



FOSSILS



VIAGRA, SNUFF & ROCK 'N' ROLL

A Hilarious Novel by Robert A Webster

Fossils

Written by Robert A Webster
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-Track One-



Charles felt the walls closing in as his world fell apart. He longed to hold his wife, tell her how much he loved her, smell her fragrance, and hear her comforting voice telling him that everything would be fine. Standing with his hands clasped in front of him, he glanced over at her gloss wood casket and heard the faint hum of the conveyor echo in the chapel as a curtain closed and the coffin slowly moved toward the furnace.

Charles's sons, John and Peter, two of the pallbearers, then came and sat on the pew beside him. John patted his father's arm, but Charles just stared forward.

Lorraine, Charles's daughter, with tears streaming down her face, gently squeezed his hand as the vicar prayed for the safe journey of Mary's soul. Charles wasn't listening and showed no emotion trapped within his earthly cocoon. Apart from being with his beloved Mary, nothing else mattered to Charles.

With sobbing heard in the crematoriums chapel on the outskirts of Cleethorpes, the vicar finished his prayer and told the congregation to reflect on Mary's life.

Charles gazed up at a ray of sunlight that shone through a skylight. He gasped and smiled. "Mary," he whispered, as an apparition of Mary's face as a young woman appeared in the sunbeam.

"Hello my darling," said Mary's voice in his head.

Charles trembled and thought, 'Oh Mary, I am so lonely and sad. I want to end this and be with you.'

Mary smiled and Charles remembered the smile he fell in love with all those years ago, as Mary said. "We will soon be together my darling, but now is not your time. You still have plenty to live for...remember what I always told you. Life is too short to be sad."

"Dad, sit down," whispered Lorraine as the vicar beckoned the congregation to sit.

Charles, his thoughts interrupted, sat on the pew. The vicar went to the small pulpit and began his sermon, giving details about Mary's life, a woman he barely knew.

"Are you alright, Dad?" whispered Lorraine, noticing Charles smiling up at the skylight.

Charles ignored her, 'Where are you my darling?' Charles thought, watching rays of sunlight dancing through the empty skylight.

"Dad, are you okay?" repeated Lorraine, squeezing his hand.

John, hearing Lorraine's concern, looked at his father and gently nudged him. "Dad!"

Charles juddered and smiled at John and Peter, and with a glazed expression and tears in his eyes, looked and nodded at Lorraine.

Lorraine, relieved to see his tears, wiped them from his eyes with her sodden handkerchief. She kissed him on the cheek, faced forward, and listened while the vicar continued his sermon. Charles now felt warm, safe, and no longer alone. He glanced up again at the empty skylight, and as the vicar's words become a blur, his thoughts drifted into happy memories.



ON A WARM SUMMER'S afternoon, a removal van arrived and unloaded a Steinway Parlour Grand Piano into the recreation room. Throughout the day, elderly residents came and admired the fine instrument, inquisitive about who was moving into Albert's old room. However, three residents felt excited by the piano and eager to meet its owner.

The following day, a BMW came up the driveway. A middle-aged couple got out of the front seat and helped a gaunt, but well-groomed, elderly man out of the back. They took belongings from the back seat, walked into the residence, and went to the warden's office. The curtains twitched as excited old folk tried to see their new neighbour.

John, Lorraine, and Charles sat in Mrs Chew's office while she explained about the residence and the rules and regulations that Charles must abide by during his stay.

The office smelled of stale tobacco. Hilda Chew, a small, haggard woman in her early sixties with stern features and a wrinkled face making her look like a constipated bloodhound, had been the warden at Fosdyke since it opened eight years earlier. Charles paid scant attention to the warden's instructions as his mind wandered elsewhere.

Mrs Chew then took them along a corridor. They stopped at a room on the ground floor and went inside. "Here's your room Mr Clark, or can I call you, Charles?"

Charles shrugged as Mrs Chew told him, "This will be your home from now on Charles. We put your chair near the bay window. The grounds look lovely this time of year."

John put Charles's suitcase on the bed. "It's nice and roomy Dad," he said, opening the case and hanging clothes in a wardrobe.

"You have a television, but most of the residents watch the large one in the recreation room," said Mrs Chew, pointing to a portable television and then told him. "Your piano's in there."

"I'll put your socks and underwear in this drawer," said John, but knew his father wasn't paying attention.

"Isn't this nice, Dad? And look, you'll have plenty of things to do," said Lorraine, waving the Fosdyke brochure at her father. "It's near to the beach and you love the seaside."

"And you'll have plenty of company," said John sniggering, "Did you see all your new neighbours looking?"

Charles sighed, walked over, and sat in his armchair.

"Don't worry," said Mrs Chew and assured them, "It takes time to settle in, and he'll be fine. It might be better if you both leave and give him time to get acquainted with the place. I am sure he will have visitors come along once you've gone." she smiled.

Lorraine nodded and said, "Okay Dad, we are going, we will let you get settled into your new home."

"I will bring Emma and the kids to see you soon," said John.

"Peter said he will come when he is not so busy. I will bring George and the kids to visit once you get settled," said Lorraine, who walked over and kissed her father on the cheek. She felt tears well up in her eyes as she saw the vacant, lost expression across her father's gaunt face as he gazed out of the window. She stroked his grey hair, picturing the vibrant, caring man from her childhood. Here was the same man who picked her up after a fall, taught her to play the piano and appreciate the beauty in music. The man who she could always depend upon and the man whom she never imagined would end up in this empty shell.

"Bye Dad," croaked Lorraine, and with tears streaming down her face, walked towards John.

“Bye Dad, see you soon,” said John, putting his arm around his sister, and along with Mrs Chew, left the room.

Charles stared out of the window over the manicured lawns. His room smelt like the rest of the place. It had an eggy, musty smell, usually associated with old people’s homes. For Charles, it was not, or never would be, home, and he hoped his stay here would be short. He gazed around the garden and watched a bumblebee disappearing into a rose. Reappearing moments later, it clumsily flew past butterflies airing their brittle colourful wings. Sparrows chased each other, flying low past Charles’s window, and while nature went about its business, he reminisced about growing up around the entertainment business.



HIS MOTHER WAS AN OPERA singer, so he had gained a love for music from an early age. His father, disappointed by his son's chosen interest, expected Charles to follow him into the army. Charles was twelve-years-old when his father was killed in Ireland. His mother encouraged, and tutored him, into becoming a vocalist, but with having deformed vocal cords, his voice sounded gravelly. She knew he would be unsuitable for classical singing, so she bought him a Steinway piano. That opened up a new and exciting world for young Charles. He practised hard and became a talented pianist. The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra employed him soon after he left Surrey University.

Charles was twenty-two when he met Mary. She was auditioning for a violinist position in the orchestra. He’d noticed the pretty young blonde in her interview when she played Paganini's Caprice No.24 in A minor. Joseph Fletcher, the orchestra leader, impressed with her performance, and with Charles’s prompting, employed Mary. Charles and Mary grew close, and after a short courtship, married.

Mary hailed from Cleethorpes on the Lincolnshire coast of England. With property prices being cheap in the seaside resort, they bought a five-bedroom house on the outskirts of town. They performed with the Liverpool Philharmonic for four years before Charles accepted a position in the prestigious London Philharmonic Orchestra. They realised that Charles’s new job meant he would spend a lot of time touring, so Mary left the Liverpool Philharmonic to go with him. However, she fell pregnant after their second tour, with their first child, John.

Charles spent the next few years touring the UK and abroad, while Mary remained at their Cleethorpes home raising John. She gave birth to two more children, first Lorraine, followed by Peter, a year later.

The years passed, and with Charles spending most of his time away from home, he and Mary decided that he found work closer to Cleethorpes. He taught music at a local college, where he stayed until retiring and with their grown-up children now having families of their own and life was idyllic for Charles and Mary. They spent their days either in each other's company or with family members and evenings they spent alone with Charles playing his piano and Mary playing her violin. The couple lived a serene and happy life until the scourge of leukaemia took Mary and Charles's world fell apart.

A knock on the door interrupted Charles's thoughts.

"Hello Charles, the evening meal starts at 6 o'clock, so you need to go to the dining room." Mrs Chew shouted through the door.

"I'm not hungry," Charles replied.

"Suit yourself," grumbled Mrs Chew and walked away.

Charles relaxed back into his chair and recalled events leading up to him living at the residential home. He thought about his uncaring children.

During Mary's wake, John had put his arm around his father and said, "Dad, remember what Mum told you to do when this day came."

Charles glared at his son and said nothing, so John sighed and went over to speak with his brother and sister.

Once Doctors diagnosed Mary's illness, Mary, Lorraine, John, and Peter, arranged for Charles to move into Fosdyke residential home as soon as Mary passed away and organised everything without involving Charles, who, although angry when he found out, said nothing, not wanting to accept the inevitable.

After the wake finished, Charles was alone in the house. He played his piano and drank himself into a stupor, thinking about his life and his emptiness without his rock, Mary.

John arrived at mid-morning and went over to his father. Noticing the empty whisky bottle and knocked over glass, he shook his father awake and said, "I'll make a cup of tea Dad. Why don't you go to bed and I will bring one up to you."

Charles got unsteadily to his feet, went upstairs, and got into bed. Family members turned up throughout the day to help with the move. With

only a few personal items allowed into the residential home, the family sold the rest of Charles and Mary's belongings and divided the proceeds between them.

While a removal company took his piano and cleared the house, Charles remained in his bedroom.

Several hours later, the house was bare apart from Charles's bedroom furniture. Lorraine had brought food for Charles throughout the day, which went uneaten.

That evening, Charles walked around his empty home, desperately wanting to join Mary.

John and Lorraine arrived the following morning to collect Charles. They led him from his house and drove forty minutes to Fosdyke residential home.



ANOTHER KNOCK ON THE door disturbed Charles's thoughts.

"I am not hungry," Charles shouted, sounding emphatic as he assuming it was Mrs Chew.

The door opened and a small rotund man as bald as a bell-end walked in.

"Charlie boy," shouted a jovial geriatric in a gruff voice.

With a cheery grin, he went over to Charles. "I'm Steve, but they call me Strat. Chewy told us you weren't coming to eat, so I thought I'd come and change your mind."

Shocked, Charles forced a smile and said. "No, I'm not hungry."

"Come on, just try some. The grub isn't bad, and tonight it's BBQ rib night, a real treat," insisted Steve and put his arm around Charles's shoulder to coax him out of his chair. "I'll introduce you to everyone," said Steve, and sniggered. "You can meet the band."

Charles, taken aback, asked, "Oh, you have a band here? I never heard about that. What type of music do they play?"

Steve grinned and said. "It's a long story, but I will tell you over supper. Come on, before the ribs get cold or the other old farts scoff them all."

Charles looked at the comical character resembling a pear with spindly legs and, realising he was persistent, got out of his chair.

"Don't worry Charlie, it ain't bad here. I've been an inmate for five years and known in most of the pubs in the area. You'll be a big hit with the

ladies with that posh accent.”

Steve chuckled and the pair made their way to the dining hall.

The chatter in the dining room stopped when the pair went in, with all eyes focused on Charles, who fidgeted and looked uncomfortable.

“I hope you old farts saved us some ribs,” Steve growled and led Charles to empty seats between two other elderly gentlemen.



-Track Two-



Within picturesque grounds in the northeast coastal town of Cleethorpes, Fossdyke, converted from a guesthouse into a residential home by the current owners, had a two-story building with twenty-three spacious ensuite, furnished studio apartments. The ground floor apartments had large bay windows at the front overlooking landscaped grounds, making it an idyllic and tranquil location.

A short distance away from the resident's block in another building was the kitchen and communal dining area, where meals were provided three times a day. Another large room served as a recreation room, where the residents could congregate, organise activities, and watch a large TV. This communal room also contained several smaller rooms where residents kept belongings locked away, which now had a Steinway piano in a corner of the room.

With little happening at the home during the summer months, the old folks would either stroll along the boating lake and nearby beach or relax in the gardens. It was a serene existence and the residents varied. There were several married couples, but it was mainly elderly widowed men and women.



AFTER CHARLES AND STEVE sat, the dining room was again full of chatter and clatter. Kitchen staff continued to serve the residents' BBQ ribs and drinks. Even though some struggled to gnaw through the pork with their false gnashers, it didn't stop them from giving the meat a damn good sucking. Charles looked around the room at his new neighbours.

"Charlie, meet Wayne," said Steve as he sat back, and a man leant over and shook Charles's hand.

Wayne looked Latino, with black curly hair and a boyish demeanour.

"Hi Charlie, I'm Wayne Logan," he said, shaking Charles's hand.

“It’s Charles, not Charlie,” said Charles.

“What?” Wayne asked.

“I said, it’s Charles, not Charlie,” repeated Charles... louder.

Wayne looked confused and then said. “Yes, I have all my teeth.”

Steve chuckled and said, “Sometimes he is as deaf as a post, and he dyes his hair black.”

“What?” Wayne repeated as he turned up the volume on his hearing aid. “That’s better,” he said.

“Hello Wayne, what part of America are you from?” asked Charles on hearing Wayne’s accent.

Wayne frowned and said, “I am not a yank, I’m Canadian.”

“Oh, my apologies,” said Charles.

“Allo Charles,” said the man to his right in a chirpy cockney accent, “I’m Elvin Stanley, but they call me, Chippers.”

“Charles Clark,” said Charles, and shook Elvin’s hand. He noticed that Elvin had several fingers missing and felt uneasy trying not to stare.

“Right,” said Steve, “now you’ve met the band.”

Wayne and Elvin looked puzzled as Steve announced, “After we’ve finished eating, we can go along to the recreation room and see what you can do on your old piano.”

Charles tried to imagine what instruments their band could play, with one as deaf as a dildo and another whose hands looked like a lobster’s pincers. Elvin and Wayne looked nervously at each other as Steve pointed out several other residents and relayed some of their weird foibles. Andrex Ethel, who walked around with toilet paper sticking out of her knickers and boring Bill, who people avoided, as all he ever talked about was pigeons.

Charles felt eager to see his piano, so after they had finished eating, the four went to the recreation room and over to his Steinway. He sat on his piano stool, lifted the lid, looked at the ivory keyboard, and stroked the keys. The other three stood around the piano.

“So, what kind of music do you play?” asked Steve.

Charles smiled at the three and played Sergei Taneyev concerto in E flat.

Several other residents made their way over to the recreation room, which was usually noisy as they chatted, played games, or watched TV. There was silence as they listened to soothing music as Charles became engrossed in the concerto.

Word quickly spread and a dozen residents came in.

Charles finished fifteen minutes later. He stared at the keys, reminiscing about how the tune was one of his and Mary's favourites. He languished in his thoughts while the recreation room remained silent for a few moments and then the other residents applauded. However, Charles noticed his three new friends did not appear impressed.

Mabel, a sprightly eighty-two-year-old, started singing 'Lily of the Lamplight.'

Steve, looking disappointed, then asked. "Do you know any rock 'n' roll?"

Charles looked at the three. "No, sorry, I know some older tunes, but mainly classical music and opera."

Steve frowned and he, Wayne, and Elvin stood back and talked amongst themselves.

Charles again tinkled on the piano keys and played a short Mozart piece. He stopped when Mabel came over and interrupted him. She barraged him with requests, so he played, 'White Cliffs of Dover' with Mabel shrieking along.

Steve then put his hand on Charles's shoulder and with a mischievous grin, and through Mabel's toneless warbles, said, "Don't worry Charlie boy, me and the lads still have high hopes for you."

Charles watched as Steve, Elvin, and Wayne went over to a room, unlocked the door, and went inside.

With Charles trying to match chords with Mabel's screeching, the three emerged from the room several minutes later.

Steve carried a beaten-up guitar, a small Marshall speaker/amp, and a microphone stand. Elvin had a large double bass, and Wayne carried over two round drum cases.

Mabel stopped screeching and gasped.

Charles saw a look of horror on the faces of the residents in the recreation room as the three came over to him. Steve plugged in his microphone and set up the stand. Wayne set up his drums, while Elvin tuned his old double bass.

The room plunged into panic as Steve adjusted the microphone stand. He tapped the microphone, and after a dull thump came from the speaker, he stood with the devil's glint in his eye and snarled. "Right you old

fogeys,” he paused for effect as the crowd trembled and he growled. “Strat’s back!”

Mabel shrieked and Ethel ran around trailing toilet tissue, while boring Bill headed for the door. Wally, another resident, made a desperate plea,

“Somebody get Chewy... and hurry!”

Steve plugged in his guitar and took a plectrum from his wallet. “Here’s my old faithful,” he said, showing Charles the old plastic plectrum with an ‘S’ hand-painted both sides.

Elvin stood to the side of his large bass and Wayne sat behind his drums, all smiling as the panicking residents rushed out of the room.

Charles sat at his piano looking confused as Mrs Chew rushed in and hurried over to the four.

She glared at Steve and shouted, “I told you not to set up again after the last incident. Don’t you remember our previous conversation?”

Steve smiled and said, “Just making our new friend feel at home, besides, the rec room’s empty, so we aren’t disturbing anybody.”

Mrs Chew became exasperated and yelled, “It’s empty because you scared everybody away, the same as before.”

Steve chuckled and told her. “This time it will be different. We are playing along with Charlie’s classical shit.” He turned to Charles and said. “Play her some of your music, Charlie boy.”

Charles, looking dumbfounded, played Debussy’s, ‘Clair de lune.’

Mrs Chew stood with her hands on her hips and listened to Charles play the melodic tune. She knew Steve was manipulating her yet again, but he was the boss’s father, so she couldn’t say anything.

Glowering at the smiling Steve, she snapped, “You have one hour and then be out of here.” She glared at the four and stormed out of the recreation room.

“Good, now Chewy’s pissed off, now we can start,” said Steve and grinned at Charles, “Okay Charlie boy, you can stop playing that crap and we can get down to playing serious music... Rock ‘n’ Roll.”

Steve sang and pouted like a bald teenager as he played, ‘Johnny ‘B’ good.’ He rocked away like a space-hopper on steroids.

Elvin struggled to pluck his double bass because he hadn’t put on his ‘little falsies.’ Wayne rocked back and forth, thumping out a beat on his drums, but unfortunately not for the same song.

Charles sat at his piano while they banged out their rendition of the rock 'n' roll classic. He grimaced as he listened and thought he could feel his eardrums bleed. This wasn't music to his ears; it sounded more like cats being murdered. He understood why the others had panicked in the desperate need to escape.

Fortunately, Charles's torture only lasted several minutes as the three finished and looked at him.

"Well, what do you think Charlie, could you add something to make any improvements?" asked Steve, looking pleased.

A shotgun came into Charles's mind as he looked at the smiling faces of the proud wrinkled rockers. He recalled what Mary always told him about not being good or bad music, only music that people either liked or disliked.

"Hmm, perhaps you need to all come together with a little more harmony. You need a little structure." He replied.

The three nodded and smiled at each other.

"Can you 'elp us with that?" Elvin asked.

Steve interrupted, "Yeah Charlie boy, you can help us and join our band. We will give yer a cool stage name."

Charles knew this would be a challenge but relished having something to keep him interested with this motley band of geriatrics and thought it could be fun. He smiled and said, "Maybe I can help, but please don't call me Charlie."

"What do you want us to call you?" Steve asked.

"My name is Charles, so how about you call me, Charles."

Steve laughed. "I'm known as 'Strat', Elvin's 'Chippers' and deaf boy over there," he said pointing to Wayne, "Sticks, so we can't just call you boring old Charles," said Steve.

"Ow about Nobby?" interrupted Elvin.

The three looked at Elvin and asked, "What?"

"Nobby," repeated Elvin, and explained, "In the military, anyone with the surname, 'Clark,' was always called '*Nobby' Clark."

Charles remembered from his childhood how he had heard people refer to his father as, Major 'Nobby' Clark, although unsure why.

Charles pondered, looked into the faces of the excited old rockers, scratched his chin, smiled, and said, "Okay, Nobby it is then."

The three cheered and patted Charles on the back. "Welcome aboard, Nobby," said Elvin, and walked back to the small room.

“He’s gone to get his falsies,” said Wayne as Elvin returned carrying an old holdall.

Charles watched Elvin fitting homemade prosthetics to his digitally challenged hands.

“I will sound better playing with these on,” said Elvin, waving his small Edward Scissorhands-Esque attachments. One had an index finger and a thumb-shaped object set at various angles, which Charles noticed was the perfect shape and design for plucking the strings of the double bass. His left-hand prosthetic was just one small tube, which looked ideal for covering the fret strings at the neck of the instrument. ‘Ingenious,’ thought Charles.

Elvin, noticing Charles’s interest, said. “These are me little falsies. I made a few of these for different occasions. These are my ‘bass falsies’. I also have me ‘eating falsies,’ ‘card-playing falsies,’ ‘lady pleasing falsies,’ and many more, which I will show you in the fullness of time,” said Elvin in his cheery cockney twang.

Charles looked at Elvin’s tatty old instrument and asked. “That’s a Flores, isn't it?”

Elvin, impressed by Charles’s knowledge, told him, “Yeah, a Flores Midnight double bass, which I bought many years ago when I saw it advertised for sale. Although dilapidated and ‘eld together by woodworm holding hands, I fell in love with the tatty old instrument, so I got it restored. I always loved playing the double bass and learned to play years ago before I lost me fingers.” He again held up his hands displaying his falsies and proudly announced. “And fanks to these, I still can.”

Charles winced and hoped Elvin would not play again.

The four old musicians stood by the side of Charles’s piano and Steve said, “Well lads, we still have thirty- minutes before Chewy finished ironing her wrinkles and chases us out, so what shall we play?”

The others chuckled and Elvin replied. “Perhaps Nobby could suggest somefin.”

Charles cringed. He looked at the eager trio and suggested. “I suppose our first step would be to find something that we can all play together. I don’t know any rock music and I don’t imagine you have sheet music for me to follow, so maybe we start with the basics.”

“Sheet music,” said Steve. “I don’t reckon that any of us can even read sheet music,” he laughed.

“I can,” said Elvin sounding wistful.

“Me too,” said Wayne. “I have also written a few songs.”

Steve looked shocked; he had known Wayne for almost two years and never suspected that this old Canadian had any musical education.

“You’re a dark horse, Wayne Logan,” said Steve and grinned.

“Perhaps I could look at your songs, Wayne. We may as well learn them,” said Charles.

“What?” asked Wayne.

Charles repeated his request but spoke louder.

“Okay,” said Wayne “They are in my room, so maybe tomorrow.”

Charles wanted to find out more about his new friends, partly because he was interested, but more importantly, because he wanted to fill the remaining time to stop them playing more awful, eardrum-bleeding noise.

“Are any of you married?” Charles asked.

“No,” said Elvin, and sighed. “My wife passed away four years ago.”

“I’m single. I got divorced years ago and played the field,” Steve interrupted and chuckled.

Charles looked at Wayne fiddling with his hearing-aid, and asked, “How about you Wayne, are you married?”

“Wayne lost his wife twenty- years ago,” Steve said and shouted at Wayne. “Didn’t you mate?”

“Oh, I am sorry to hear that Wayne,” said Charles.

“What?” Asked Wayne.

“I’m sorry to hear that your wife died,” Charles shouted.

Wayne looked confused and said, “My wife didn’t die.” His hearing-aid screeched, so he tapped it.

Elvin and Steve chortled.

“She didn’t die,” said Elvin. “He just lost ‘er.”

“That’s better,” said Wayne, now able to hear. He looked at Charles, smiled, and related his story.

Wayne, popular among the female residents of Fosdyke with his Latino appearance and when he first moved in, the old women hung around him like a Liverpool postman on giro day. Even Mrs Chew had a crush on old Wayne, even though married and 20 years his junior.

Wayne had lived at Fosdyke now for two years. Originally from Ontario, Canada, he settled in Cleethorpes years ago, after trying to trace his long lost love, Julie.

His family originated from Sicily and owned an Italian restaurant chain in Canada. With his sights set on becoming a musician, he left the family home on his 16th birthday and joined The Alex Gilroy Band, a seven-piece swing band. He studied music at school, and although he could play keyboard instruments, he loved playing the drums. Given the nickname, Sticks, by the band, because he always carried around drumsticks tapping anything that could offer a beat. He toured as the band's drummer throughout Canada. When the rock 'n' roll revolution hit America in the late fifties, Wayne moved to the U.S. where he joined 'Johnny and the Jeepsters,' a rock 'n' roll, skiffle band. Throughout the sixties and seventies, he moved around with various bands.

During the 1980s, as other forms of music pushed out rock 'n' roll, he tried his hand at rock music. Although ageing, he joined a rock band called, 'Smoking Heads' and dropped his nickname, Sticks, as he felt it was no longer cool, and didn't belong in the rock, pop era. The band never became famous but had a small fan base. They performed many gigs around the world, touring several countries. With the loud music taking its toll on his hearing, it became increasingly more difficult to hear the music as each tour went on. The group did a tour of the UK in the mid-1980s. They decided to get rid of Wayne, who, due to his age, no longer fitted in with their rocker image. They played his farewell gig at the Sheffield Arena, where he met Julie, an attractive twenty-five-year-old woman from Cleethorpes. Wayne prided himself on having no emotional attachment towards women but became besotted with Julie. He invited her to the United States, and she accepted.

Their life was great at first. Wayne found work as a session musician and wrote several songs.

As his deafness became worse, his work sessions got shorter. He became miserable and angry, taking his anger out on Julie. He turned into a violent drunk and Julie felt dejected. One night he came home *spannered. Julie and her belongings were gone.

Over the next few days, he stayed sober while trying to figure out what happened to Julie. He'd phoned friends and acquaintances but to no avail. Julie had vanished without a trace, taking a chunk of money from their joint account and used their credit card to buy a flight to Manchester, England.

He had inherited 25% of his family's business and received an annual dividend. With money being of no concern, he decided to search for Julie in

Wayne smirked and said, “Well, I did only play for pleasure... then.”

“You are a dark horse, Logan,” said Steve and chuckled.

Charles looked puzzled and asked, “I thought you dropped the name Sticks. So how come they call you Sticks now?”

Wayne looked at Steve and frowned. “It’s that slap-heads fault,” he said. “That’s how they found out I was in a band. I kept a few mementoes from my younger days and one was an old framed poster from my time with ‘Johnny and the Jeepsters,’ hung in my room.”

Steve giggled as the story unfolded.

“One day, I was getting ready to go to the recreation room. Steve knocked and just walked into my room.” He scowled at Steve still smirking, and continued, “He went over, looked at the picture, and asked about the band. He said he had never heard of the Jeepsters, which was great, as I didn’t want them to know about my past. I told him I played with them for a short while in the ’60s, but he wouldn’t let it be and kept asking more questions. He then read the band’s line up, and saw Wayne ‘Sticks’ Logan.”

“And Sticks was reborn,” said Steve smirking.

Wayne mumbled and sighed.

Much to Charles’s relief, the three did not play anymore after hearing Wayne’s tale, and Wayne, Steve, and Elvin packed away their instruments.

“It’s early,” said Steve. “How about we go for a couple of pints in the Pavilion?”

“Yeah, good idea,” said Elvin. “It ain’t far Nobby, only a ten-minute walk.”

Charles wasn’t in the mood, but after the three persisted, and wanting to hear more about them, he agreed.



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