that time I have observed from a distance but now I think it's time to intervene. I bring the beers to the customer: – Hey, my friend, I'll offer them to you...  
– Oh, thank you Johnny – says the customer – you didn't have to...  
– Duty...- I answer. Then, I look at Johnny B. Cool: – Can you follow me to the kitchen, Johnny?  
– Ok, I already understood, Johnny...  
– You too – I say to Johnny B. Strong – in the kitchen...

We enter into the kitchen. It's a large and tidy environment, experienced and functional at the same time. I didn't have an exact idea about how to

furnish it, I only imagined it after reading the Banana Yoshimoto's book.

Johnny B. Bup prepares a sauté of vegetables and Johnny Stand By kneads yeast with water and flour. Both maintain the rhythm of a blues of B. B. King coming out of the radio, turning their heads. Our arrival breaks the harmony that reigned in the kitchen few moments before.

– Boys: how many times do I have to repeat it? – I say to the waiters: – In dining room it's better not to make speeches like that in front of customers!

– We get carried away – Johnny B. Strong explains – you're right, Johnny.

– Oh yes, the fact is I can't contain myself when it comes to pub music...- B. Cool says.

– What is pub music? – Johnny B. Bup asks intrigued, interrupting the preparation of the sautéed.

– B. Cool claims there's pub music and stadium music – Johnny B. Strong answers.

– What the fuck does this mean? – Also Johnny Stand By asks questions.

– He can't stand the Queen, – Johnny B. Strong replies.

– Oh, well ... they didn't drive me crazy either – says Stand By.

– Do you see I'm not the only one? – Says Johnny B. Cool to Johnny B. Strong.

– But I didn't understand the difference between pub music and stadium music – Johnny B. Bup says again.

– Unfortunately, it's not the only thing you don't understand...- Johnny B. Cool attacks him sarcastically.

– What would you say? – Johnny B. Bup asks him.

– Have you ever wondered why they keep you locked in the kitchen? – answers B. Cool.

– What do you have to say about who works in the kitchen? – Johnny Stand By asks threatening.

– I'm not talking to you! – Answers Johnny B. Cool.

– I suggest you to get out of here with your legs – replies peremptorily B. Bup, brandishing the knife with which he was shredding herbs for sautéed.

I feel I have to participate immediately: – Hey, stop it!

I looked at Johnny B. Cool: – Johnny, what the matter? You're making a mess...you have to apologize to everyone, Johnny...

Silence falls in the kitchen of Johnny's pub. All four askance each other. Their faces are serious, proud. Then Johnny B. Cool interrupt the quiet: –

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Ok, guys... I exaggerated. I ask... to everyone...

– What? – Asks Johnny Stand By.

– I SAID I APOLOGISE YOU ALL! – Shouts Johnny B. Cool.

– Ok – ends Johnny Stand By.

– But – adds Johnny B. Cool – one thing must be clear: I don't like the Queen...

## CONCLUSIONS

Surely Rock and roll hasn't changed things in the world, but surely many people's lives would have been different without rock and roll. More or less I wrote this (sometimes I don't remember even the exact text of my books) at some point in *on my generation*. Namely, when I'm sad and things don't go well, I often console myself with a beer, tobacco and a blues disc, the root of rock (and so many other things). People who invented rock and roll and many of those have changed it, or who have been fundamental for it, have done it in a short time and almost without realizing it when they were doing it, and all this is amazing.

In the movie Cadillac Records are described the events of Chess Records, the record company of Chicago founded by Leonard Chess and his brother Phil. They promoted people like Muddy Waters, the harmonica player and singer Little Walter, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Etta James and others. The movies titled Cadillac Records because Leonard used to give a Cady to his musicians.

Chess was the dynamo of what today we can call Chicago Blues, the electronic one. All these people have alternated in the time frame of fifteen years. This movie proves, if needed, the rock matrix was black. These guys, peasants, children of peasants (like Muddy Waters, nickname gave him by his grandmother because the little Muddy liked to swim in the mud of the Mississippi shores) worked in the cotton fields of white people and at the end of a hard day, sat in the verandas of their houses, they pinched the strings of their acoustic guitars literally with their hands dirty of ground. Pretty soon they found themselves from the fields to the registration halls, thanks to the guys of Chess. Full of money, full of women, a great talent in their hands and that bother called success, to be managed. It's a wonderful

period, the moment of purism.

People who went around with their fingers full of rings and the gun in the holster, just not to forget who they were and where they came from or, maybe, why they didn't realize what they had become. At some point in the movie, there's Muddy Waters out of the studios, leaning against a wall with a foot, smoking a cigarette. He looks like a character of "Poveri ma Belli", but he isn't. Five English guys, who came to Chicago to visit Chess Records Studios, got out from a taxi. He welcomes them, greets them and brings them their suitcases: those guys are the Rolling Stones, overwhelmed fans of Muddy Waters!

In that frame, however, we were already in '64, when that boys had the privilege of playing in Chess studios in Chicago after their initial successes in homeland. In that moment (until then Stones played only covers) they started writing their own pieces. When Muddy's fairy-tale started to decline, Dartford's guys will pay Muddy's English tour. Besides, they had to return the favour to the author of Rolling Stone, hadn't they?

Years later, many years later, there's the story told by Keith Richards about his recent meeting with Chuck Berry. An airport somewhere in United States. Richards sees him and he walking toward him to greet him. He approaches him and says: – Hey, Berry, what's up? – But old Chuck, who doesn't love being disturbed, throws a punch on his muzzle, then says: "Hi, sorry, I did not recognize you..."

Eh, eh, there is only a throne, the place for only a person in this world.

Oh, rock and roll is the son of a big bitch, surely among all these persons there's a father, but no one knows who he is. The great Chuck Berry, the one of Johnny Be Good, could be its the king, if the great storm didn't fall on the world. It's Elvis's moment and there will be no one else left, the hour when the big mass appropriates rock as a popular phenomenon, and for those under contract with Chess Records comes down the sunset, the whites steal scene and paternity. The white man who sang like a black or a black man who sang the country music of the white men, this was Elvis on the radio. The time most people love, people like Lennon for example, was the Elvis pre-army, the period before his military service, the one of the records for Sun from 1955 to 1958. Three years, only three years which changed the history of rock music. The rest, what happened in the following period, is frankly mortifying for his figure: his meeting with President Richard Nixon, the denunciation of The King to US authorities about the fact the Beatles represented a threat to US youth.

Your Majesty, Berry would never have done it.

The fact that the chronology of events is so “close” between the Elvis phenomenon and black rock must not mislead. It was like a tempest: a storm in a part of the city while the sun shines on the other side. At the beginning, they were local phenomena (Elvis, on the other hand, “entered” in all US homes only when Colonel Parker – his manager – contracted with television) and the United States is an extremely wide country. Events happened in a too fast succession and they were so many. But every thing ends if you don’t feed it or, if you feed it too much, it ends for excess. The sunset of the period of Chess Records and the decline of Elvis bring us to an equally fascinating event: the British invasion.

Often we wonder about mass reactions and fanaticism. It’s February 7, 1966, when a Pam flight left New York City to London. Only three months earlier, John Kennedy was murdered (Dallas, November 22, 1963) and that year Christmas was a recurrence few Americans had the spirit to celebrate. From November until the beginning of that snowy February, media were obsessed only by the amateur video about the president’s murder.

Murray the K is an American disc jockey of WMCA radio station in New York. On the plane flying from London to New York, there’s an English music group (absolutely unknown in America) and all its staff. On the morning of that February 7, Murray on the radio gives the starting whistle to what will be the madness of the century: It’s 6:30 AM, the Beatles Hour. they left London For thirty minutes. In that moment they are on the Atlantic Ocean, heading to New York. The temperature is 32 degree Beatles.

Within a month, the Fabulous Four will have four 45 laps to top positions in the American charts. The single which had upset the young Americans in the radio was “I want to hold your hand” and, in a manner of speaking, it was like the whole country was holding his hands. The rest is history, chronicle and legend. The British invasion had been a little bit planned (guys screaming at New York airport had been gifted with a dollar and various gadgets), but all the rest was come about by accident, thanks to lucky and mysterious circumstances. Beyond any reasonable point of view, it seemed what the world needed at that time.

They leave their own music, a kaleidoscope of innovations, and their strength lies in sounds that often don’t vanish, not the big hits, but what remains unheard to the big part of people. Then remain stories, legends, someone who dies for fake and others who die for real, anecdotes and affairs which increase mythology, as the one related to the delivering of MBE.

On October 26, 1956, Queen Elizabeth awarded the Fourth with the honour of Members of the Great Order of the British Empire. In England there is the law which punishes the homeowner if drugs are consumed within the house. Liverpool kids, event never denied or confirmed, consume a joint in the bathrooms of Buckingham Palace.

When you did it in America, you did it everywhere. No singer or English group, up to that time, had reached the top in United States. In that moment it seemed almost impossible to get visibility if you hadn't been of British nationality. There are exceptions, one, bigger than others, is called Jimi Hendrix. Complicated childhood, hard dues to emerge, Jimi represents what we could call the highest sacrifice. Hendrix and its reverse path, from United States, Seattle, its city, to England. It's September 23, 1966, the guy embarks from Kennedy Airport and landed at Heathrow, London, next morning. He's stopped at customs because he has not a work permission. He get in touch with the London scene and give birth to Experience. Four years scarce, between arguments, anger and band changes, four albums produced, until the his still obscure death, on September 18, 1970, almost four years after his first landing in London. Jimi, on the horseback of his Fender Stratocaster, was able to fly over the sky. The way to play guitar hasn't been the same in rock music.

Talent deliver a musician to immortality. Somehow, I think the threads which bind him to his origins are broken. An artist belongs to everyone and becomes universal, despite the fact everyone, as a human being, tries to remain faithful to their origins and often he/she refers to them when ground begins to burn under their feet. A turbulent and elusive existence goes forward a slim balance between success and personal life. This can make us understand excesses and vices. This balance is a fragile and often is enemy of the art. So, Is he a musician a sort of lay monk who sacrifices himself on the altar of music? Rhetoric, emphasis, words, better, bombast. There are so many artists who have made the balance their solid foundation of their work and life. But those who, in a short time, have written their names indelibly and have flown to a better luck, will have a special place in our hearts. Those who, in one way or another, have "sacrificed" themselves. They are cursed artists and in their madness there's all the meaning of existence. Pardoned and unlucky, balanced and unbalanced, as far as I was concerned, as he/she sang, I loved them all.

It's impossible quantifying musical and artistic heritage. We could venture into lists of albums, artists, but we wouldn't finish. Have those

years changed the world? I'd say they do it, but not in an institutional sense. Maybe, as I wrote at the beginning, lives of many people would have been different, those people would be other people.

What's left? Well, just music.



## THE AUTHOR

Enrico Mattioli was born in an Italian city, the capital of that State, washed by a river, built on seven hills, of which he prefers not to make the name for privacy reasons.

Enrico Mattioli started his career as a humourist, but an experience as a basic union delegate made him passionate about issues related to working environments. Humour and social, therefore, live together in his books.

Manages the site [www.enricomattioli.com/enrico-mattioli-3/](http://www.enricomattioli.com/enrico-mattioli-3/)

To purchase the paper version of the book, click on this link  
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B085R72LV2>

He wrote in Italian:

**Avvisiamo la gentile clientela**

**La città senza uscita** – *tutto quello di cui hai bisogno è comprare* –

**Diario di un precario**

**Gabbie**

**Stelle di polvere** - *incursione nel sottobosco dell'arte e dello spettacolo* -

**Storie di qualsiasi anonimi**

**La rivoluzione che non c'è**

Translate in English:

**Supercashiers** (Supercassieri)

**Super customer** (Avvisiamo la gentile clientela)

**Best' generation** (Storie di qualsiasi anonimi)

**Mail from land** (Gabbie)

**Show business' stars** (Stelle di polvere)