

GUESS IT HAD TO BE THAT WAY

Written by

Robert Rosenbaum

© Robert Rosenbaum
robert@rprose.com
(607) 538-1845

Guess It Had To Be That Way
A play lost in time.
by
Robert P. Rosenbaum

As the house lights fade down, music fades in. The song is Creeque Alley by the Mamas and the Papas. The audience should be able to hear all the words of the song.

Midway through the song, the lights begin to fade up on YOUNG and POPS. They are sitting on opposite sides of a small round table. There's a chair between them.

Young is dressed in ripped jeans and a dirty T-shirt. His hair is long and in his face. He has a scruffy beard and is wearing sun glasses even though the bar is dimly lit. He is dirty.

POPS is dressed in a sport coat and tie. He is clean shaven.

As the lights come up, and through till the end of the song, we see Young getting deeply into the music. He even begins to play an imaginary guitar. He obviously loves this song. Pops sits there quietly, deep in thought. He is remembering how he used to love this song.

POPS

Excuse me, that seat is taken.

(Silence.)

Excuse me, that seat is taken.

(Silence.)

Hey, that seat is taken.

YOUNG

Yeah, I know. I'm sittin' in it.

POPS

I mean I'm saving it for someone.

YOUNG

I don't see no one, man.

POPS

I mean I'm saving it for someone who is not yet here.

YOUNG

Who?

POPS

What do you mean, "who?"

YOUNG

Who, man? Male? Female? Young? Old? Friend, lover, Irma, Fred? Who, man, who?

POPS

What's the difference who? I'm saving the seat for someone.

YOUNG

Cool, man. I'm someone.

POPS

You most certainly are, but not the right someone...

YOUNG

Damn.

POPS

So would you kindly leave?

YOUNG

But I was here first. man. Like, the table was empty.

POPS

No. I don't think so. There was no one here when I sat down.

Pause.

YOUNG

I was here first, man.

POPS

I'm sorry, I was here first...

YOUNG

(Yelling.)

I said I was here first, man!

Silence.

POPS

Well, maybe you just didn't notice me here when you sat down.

YOUNG

I notice everything, man.

(Pause.)

I got twenty-twenty vision. I got peripheral vision...
double vision... "telly" vision.

(Pause.)

I got extra... sensory... perception.

Silence.

POPS

Maybe your... perception has been altered.

YOUNG

Are you implying that I may be under the influence of some
mind expanding DRRRUUGGS!

Pause.

POPS

Maybe it's just your sunglasses.

YOUNG

(Angered.)

And maybe your tie is so tight that it cut off the
circulation to your brain, and you just didn't happen to
notice me sitting here when you parked yours.

POPS

There was no one here when I sat down. And I am waiting to
meet someone for lunch. So kindly move.

YOUNG

I was here first, man. But dig, there is plenty of room for
three.

POPS

Why must you be such a spoiled little brat? There are plenty of other tables.

YOUNG

I like this table. Besides, it's the principle of the matter. I was here first. You are welcome to join me, or split, man, it's a free country.

POPS

I was here first. But since I gave up my principles a long time ago, I will leave.

YOUNG

You afraid I'm gonna steal your girlfriend?

POPS

If it was my girl... my wife I was meeting, I would be more than happy to introduce you to her, you are a most amusing character. But unfortunately, this is a business meeting...

YOUNG

You mean with briefcases and martinis? Groovy, man. I could learn somethin'. You know, I was a business major at N.Y.U. before I moved to L.A. and became a hippie.

POPS

Oh? you've been to school?

YOUNG

Yeah, I did the whole bit. Books... pencils... grades... drugs, sex.

POPS

And you flunked out?

YOUNG

No, man. My grades made my old man smile.

(Pause.)

I can't stand it when he smiles.

POPS

So you quit?

YOUNG

I just couldn't make the education scene, man. Besides, I don't considerate quitting, I consider it... expanding my universal knowledge.

POPS
Expanding..? By dropping out?

YOUNG
Not dropping out, man! Making a new scene.

POPS

(Sarcastically.)
Far out.

YOUNG
I thought you were going to split?

POPS
It's a free country.

(Pause.)
I think that I'll wait here for my party.

YOUNG
Sudden surge of principles?

POPS

(He laughs.)
I don't think so. I'm just amused. I was like you when I was your age.

YOUNG

(Sarcastically.)
Must have been a billion years ago.

POPS
At least. But I remember, I was idealistic, naive... a fighter.

YOUNG
So when did you die?

POPS
I didn't. I grew. It happens to everyone. You'll see, I did.

(Pause.)
You're so young. You've got a lot of things to learn. You'll wake up one day and notice you've changed, and you won't even know why. And you'll go on.

(MORE)

POPS (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

Well, live and learn.

YOUNG

You sound like my old man.

POPS

I sound like my "old man" too. That's scary.

YOUNG

But you still talk that way?

POPS

I say what I think.

YOUNG

Then you think like my old man.

POPS

Does that make me bad?

YOUNG

My old man's an asshole.

POPS

I bet he has money, doesn't he?

YOUNG

What's the difference, man?

Silence.

POPS

You've had it easy.

YOUNG

Yeah. Tell me, Pops, did you have to walk twenty miles through the snow in your bare feet to get to school when you were young?

POPS

Your generation is so spoiled. At least when I was your age I was doing something... Trying to make a difference.

YOUNG

How? By fighting communists and making babies?

POPS

I was never in the army. And I did a lot of growing up before I started a family.

YOUNG

So what did you do to make a difference, man? Exterminate dinosaurs?

POPS

We tried to change things, the order of things.

YOUNG

Oh, you were just the hippest, weren't you?

POPS

We were trying to make things better for your generation.

YOUNG

Well you didn't. So now me and my generation will have to take things into our own hands. We're a strong force, and we won't let anything stand in our way.

POPS

We were strong too. And united. But not for the same reasons as you. We had a cause. We weren't power hungry.

YOUNG

It was different in your day.

POPS

You're damn right it was. We had a cause that we all believed in. A cause we thought would benefit all mankind. Your generation is selfish.

YOUNG

Why, because we don't want to go to war and die?

POPS

We didn't want that either. And we protested peacefully against war.

YOUNG

You ain't seen no protests 'till you see our protests in the next few years.

POPS

Come on, there isn't even a draft.

YOUNG

Where have you been, Pops?

(Pause.)

Why do you think I went to college, because my old man wanted me to?

(MORE)

YOUNG (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

I went to avoid the draft. I wasn't gonna end up in a hole next to my brother, man. Or worse, come back missin' some pieces like some of my friends. Uh-uh, man. Not me. Nam just ain't a safe place.

POPS

If you only knew what you were saying, kid. Humph. You must be higher than a kite.

YOUNG

Is that your generations answer to everything, man? The kid must be on drugs? What the hell you even know about our drugs? You sit there piously from behind the cigars shoved in your faces, drinking your martinis; your wives with there caffeine pick-me-ups in the morning and the Librium at night. And you all pass judgment on us and our drugs because you've never tried them. And the funny thing is, if you did, you'd probably like them and pass laws to make them legal, of course, only if you're over a certain age.

POPS

I was experimenting with drugs you couldn't find anymore before you were even old enough to pronounce their names.

YOUNG

You sound proud, Pops.

POPS

I am... not. I was young and stupid, like you.

YOUNG

Your generation just can't dig us, man.

POPS

How old are you, kid?

YOUNG

I'll be twenty-two next week, Pops.

POPS

Well don't you think it's about time you grew up? Things are different these days. Take off those "rainbow shades," man. There's nothing left to fight... nothing like there was. You can't possibly know what it was like to be young and stupid and scared back then.

YOUNG

I may not know what it was like to be young back then, but you don't know what it's like to be young now. And as the man said: "Your old road is rapidly aging."

POPS

You don't even know what that song meant.

YOUNG

Sure I do, man. I'm a musician.

POPS

You're a young musician.

YOUNG

Young? I'm almost past my prime for this business.

POPS

Don't be silly. It's not like that anymore.

YOUNG

What do you know?

POPS

Well, besides the fact that I work for Capitol records...

YOUNG

You work for who?

POPS

Capitol records.

YOUNG

(Having a sudden change of
attitude.)

You work for Capitol? Man, I am pleased to meet you. Are you gonna be here to catch my gig?

Pause.

POPS

What do you mean, catch your gig?

YOUNG

Watch me play, Pops.

POPS

Here? They haven't had live music here in years.

YOUNG

Are you kiddin', man? Everybody plays here. The leaves, The Byrds, The Mamas and the Papas, The First Edition. Buffalo Springfield played here before they took their name. Shit man, Scott McKenzie plays here all the time.

POPS

But that was more than fifteen...

YOUNG

I mean you must know of Scott McKenzie? He and John Phillips recorded on your label, on Capitol a while back as the Journeymen. They know me. I played them in the Mugwumps. Dennis said I was great. But I was too young to come out here with them... Shit... I played with Sebastian too, man. We went to school together. I was almost in the 'Spoonful, but I was going through some bad times. But I'm here now man, and I'm ready. Stick around and listen to me. I'm going to be bigger than all of them. And you could be known as the guy who signed me. I could be the biggest thing for Capitol since the Beatles.

POPS

You say you went to school with John Sebastian?

YOUNG

Yeah. In '63, man, at N.Y.U. I was a freshman. He's a year older than I am. I played with all those guys at the Nite Owl. I sat in on rehearsal sessions in the basement of the Albert Hotel.

(Pause.)

Hey, are you testing me?

POPS

That would make you...

YOUNG

Twenty-one, man. Almost twenty-two. I'm legal. Wanna see my I.D.?

POPS

But you're too young. All those people have...

YOUNG

No man. It ain't like that. That's why I'm glad that I didn't hook up with any of those groups. I mean, they're cool, but they don't have much meaning, like you said, they're too young. But my shit's together, man. I've got some heavy stuff, some mind-blowing psychedelic rock. Just stay and listen to me.

POPS

Are you tripping on something, kid?

YOUNG

OK, so I been trippin' a little lately, but I'm clean now, man.

(MORE)

YOUNG (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

Shit, I just had one jay before I came here. It helps me play. Everybody does refer man. You're in the business, you know, man.

POPS

Sure, I know.

They smile at each other. There is a long pause.

POPS (CONT'D)

You know what today is?

YOUNG

Saturday?

POPS

No, what's the date?

Pause.

YOUNG

August 26, 1967. Oh, come on man, I ain't that gone.

Silence.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

What gives, Pops?

POPS

Oh, nothing. Listen, I don't sign people...

YOUNG

Shit... I should of known.

POPS

...But I know people, and I know things that can help you.

YOUNG

You think you can get me an in, man? Cause I know if I can just get my music heard man, I could make it right to the top.

POPS

Ah, so what you really want is to be a star?

YOUNG

No, man. I just want my music heard, Listen to me play. My music's important. People are going to be diggin' me because of the music I make; and it's going to be my music.

(MORE)

YOUNG (CONT'D)

No fifties remakes or old Beatle songs... You know, I could of been the one who recorded "San Francisco." But I'm glad I didn't. It's a great song, and I'm happy for Scott, but I'm going to make it with my own stuff.

POPS

You're pretty serious about your music, huh?

YOUNG

Yep.

Pause.

POPS

You thinks it's good?

YOUNG

You're damn right.

POPS

So you come here and play, and wait to be discovered?

YOUNG

Right man. I figure that if I can be heard by the right manager I'll be on may way.

(Pause.)

Even the Beatles were nobodies 'till Epstein found them. I mean, they may have had all the musical genius, but Brian Epstein has all of the business genius, and without his talent and influence... who knows? Now if I had someone like him, or even... Hey man, if you work for Capitol, you must know him?

POPS

Sorry. I never had the pleasure.

YOUNG

Shit man. I know if I had a good manager I could make it.

POPS

And then you'd be a star?

YOUNG

Right.

POPS

And you'd be bigger than all those guys who turned you down... And then you'd show them?

Silence.

YOUNG

I just want my music heard, Pops. I got something to say and I want it heard. That's all.

POPS

I don't think that's all... You're jealous!

YOUNG

What the fuck you talkin' about?

POPS

You're jealous of all those guys who made it because none of them wanted you.

YOUNG

Look man, I don't know where your head is at, but dig this; I am a serious musician. I know your kind can't dig our music, though Lord knows you're rakin' in the bread off it, but this is the heartbeat of my generation, and the soul of our movement. The youth of this country is a force, united and driven by its music. The music gives us our direction. And I'm gonna make some of that music. I'm gonna give some of those directions, and I'm gonna help lead my people to power... and peace.

Pause.

POPS

Well, which is it? Power or peace?

Pause.

YOUNG

You can't even dig what I'm saying, man. I'm gonna change things with my music. I'm gonna make a difference.

(Pause.)

Can't you dig it, man? Once we get the power, we can make peace.

POPS

No. Oh, you'll get the power, the power always goes to the young, eventually. But along with power comes responsibility. And to keep the power, you have to fight for it. Nowhere in the deal comes peace.

YOUNG

Maybe that's how it was, but things are going to change. And my music is going to be part of the changing force.

POPS

And that will give you what you want... power, fame, money?

YOUNG

It ain't like that, man. I don't need bread...

POPS

That's right, your daddy is rich.

YOUNG

My "daddy" is a capitalist pig, and I ain't got nothing to do with his blood money!

POPS

But you let his "blood money" buy you out of the army when you dropped out of school?

Silence.

Young gets up and grabs Pops by the collar.

YOUNG

Why you dirty motherfuckin'... You're just like all the rest, aren't you?

Pops stares at Young.

Silence.

POPS

Like whom?

YOUNG

Like everyone else in the business. You're makin' fun of me. You think I'm just a no-talent, spoiled little rich kid; a dreamer who doesn't have a chance. You're laughing at me from behind that tie... from behind your success. Just like all of them, they're all laughing.

Pause.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

You think I'm a big joke, don't you?

(He shakes Pops.)

DON'T YOU!!

Silence

POPS

And what if I do? Are you going to beat the hell out of me?

Pause.

YOUNG

I don't know.

POPS

A New York tough guy. And I thought you were a San Francisco flower child who only wanted peace for the world?

Silence.

Young smiles slightly and lets go of Pops as he sits back down.

YOUNG

I get so paranoid lately, it ain't funny. I guess it must be those drugs.

POPS

Grass?

YOUNG

Everything, man.

POPS

You're so young.

YOUNG

You resent that, don't you?

POPS

No. I told you, I used to be just like you. I did a lot of things because I thought I had to. I bet you're doing a lot of things because you think you have to?

Pause.

YOUNG

You know, you're all right man. Not like those other cats that wear ties, you're cool. I guess that's because you're in the business.

(Pause.)

You know, man, I get scared sometimes.

Silence.

Young pulls out a pack of Camels. He is shaking a little. He takes out a cigarette and offers one to Pops.

Pops takes one. They both light up.
Young starts to get up.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

Mind if I drop a dime in the slot? It's so quiet around here during the day.

Young puts a dime in the jukebox and makes two selections. The coin drops and we hear the machine go through its motions.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

You're suppose to get three songs for a dime, but the damn machine only gives you two. I suppose they make more money that way... Pigs.

The record starts. The song is "If You're Going to San Francisco" by Scott McKenzie. The music should be audible, but soft enough to speak over..

YOUNG (CONT'D)

Sorry, it's not a Capitol release.

POPS

That's OK, not many were.

YOUNG

What?

POPS

Nothing.

Pause.

YOUNG

You know, John Phillips wrote this song, man.

(Pause.)

And I inspired it... You see, I was going up to Frisco, and I told John, and he told me to wear flowers in my hair... I mean, everyone was saying it, but man, he said it to me. By the time I got back, Scott had recorded this song... SHIT MAN... it should have been mine.

POPS

I thought you said that you didn't want to record anyone else's music? I thought you only wanted to do your own work?

(Pause.)

(MORE)

POPS (CONT'D)

I thought you weren't interested in fame or money or topping the pop charts?

YOUNG

I'm not, man. It's just... it ain't fair, man. It just ain't fuckin' fair! SHIT!!

With that, Young pounds the jukebox. We hear the record scratch to its end. The machine goes through its starting noises, and the next song comes on, all the while Young hangs his head on the machine.

The next song is "California Dreaming" by the Mamas and the Papas.

Pops gets up. He takes Young back to his seat, and walks off. He returns with two glasses. He hands one to Young.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

What's this, man?

POPS

It's just coffee.

YOUNG

What's yours?

POPS

Scotch.

YOUNG

Gimme some of that...

POPS

Your too strung out... Just drink your coffee.

YOUNG

Now you sound like my mother.

A smile passes between them. They are silent for a moment as the music plays in the background.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

You know, this is the song that brought me out here, man. It was just before school started up again after Christmas break. I saw this disc at a store.

(MORE)

YOUNG (CONT'D)

I'd heard it once on the radio, but I didn't realize who cut it. So I took it home and played it... all night. Man. I knew it was gonna be a hit... And the words "The preacher likes the cold, he knows I'm gonna stay..." Shit. No I wasn't gonna stay. So I packed up what I could and split. All the way out here this song was playing on the radio.

(Pause).

I left my old lady a note. It read:
"Dear Mom, I went to California, I should be back before I die." Period.
"Yours truly." Comma. "Your Son."

(Pause).

I've made it into a song. I think it could become a standard for run-aways.

Pause.

POPS

You know, you hurt... you probably hurt your mother very much.

YOUNG

There you go again, sounding just like my fuckin' old man.

POPS

It's amazing how much smarter a father becomes as you near his age.

YOUNG

I told you what I think of my old man, Pops. And my opinion won't change if the asshole dies tomorrow.

Silence.

POPS

He won't die tomorrow, but it won't be long.

(Pause.)

And you'll be surprised at just how sorry you are for the last couple of years. For all the shit you put him through... For all the times that you took him for granted. For all the love that was wasted... and you'll be surprised at how much you'd give... just to see him once again.

Pause.

YOUNG

How do you know so fucking much, man?

POPS

You'll start to see, in a few years.

YOUNG

What are you, a fortune teller? You think you know the future?

POPS

It's easy to see your future.

YOUNG

OK, if you know so fucking much, tell me what's gonna happen to me tomorrow?

Silence as they stare at one another.

POPS

Brian Epstein will die...

YOUNG

What???

POPS

Brian Epstein will die tomorrow of an overdose of Carbitrol, which will make a profound impression on you and your outlook on life, which will sink lower than ever before. You will resort to drugs and hate them at the same time. You'll come to despise life and blame it for your situation. You'll go into a deep depression and...

YOUNG

Man, you are more whacked out than I am. I think you've had too much of your business mans lunch. What makes you think that you can tell the future?

POPS

I can't... I just know the past.

Silence.

Young stares at Pops, Then gets up and begins to pace, still watching Pops. Young then takes out his cigarettes. Pops offers him a light. He takes it hesitantly. Then he offers Pops a cigarette. Pops takes it and lights it.

They both smoke.

Young sits down and slowly leans toward Pops, takes off his sunglasses and stares.

Pause.

YOUNG

(Dead serious.)

Tell me straight, man, before I make an even bigger fool of myself... are you God?

Pops laughs.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

They told me if I did enough of the stuff I'd see God... Are you him?

POPS

No.

Pause.

YOUNG

(Not as serious.)

Then are you the Devil... here to make a deal? My soul for a recording contract?

POPS

No.

YOUNG

(Looks around.)

Well then, who the fuck are you, man? And why are you playing these games with my mind?

POPS

I'm not playing games.

(Pause.)

I just came in here for a business meeting.

Silence.

Young puts on his sunglasses.

YOUNG
How old are you, Pops?

POPS
Thirty-six.

Pause.

YOUNG
And you were a musician?

Pops nods his head.

Pause.

YOUNG (CONT'D)
And now you're wearin' a tie, going to business meetings and pushing a label from behind a desk?

POPS
I did some producing and some arranging, which I still do, sometimes... But, I just couldn't make it on the grooves.

YOUNG
So you sold out?

POPS
I took stock of myself.

(Pause.)
Somewhere along the line I had to decide exactly what I wanted to do, and of that, exactly what I could do... I had to take on some responsibility... I had to grow up.

YOUNG
You mean sell out...

POPS
I had made it as far as I was going to go, for what I wanted to do. I had a couple of songs hit the charts in the late sixties. I played back-up for some wonderful musicians you haven't even heard of yet. But things changed... Ideas changed... And I changed.

YOUNG
And you're sayin' that's what's gonna happen to me?

POPS
No. I'm saying that's what happened to me.

YOUNG

But you are here as an example to me?

POPS

I told you, I'm here for a business meeting.

YOUNG

Maybe you're just a creation of my drug infested brain.

POPS

Maybe you're just a creation of my haunting memories?

YOUNG

Haunting?

(Pause.)

What? Don't you dig your memories, man?

POPS

I have quite a few good memories, thank you. But I am not one to live in the past.

YOUNG

You're just one to hide from it.

POPS

I have nothing to hide from.

Pause.

YOUNG

What about the fact that you might've been a star, but you weren't good enough, or you were too scared to fight for it, so you sold out and went establishment? Now you're hiding behind that tie, resenting all you were, and all you became, and all the others who had balls enough to make it when you couldn't.

Silence.

POPS

That might have been part of it a long time ago, but it's not true anymore. I'm thrilled when I hear of any of the old gang making it back onto the charts, and I give anyone who I think is talented enough to make it any help or advice that I can. And even though I often wish that I could be doing what some of the truly talented musicians of today are doing, I don't resent them, or the fact that I can't.

YOUNG

Well, I can make it. And I'll die trying before I'll sell out.

POPS

I said that once, but things happen that you don't count on. And there are a lot of things that you don't see when you are young.

Silence.

Young is glaring at Pops.

POPS (CONT'D)

You're right, the times are changing; everything, everyday. You're changing, music's changing. Every time the Beatles release a new album the whole damn industry changes. What's their latest release... let's see, "Sergeant Pepper's"?

(Sotto voce.)

God I'm getting old.

(Pause.)

Rock is changing, too. It's getting more complex. You'll soon see where it is heading. I did.

When I got a couple of songs on the charts I thought, "Wow, now I'm going somewhere", but I wasn't.

I don't think I had what it takes to make the kind of music I wanted to make. Maybe it wasn't even that I didn't have the talent. But I was missing something, and I was changing.

POPS (CONT'D)

And then my father died... I started reevaluating my ideas... What was really important. Then came the incident that woke me up, woke a lot of us up. It happened to kids my age on a nice, safe college campus during a "peaceful" protest. It scared the hell out of me, and made me realize that I'd be just as dead if I died protesting, or killed myself with drugs, as I would have been if I were killed in Nam. And I realized that I wasn't trying to save the world, or anybody, as much as I was trying to make good for myself. And if, in fact, I did want to help the world, or help anyone, I could do more other ways than by singing top-tens or shouting at marches.

(Pause.)

(MORE)

POPS (CONT'D)

And then I met a girl. And nothing seemed too important anymore, except us.

Silence.

YOUNG

Well... you're an asshole, man.

Pops laughs.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

Man, there is a lot of wrong out there, and I won't be a part of it. I can change things. I can make things happen.

POPS

It's easier to unlock doors from the inside than to beat them down.

YOUNG

It's easiest just to burn down the whole damn house.

POPS

I thought you wanted peace?

YOUNG

Man, we are on the eve of destruction.

(Pause.)

This country needs an overhaul. And you watch, within five years there is going to be a revolution. Man, we are on the eve of destruction.

Pause.

POPS

There was no revolution.

YOUNG

(Very angry.)

There might not have been one, man, but there is going to be one.

Pause.

POPS

I can't believe I was ever that naive and idealistic. Not to believe the truth when it stares you in the face.

YOUNG

Maybe you never were, man. It's the ones that won't believe other peoples "truths" that cause change.

POPS

I thought that way once, we all did. Sometimes I wish that it could have been so.

YOUNG

I thought... I did... I was... Past tense, man. What the hell are you doing now?

POPS

I'm making a living, and doing the best that I can. That's what the world is all about.

YOUNG

I'd hate to live in your world, man.

POPS

You will.

YOUNG

...I'd hate to have to look in your mirror, man.

Silence.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

My mirror is going to be beautiful. My world is going to be beautiful. It's going to be green and gold, sunshine and flowers, peace and love. People are going to care about each other, and help each other. Nobody will be hungry in my world. There will be food and shelter and love enough for everyone. And the children won't know of hate or prejudice. People will live together in harmony. Free. And there'll be no need for government. The people will be ruled by the poets, headed by Dylan, Simon and Lennon.

Young's speech has become a melodic chant, almost a song. he has talked himself into a state of euphoria. For the first time he appears really high.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

And I'll be along side of 'em... justa livin'... lovin'... groovin'... singin'...

POPS

(Softly.)

It won't happen. John Lennon is dead.

Young looks at Pops blankly.

POPS (CONT'D)

And all the dreams turned to stains of blood on a cold gray sidewalk in New York.

Silence.

YOUNG

(Burning.)

Maybe for you, Pops, but not for me!

That may be your past, but this is my future. You've seen things the way you wanted to see them. You made things the way you wanted to make them. But things are going to be different for me, man.

I'M NOT YOU!

And I'm going to make things different. I'm going to see things the way I want to see them!

Pops gets up and pulls some change out from his pocket.

POPS

That's not the way I wanted things. But things can't always be the way you want them to be.

Pops goes over to the jukebox and looks at it for a moment.

POPS (CONT'D)

A quarter a play. Things change.

YOUNG

What are you playing, man?

POPS

Nothing special. It just seems quiet around here these days. I just thought I'd make a little noise.

Pops puts a quarter in the machine. Young covers his ears.

YOUNG

I don't want to hear any of your noise, man.

Pause.

POPS
Are you afraid of something?

YOUNG
I just don't want to hear your music.

POPS
But I thought you liked music.

YOUNG
My music.

POPS
(Proceeding to push buttons.)
Sorry, my money was already in...

The machine once again starts through its motions, but they are now electronic sounding.

Young stares at the jukebox while Pops sits back down.

Just before the song comes on, Young rushes over and pulls the plug. the machine winds to a halt.

YOUNG
You can't determine my destiny, man. Things are going to be my way. I'm gonna make sure of it!!

POPS
I wish you luck. I just hope you're strong enough.

YOUNG
I am!

POPS
Then what are you afraid of?

YOUNG
I'm not afraid of nothing.

POPS
Not even the future?

YOUNG
Especially not the future. The future is mine.

Silence.

Young looks at the plug, then at Pops, then at the jukebox. He then plugs the jukebox back in to the socket.

The song that comes on is "The Beat Goes On" by Sonny and Cher.

Pause.

POPS

(Softly.)

My music.

Long silence as the song plays on.

YOUNG

(Returning to his seat.)

You sold out, man.

POPS

Yes, in your way of thinking I did. But I don't consider it selling out. I consider it... expanding my universal knowledge.

Silence.

POPS (CONT'D)

Look, I did my thing, you'll do yours. If you can make it, more power to you. But if you don't, that's OK too.

YOUNG

I'll make it. And if I don't... I'd rather die than end up like you!

POPS

If you keep up like you are, you may.

YOUNG

Hey, no lectures, Pops.

POPS

I'm sorry. I guess it's just characteristic of my generation.

Pops laughs.

Silence.

YOUNG

Don't you have a business meeting?

POPS

I guess they're not going to show up.

YOUNG

Well then, don't you gotta get back to work or something, man?

POPS

I thought you didn't mind if I sat here with you?

YOUNG

It's a free country, man. Stay as long as you want.

POPS

Thanks. But, I'll just finish my drink and get going.

YOUNG

Can you do it quietly?

Young sits holding his head and starring out. Pops quietly sits smiling and sipping his drink.

Music fades up. It's the last chorus of "Creeque Alley" by the Mamas and the Papas. It plays through.

As the song ends the lights fade.

THE END.