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Quadrophenia: Can You See the Real Me?

By Unknown

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The Who started as a band with four
very different individuals
with very, very different needs.

Got a few hits,
managed to pull off Tommy,
managed to pull off some
kind of amazing live stage energy.
'A special TUC conference in London
has voted...'

'New challenges and burdens
created by the oil crisis...'
'As the gas situation gets worse...'
'The miners need some inducement to
come to talks...'

'I think the three-day week should
be called off at once.'

'Ten years on from The Who's
first successes comes the release
'this weekend of a new double album
that could be a step on,
'even from Tommy, Quadrophenia.'

When we got to Quadrophenia,
talking 1973,
something strange was happening to
the internal politics of the band.
It was quite clear that Keith Moon
was certifiably insane
and that if he hadn't had a drum kit
to play with, he probably would have
ended up in jail.

John Entwistle simply wasn't happy
because he was a songwriter,
and it seemed as though for him,
the band had come all about me
and my ideas.

Roger wanted something which meant
he could swing his hair
and looked glamorous
and take his chest off
and be a superstar.

I had difficulties as well.
Lifehouse, which followed Tommy,
failed.

The accusation was, "You failed
with your big idea
"because you're an arty-farty
pretentious twat."
It felt, to me,
as though we were drifting apart.
So my first mission,
my first part of the brief that
I gave myself was replace Tommy as
a performing vehicle, that was it.
So my story was, I'd bought this
riverside property out...
It's actually in a place
called Cleeve on the River Thames.
One day I got this call
about Eric who was wallowing
down in his house in the country,
and would I go down and see Eric?
Eric had done an album
and ended up as a heroin user.
I remember going down and seeing
him. He was very courteous, very
kind, very dignified, very loving,
very friendly
as he always was to me.
But I was affected by it.
I start to think about how we can...
Not rescue Eric,
but just to kind of stimulate him.
I turned to a couple of my mates,
Ronnie Wood, Stevie Winwood
I was nodding off and Rick the bass
player said, "Try this." I said,
"What is it?"
He said it is
a kind of a popper thing,
he said, it wakes you up,
and it was amyl nitrate.
And I took it and I went, "Oh,
that's fun, a bit of a buzz,"
and then played. I did not get stuck
on it but I used it quite a bit.
Once the concert with Eric
in January 1973 was over, I suppose

I must have had some sort of come
down from the lack of amyl nitrate.
On a dark, wet winter
weekend at the cottage at Cleeve,
with the river running
faster than usual,
I had a flashback to
when I was 19 years old.
The Who had just played this
amazing gig at the Aquarium Ballroom
in Brighton and I was
with my art school friend Des Reed.
After the gig
we missed the train home.
So we hung out
and we went down under the pier
and there were all these boys
in parkas
with the fucking tide
coming up around their feet.
They didn't seem to understand
that they were going to drown!
Under the pier, I was coming
down from taking purple hearts,
the fashionable uppers
of the period.
Sitting there at Cleeve,
that day nine years later,
that same feeling came flooding back
of feeling depressed,
lost and hopeless
and I grabbed a notebook.
Quickly when I was still in this
sad and lonely mood,
I scribbled out the story that is
on the inside sleeve of the original
album of Quadrophenia.
This was the story of a mod
called Jimmy.
Jimmy was a normal boy, with normal
needs, passing through the normal
things of childhood, but what made
everything so much more complicated
for him was he had a bipolar

problem, he was schizophrenic.

I think that Jimmy is meant to be,
instead of schizophrenic,
he is meant to be quadrophrenic,
and that is the original concept,
to have Jimmy have these four
personalities.

So Quadrophenia was a double-album,
in the old days of vinyl that meant
you had two 12 inch vinyl discs.

And it's that difficult,
dodgy '70s thing, the concept album.

A sensitive story of a mod
on a journey of self-discovery,
but played by The Who - tough,
muscular, physical, a man's band.

What I know is that I'm going to
be on a stage

with a bunch of yobbos
with an electric guitar.

I'm going to have to turn it up, I'm
going to have to jump up and down,
I'm going to have to tell them
to fuck off and shut up.

This is Pete, the writer, trying to
serve Keith and John and Roger,
giving them really

stimulating, useful
fucking stuff that they can express
their stage personalities through.

The Who's sound has got those
warring elements in it.

On the one hand they are
a street fighting band,
doing all that physical,
visceral side on the one hand,
on the other hand that spiritual,
whimsical,
melancholic lyrical side and banging
them together, often in one song.

This bit of paper is kind of,
on the top line you've got me,
Roger, John, Keith.

The next line is good, bad, romance.

They are joined together with
the word sex, insanity.
The idea that each of these themes
would produce songs.
In actual fact, this is just
a musical blueprint for what
I wanted to do.
Pete, you know,
is working very hard.
I don't know quite what on but...
You know, I think it'll be good.
The trouble is with Pete,
working with him,
he had these wonderful little
kernels of ideas
but then he would want to pitch them
and make them into stories.
But we got the essence of it.
This guy's got all the personalities
of every member in the band
and it's just one guy.
And that was enough for me to say,
"Great idea, let's go for it."
This is how the album starts, OK.
No other Who album starts with
ambient noise.
And it very specifically
is putting you in a place,
it sets a scene, which
none of the other Who albums did.
Once we had the sea noise going,
we just introduced each
theme of the four themes.
The first thing you hear
is I Am The Sea,
the breathy sound of,
"I am the sea."
And do-dee-do-do-do, which is
the Helpless Dancer.
Then you hear, is it me for a
moment, which is the romantic side
and so on.
Instead of having
a straight overture,

you get pieces of the songs
and it comes back as memories.
You're automatically put
on that rock.
And you hear the themes and then
bang into the first track which is,
Can You See The Real Me?
He's at the doctor,
he's going to the shrink,
he's going to the priest,
he's going to his mother for advice,
and I wanted to establish
very, very quickly
that this is not just a troubled
boy, this is a boy that has
mental illness.
He's bipolar
or he's manic-depressive.
And this idea of him being,
you know, doubly schizophrenic.
I went back to my mother
I said, I'm crazy, ma, help me
She said, I know how it feels, son
Cos it runs in the family
Can you see the real me, mother,
mother?
Can you see the real me, mother
Whoa, Mama...
Once you hear that track,
you know that this is going to be
the revelation of a condition.
Jimmy gets up in the morning,
goes to see his shrink,
goes to see his priest because his
mum is a deep, dark Catholic.
Goes to look up at this girl's
bedroom that he's in love with
who won't shag him.
The cracks between
the paving stones
Like rivers of flowing veins...
You're going right inside the boy's
head. You know where you are,
you've come from the peace

of the sea,
and the idea that this is
a little bit of this,
and a little bit of that and then,
bang, you're into the action.
Lives in this yellow house
Yesterday she passed me by
She doesn't
want to know me now...
When I first heard it,
a friend of mine had it and they had
the gatefold sleeve and everything
and I loved it, but it was
quite costly, so they recorded it
for me on what was back then a C90.
I remember for ages thinking that
he'd started on side two
because it begins with
"I went back to the doctor."
It's like you've jumped right into
the middle of the stream,
you've come right into the middle
of the ride,
come right into the middle of
a rush, and that is brilliant.
Can you see the real me, mother?
Can you see the real me,
me, me, me, me,
me, me, me, me, me m-m-me... #
1, 2, 3, 4...
Pete decided that as part
of the album, he'd have this lavish,
very generous big photo book to
illustrate the story and also,
the other thing is I think he
thought it would help explain
the story, particularly to the
Americans who didn't understand it.
Ethan Russell's photos
put you in that place.
As an American,
you were able to understand
because you were able to see it,
you were able to see his room,

you saw the life and it told you
the story better than a movie,
better than a video. It's all there.
The first cover I did for The Who
was the album Who's Next, here.
I was back in the United States.
I got a call from Pete.
He was pretty stressed already
because he'd been
working on this forever
and you could feel this tremendous
energy of him sort of wanting to
birth this thing, you know.
So he played me the material
and he told me the story.
And we went out to try
and sort of build that world.
We're here in Battersea in
the Patmore Estate.
My sister Maxine and I used to
live across the road here,
in this block of flats here.
Our foster sister Jane used to
live in this block of flats here
and the three of us
used to hang out,
generally around on that
corner block there.
Along here,
which used to be a church hall,
became Rampport Studios
which was owned by The Who,
back in the early '70s.
This is myself here. I would have
been just coming up to 15.
That was an original mod outfit.
I had my hair cut very short
and cropped and black eyeliner,
which you can't see through
the black and white picture.
That's me.
And I've got on a pencil skirt,
a pinstripe pencil skirt,
Hush Puppy shoes

and a navy blue twinset,
little jumper underneath,
a cardigan and like Julie,
my hair cut very short,
mod-style haircut.

The girls came up,
too young to go in the pub
but they knew that I was
looking for someone to play Jimmy.
Chad was one of the local guys
that lived near the pub.
We thought he had the look for
the main character of Quadrophenia
so we introduced him to Georgiana.
I saw the attitude.
I saw the class and the attitude
and the sort of, you know..
His wheels were spinning a bit,
you know.

And he was the real thing. He had
love-hate tattooed on his hands.
Pretty early on in life for that,
you know.

He was often in bed.
They would have to go and get him
up at the flats, I remember that.
Because he'd had too much to drink,
or maybe drugs,
I don't know what,
I won't swear that either,
but he was often not on location
when he was supposed to be.

About two thirds through the shoot
Chad came up to me and says,
"I've got to go to court."
I said what have you got to go to
court for? He said, "I stole a bus."
And I said, "You stole a bus?" And he
said "Yes, I stole a bus."
I said, "OK."

He walks up to the judge and the
judge says, "What did you do?"
He said, "I took her for a drive."
I can't do the accent.

He said, "what are you doing now?"
He says, "I'm a male model."
And I'm sitting in the back,
and he says, "Who do work for?"
"I work for The 'Oo."
And the judge turns to me and says,
"Is this true?" And I said, "Yes."
He says, "You need him?" And I said,
"Yes, absolutely I need him."
So he let him off.
Pete always had this thing about
mods, even before they were mods.
I like to be subsumed in a gang.
And so I love that feeling of being
safe in the mod movement.
I felt safer in a gang of mods
than I did in the band,
I can tell you that!
There was this
hierarchical structure.
At the top you would have
these top faces.
These were the mods that really
looked really smart
and seemed to be able to afford
new suits a lot.
There were the numbers
and there was tickets.
The tickets were the little kids.
The one that I came across
was Seven And Sixers,
and I never knew why they were called
Seven And Sixers and it was cos
the T-shirts they wore were
seven and six in Woolworths.
What will the well-dressed mod
be wearing this Whit weekend?
I will be wearing white hipster
slacks or blue hipster slacks
with either a cycling shirt,
a zip here and stripes across there,
mainly with white ground
or a blue ground.
Or a T-shirt with a large

emblem on the front or back.
Roger talks about the mod movement
only happening
because in those days, '62, '63, '64,
a young man could get a job.
We were the first generation to have
money and creative energy because
previous to that everybody had been
slaving to pay the bloody bills.
And living on the ration book.
To be a face, you had to go out
to work. You couldn't be a face
if you're a school kid because you
didn't have enough money to buy
the scooter, to pay for the petrol
to pay for the girlfriends
and the burgers and the drinks.
The mods were hard-working
youngsters
and it was all about spending
your money on clothes.
A new booming outfitting
business both meets and creates
the mod demand for elegance
in a young man.
This shop now has 18 branches
in London
and a turnover of
half a million a year.
They'd see Italian students
and kids over here on holiday
in central London
and were admiring their clothes
and saying, "Look at the cut on their
clothes." Stuff that we didn't have.
I don't like red on you anyway.
From all these different elements
emerged this sort of movement
with its strict rules that were
never written down
but they seemed to understand them.
That's a very mod neck.
That rollneck's all right,
a suede front, it's different.

That's true, yeah. This is great,
I like this. It's fabulous.
If I left a deposit for that, John,
can I come back next week?
Yeah, certainly. Is that OK?
That's not yours, my love.
If you saw a teddy boy,
you'd know he was a teddy boy
but if you saw a mod, your mods could
work in an advertising agency,
no-one would know they were mods.
They just looked like a neat kid.
But to other mods,
they gave all the signals.
Maybe a slightly effeminate kid
and that's where
I thought the real courage came.
They used to do their own sewing
and stuff.
These great big guys would say,
"I'll take in those trousers!"
Roger made drainpipes
and put the zips in himself!
He put zips in drainpipes!
It was perfect because for the first
time in generations
you dressed as you wanted to
and at work you probably were
a shipping clerk or a filing clerk.
You were management material.
And you got, "Oh, he's a very tidy
young man,
"he's going up the ladder, mate."
Mods had real strict taste rules
and it was difficult to know
what was in, and what was out.
I remember people talking
about the way to stand outside
the Scene Club, you had to stand
with your hand in your pocket...
All these sort of ways
to maintain your cool.
My hair was a disaster. I hated it.
When I looked in the mirror,

I saw somebody like Art Garfunkel.
Roger had exactly the same problem.
He was constantly
straightening his hair. Dippity-do.
Dippity-do. He found this American
gel that would straighten your hair
long enough to get through a gig.
And I think the main driving force
then was fashion.
But then it became the music
and the other things.
And the other thing is you've to put
it in context of the time,
it was like people identifying
with this new, modern, clean world.
This is Cut My Hair, it's like the
first proper song on the album.
The album should have started
with Cut My Hair because
that's where the story starts.
On Cut My Hair you've got a...
This piano part, very nursery,
gentle piano.
Against which you get the story
of the boy complaining about why
he has to fuck around
with his hair basically.
It's interesting because what
it's about is a mixture of that
refrain when we were young
and the hair was long which was,
"Get your hair cut!"
And suddenly all of that being
turned on its head by
the mod movement where a face
would turn to you and say,
"Get your hair cut."
And you'd think, "Hold on a minute,
you're only three or four
"years older than me, don't fucking
tell me to get my haircut!"
If you were raised in a modern
neighbourhood, you had to fit in
with those people.

So, we sat down and had our hair cut.
Which I hated.
It had taken me nearly a year
to grow my Beatle fringe
down to here.
I was taken to this guy called
Jack the barber,
more like Sweeney Todd!
I remember going back to my house
with Keith Moon
and smashing the mirror in my room
because I hated it. Horrible.
I kind of rebelled against it
went out and bought myself a jacket
and trousers and I felt OK about it.
Except for my hair.
My initial reaction to it was,
"It's about me."
The essence of Townshend's
writing is that he
writes about the adolescent problems
and they never change
and that's why if you take away
the mod tunic, the mod uniform,
what you're left with is
the universal adolescent problem.
What's happening at the very end
is he's thinking, "This is shit."
He can't deal with it.
And at the end you get this abject
self-pity which Jimmy is...
Falls into regularly.
This sense of, "I can't do this."
So, it sets up this thing
that starting at the beginning
of Quadrophenia that he's
becoming disenchanted with
the burden of being a mod,
of trying to fit in,
of having the right shoes,
the right shirt.
He's not getting what he wants.
A gang of nearly 1,000
youths entered the Grand Hotel

in pursuit of two leather-clad
rockers.

South Coast police have warned
that if the fight between rival
gangs of mods and rockers continue
strict security measures will be
in force at railway station both
in London and on the south coast.
Brighton was just one of those
places that was popping.

Say me and my friends went
to a dance hall once,
there was a load of rockers there,
they were taking the mick out of us.
You can't let a load of kids take
the Mickey out of you, can you?
So, what do you do?

Well, you have a punch-up about it.
What do you fight with? With fists!
The first trouble was in Clacton.
And afterwards I think Margate
and then it was Brighton.
You had about 30 little mods
versus three big rockers.

They were all running up,
"Come on, then!" And all this stuff.
We were posing and stuff like that.
It's the rockers that started. They
screw you. What does screw mean?

You know, look you up
and down and think, "That's a funny
"way of dressing." Think you're
a poof or something like that.
The really cool mods hated
the fact that there was this
violence on the beach.

They hated it.

"Bunch of wankers!

Going and fighting with rockers."

Ha! That kind of thing.

The beat they dance to
is another difference
between mods and rockers.

At this mod club, The Chez Don,

in the East End of London
the rhythm is blue
and strong enough to lean against.
The mod girls dance with each other
and no-one bothers to talk
since you can't hear yourself speak.
Rockers don't show their faces here.
It would only lead to trouble.
This is the famous Goldhawk club.
I'm opening the door
to the dance hall.
Along here and on the other side
was a whole bunch of settees
where a lot of necking went on!
And there was kissing and French
kissing and tongues and stuff.
Got a feeling inside
Can't explain
It's a certain kind
Can't explain
I feel hot and cold
Can't explain
Yeah, down in my soul, yeah
Can't explain...
We'd just done Ready Steady Go,
they had been there in the audience,
we went to the Goldhawk Club
and played Can't Explain,
we played it again
and again and again.
The things you've said, well,
maybe they're true...
And I thought,
"God Almighty! What's going on?"
"The Who are playing probably
my favourite song of all time."
They've played I Can't Explain
three times, what's going on?
When I feel blue
But I can't explain
Can't explain
"Play it again, play it again!"
Dah, da-da, dah-da-da!
You know, fucking glorious night

at the Goldhawk Club that their boys
had gone on Ready Steady Go which was
the big mod programme of the day.
I sort of elected myself as some
kind of delegate and I came here,
I knocked on this door,
this very door we're looking at.
Irish Jack walks forward and says
"There's something we want
to tell you."
I said, "Look, this song is exactly
what we're trying to say."
You've said it for us.
I can't explain because this is what
mods were about.
They couldn't explain.
None of us could explain,
we didn't have the articulation.
So, I said to him
quite patronising, "Jack,
"you want to be to write more
songs for you about the fact you
"can't explain what it is
you want me to explain
"and I can't explain what it is
you want to explain?"
Jack immediately goes, "That's it!"
So, in words, Pete Townshend
became the song laureate of the mods
in Shepherd's Bush, Hammersmith,
Acton, Ealing.
You declared you'd be three
inches taller
You only became what we made you.
There's a fabulous postcard,
we're about 18/19,
we look like perfect
little girly mods.
That's the band that Jimmy looked at
and went, "That's me!"
Then he goes into that band
and finds that these four people,
each one of them is a deeply
eccentric and complex and difficult

and fucked up individual
and they're each in their own way.
I'm the guy in the sky
Flying high, flashing eyes
No surprise I told lies
I'm the punk in the gutter.
All of those youth movements
are built on false idols.
They're all built on the idea
of loving something
and never meet your idols.
There's that crushing
sense of disappointment.
They're not the people
you think they are.
This was the only time The Who
were in the entire book.
We shot about 4am in the morning
so we wouldn't have any traffic
and it was the Hammersmith Odeon,
that was the idea.
And in the story it's where Jimmy
sees The Who otherwise
they don't intersect in the story.
He's feeling inferior,
his hero's scooter is bust
and these guys have a limo.
I have to be careful not to preach
I can't pretend that I can teach
And yet I've lived your future out
By pounding stages like a clown
And on the dance floor broken glass
And bloody faces slowly pass
The numbered seats in empty rows
It all belongs to me you know.
OK!
There's this idea of The Who,
who had these kind of mod roots,
and they later became a great big
bloated rock band.
The distance between them
being almost '70s rock stars
and the '60s roots of what they were
is played up in this photograph.

You get this image of Jimmy,
the mod, from the 1960s, clearly,
down on one knee and out here's the
band coming out of Hammersmith Odeon
but the band appear to be like
a '70s rock band and the interesting
thing is it's the distance between
him and them, that's the time shift.
This is when the album is recorded,
this is the distance
between these two things.
It's important.
I'm the guy in the sky
Flying high, flashing eyes
No surprise I told lies
I'm the punk in the gutter.
He just happens to pass
his ex-heroes, The Who,
and says to them, "You bunch of...
You fucking let me down."
That's all it's about.
This one song,
Punk And The Godfather, that was it.
I don't mind
Other guys dancing with my girl
That's fine
I know them all pretty well...
Is it me for a moment?
Records traditionally have tracks
with gaps in between.
What Quadrophenia has
is a soundscape
and the thing it's closest to
is it's a film soundtrack.
So, between the tracks you get
the sound of Jimmy's life,
losing his bike,
losing his dirty job,
living rough on the streets alone.
The sound of the train
in the station, the whistle.
The boiling kettle and a fried egg.
In a sense,
it's using sound as music.

For sea and sand, for example,
I literally walked down a beach
with a stereo mic singing
sea and sand.

Here by the sea and sand.

But Quadrophenia had a sound, it
was one sound from start to finish,
and that sound was
the sound of the backing track.

What had happened was
the Who couldn't find a studio
that they liked,
so they said, "Let's buy a place
and build our own,"
because they had some money then,
so they found this church
in Battersea, in Thessaly Road,
Battersea.

Thessaly Road was really
a storage facility.

Pete Townshend came down one day to
see where all his guitars were.
Blimey.

I'm surprised how spacious it is.
He looked around, he gave
a click of his fingers, and he said,
"This has got good resonance."
It had, you know, a bright...
It's still got quite
a bright sound in here.
But it was brighter than this,
it was quite a bright...
And that was unusual at the time.
Most studios in London were a little
bit deader than this one.
He said, "This would make
a bloody good studio."

So, I goes,

"Right, turn it into a studio."

There's a window, you can see, here,
just there, which would have allowed
you to see from this room...

If you are sitting down, you could
see into the control room,

which would have been there,
where the doctor's waiting room is.
The main intention was that the
control room should be quadraphonic.
There were no rooms in the UK,
or in America at the time,
that had for speakers, one in each
corner. They just weren't any.
This is an acoustic ceiling,
designed...

They're always designed like this,
with this dish,
and you can see that that would have
been one of the plinths
on which we hung one of
the quadraphonic speakers,
another one there,
another one there.

You can see that the room is
designed in a quadraphonic shape.
The mixing desk would've been here,
tape machines there.

I had the idea to do something
in quadraphonic
before I was certain about the
story of Quadrophenia.

And the band that were doing
the most experimentation with it
were Pink Floyd, and they'd done
a couple of shows where
they'd introduced quadraphonic
sound into their live shows.

Money...

Dum, dum, dum, dum, tchk...
would come out in the back right,
this great big chink,
then it would come out there,
and then it goes round and round
and round. It was very exciting.
So, we had a test unit sent over,
and Pete hated it.

The separation wasn't...

It was like a big mono.

And Pete said, "You know,

I am not going to make
"a quadraphonic album that sounds
worse than the stereo."
These days, on a computer, you can
do this kind of thing in 15 seconds.
Back then, it was much harder.
We actually never mixed
anything in quadraphonic.
Quadrophonia is strictly
a stereo album.
At the same time as trying to do
that, everything was up in the air.
They were building the studio
and trying to record this thing
in the studio, while there
were builders in there.
There's people under the desk,
undoing things.
He says, "Hold on a minute,
another take,"
and then they start...
It was utter chaos.
What was different about our studio
to everybody else's,
that we had the bar
IN the fucking studio.
You know, you'd kind of go,
"Na, na, na, nee, na,"
and then pour yourself
a pint of beer,
or a pint of brandy,
whatever it was, right there.
You didn't have to reach
out very far.
The average Who session, not for
Roger, but for John, Keith and I,
would start, we'd roll up,
it would be two o'clock.
By four o'clock, we would
have had enough brandy
to start fiddling around.
We would be telling stories.
Roger hated all that stuff,
he just thought it was time-wasting.

We were building round
the making of Quadrophenia,
and we didn't know
our arse from our elbow.
We didn't know what we were doing.
When the desk got put in, Pete said,
"Let's hear what it sounds like,"
and all of us in the control room,
our ears and noses started to bleed.
I have a ruptured eardrum
to this day, because of it.
We measured it.
It was louder than standing
by the four engines of Concorde
at full throttle.
It was 140 decibels,
and one guitar blast...
just projectile bleeding!
As well as the studio falling apart,
Townshend was in danger
of losing his long-term creative
ally and producer.
By the start of Quadrophenia,
Townshend was still
under the illusion that Kit Lambert
was going to be around to help him.
Kit Lambert and Chris Stone,
their co-managers,
got into heroin and stuff.
So, they were kind of not
looking after business,
or so Roger thought, because Roger
found out that all the money
hadn't been accounted for,
and there was some money missing.
That was a really sad period,
actually.
Kit wanted to be
THE producer, as such.
Kit Lambert, who had supposed to
have been co-producing with me,
had stopped coming.
I took him out, and in the end
I got so angry with Kit

over his behaviour, that I started
to threaten him physically,
and funnily enough, Roger came out,
and calmed me down,
and got Kit Lambert away,
and then we never really
worked together again.
And daddy was long gone.
Townshend was on his own.
It was pretty difficult, I didn't
realise the extent of their drug use.
And I didn't realise
just how much destructive behaviour
was going on.
And I guess that Pete felt
incredible pressure.
The local community were
really good to us.
They loved having the Who there,
and that was in the days when
the power station was working.
You know, we had kids from the
estate used to come in
and sit down in the front,
sometimes.
5.15 was one of the songs
that they let us listen to,
which was exciting.
Roger would say things like,
"Girls, would you buy this song?"
We would say yes or no.
"Do you think it would get
to number one?"
The band now that haven't had
a single out for two years.
They've taken a track off
their forthcoming LP,
Quadrophenia, I think it's called,
and it's 5.15, and it's the Who!
The thing about 5.15
was that it was a sound check riff.
We were just getting
the sound together,
and then we moved on to another

song, but we were just riffing away.
Why should I care?
Why should I care...?
This song is built around this
riff coming up.
And then the horns complement that.
If I go back and play you
what John plays,
you can hear that he plays
an emulation of the guitar.
He's playing my guitar part
for me...
With the droning, which
I always had in the background.
Girls of fifteen
Sexually knowing
The ushers are sniffing
Eau de Cologne-ing...
And the ushers are sniffing,
eau de Cologne-ing,
was a reference to the young girls
at the Beatles concert in Blackpool.
The whole of Blackpool...
this Blackpool theatre
smelt of urine. I mean,
it was just beyond belief.
Every single girl in the audience
must have pissed themselves
in excitement, and they were
sprinkling eau de Cologne
on all the seats, because it was
apparently what you do,
was you sprinkle eau de Cologne.
Girls of fifteen
Sexually knowing
The ushers are sniffing
Eau de Cologne-ing
The seats are seductive
Celibate sitting
Pretty girls digging
Prettier women
Magically bored
On a quiet street corner
Free frustration

In our minds and our toes
Quiet storm water
M-M-My generation
Uppers and downers
Either way, blood flows...
Jimmy's fallen out of love
with his idols,
he's been thrown out of his home.
The scooter's been crashed.
Right, now what you do? This
is the going off into the wilderness,
cos actually what he's doing,
he's going off in search of Xanadu.
..Inside, outside
Leave me alone...
'He's going back to find the thing
that makes sense to him,
'you know, being on the beach,
being down in Brighton,
'being part of the whole
mod culture thing.'
..Out of my brain
on the 5.15...
'And he's going off in search
of something
'that he already knows is gone.
'That, I think,
is why that song is so powerful,
'because it's the sense that
something has all ready been lost.'
He goes back to Brighton,
but there's that lovely idea
that Townshend captures,
a very English idea of going
to a seaside town after the
fair's left. You're off season.
But, actually, there's
a strange beauty in it,
and the beauty is that he feels
calm by the sea and the sand,
because everything else
has passed away.
Here by the sea and sand
Nothing ever goes as planned

I just couldn't face going home
It was just a drag on my own...
Jimmy is drawn to -
and this is the reason
why he is not the same
as everyone else...
is that he goes and talks to the sea.
The image of him looking out
at something much bigger
than all of this.
Brighton, the mod culture thing,
is happening behind here,
on the promenade, on the pier,
but actually what he's doing
is looking out at the vast
expanse of the sea,
and the sea is speaking to him.
Let me flow into the ocean
Let me get back to the sea
Let me be stormy
and let me be calm
Let the tide in
and set me free...
That was a song written about the
spiritual journey.
..I want to drown...
It's about,
"Let me get back to the sea."
"Let me get back to the ocean,"
meaning, "Let me get back to God,"
which is brought on by
walking on the beach, by the sea.
There's nobody there but him,
he's on his own.
..Let me flow into the ocean
Let me get back to the sea
Let me be stormy
and let me be calm
Let the tide in, rush over me
You know, I want to drown, drown
Drown, drown, drown
I want to drown, drown
Drown, drown, drown
I want to drown, drown

Drown, drown, drown...
It's interesting that out of
that calm and peace
comes the story's whole turning
point, where Jimmy meets up
with this key figure from his past,
the leader of the mods,
the Ace Face.
The idea is that Jimmy goes back
and he finds this character,
the Ace Face, who he really,
really idolised,
but in fact, the guy who was
smashing in the hotel doors with him
just recently is now working
as a bellboy.
The beach is a place where
a man can feel
He's the only soul
in the world that's real...
Jimmy sees his hero in the harsh
midday sun being nobody.
..Well, I see a face coming
through the haze
I remember him from
those crazy days...
And if this person, who was
so exalted, who was so perfect,
that he idolised, is nothing,
then Jimmy has nothing,
he is nothing.
..Riding up in front of
a hundred faces
I don't suppose
you would remember me
But I used to follow
you back in '63...
Jimmy's rank disillusion
at the idea that the person
he idolised is a fucking bellboy.
..I've got a good job
And I'm newly born
You should see me
dressed up in my uniform

I work in hotel
All guilt and flash
Remember the gaff where
the doors we smashed?
Bell boy
I got to get running now...
It was quite difficult working
with Keith as a singer,
because he acted, rather than sang.
..Carry the bloody baggage out
Bell boy
Always running at
someone's heel...
I loved the way he did that.
It's the kind of thing you could
imagine a bellboy doing,
working at a posh hotel.
"Cor blimey,"
like this, with his mates,
and then when after a tip,
it's, "Hello, sir."
I was uncomfortable with turning
the bellboy into a comedy figure,
because I thought, "This is the only
time that the Ace Face sings."
..Remembering when stars
were in reach
I wander in early to work...
A couple of times, I said to him,
"It's not a comedy."
..Spend my day licking boots
for my perks...
Whoosh! That would have gone...
..The beach is a place
where a man can feel
He's the only
soul in the world that's real...
What was Keith like in 1973?
Just a little bit more drunk than
he was in 1972!
The extraordinary thing about Keith
was that whatever you felt
about him as a drummer,
and I didn't think very much

of him as a drummer...
It's kind of sacrilege,
isn't it? But I didn't.
He listened.
People would call him
a sloppy drummer, and he never
was a sloppy drummer.
He had an extraordinary metronome.
He made the music dramatic.
What he wouldn't do is play,
"Boom, boom, bup, ba, boom, ba."
He'd be, "Blrr-plplrprl!
Bing, bing, bing!
"Bing, bing, bing!
Tiddle, bing, bing!
"Biddle, bing, bing," you know?
And I'd be going,
"Boom, boom, bang, bang, boom,"
because somebody had to!
..People often change
But when I look in your eyes
You could learn a lot from
a life like mine
The secret to me
It ain't flown like a flag
I wear it behind this
bloody little badge
What says...
Bell boy...
He was at the top of his game
in '73, '73-'74,
absolute top of his game.
He was magnificent,
and funny as hell.
You know, I tell the funny
stories about him showing up
and saying, "Come outside
and look at my new car!"
We'd go out
and there'd be a Rolls-Royce.
We'd say, "That's fabulous,
Keith, great."
Then two hours later, we'd have
somebody from Jack Barclay's...

"Where do I send the invoice
for Keith Moon's new car?
"He said we've got to send it to
the Who group. Is it the Who group?"
I said, "No, you send it
to Keith Moon."
"No, no, no. We have to send it
to the Who group."
"No, we're not fucking
paying for it, OK?
"This is his car,
let him pay for it."
"No, no, you don't understand..."
"No, you don't fucking understand.
We're not paying for his car."
Ah! That's better!
Phil, what-what-what-what-what...
'I think today you'd say
he had ADHD
'and he needed some Ritalin,
or something.'
But taking cocaine and mandrax
and brandy was exacerbating it.
It was always a mixture with Keith.
You know, fun one minute
and a bit frightening the next.
Never felt afraid OF him,
but frightened for him
and people around him.
And he wasn't at his best
as a human being at that time.
I don't think any of us were,
really.
I shouldn't really
single him out.
There's a credit on the inside
of the sleeve which says,
"Quadrophenia in its entirety
by Pete Townshend."
Townshend writes, records the
entire album himself in demo form
and then, when he brought it
to the Who, they did it again.
Quadrophenia was definitely

like a Pete Townshend solo project.
It was all Townshend
from start to finish, his own...
They probably knew
nothing about it till he came
and said, "Here it is."
So, you could see how Roger
and maybe the others would feel
a little bit resentful,
because it could be construed
as being used like
session musicians, you know.
I hear it said that Pete produced
the album, which in a sense he did.
But the one thing he never,
ever produced was the vocals.
He's never there when I record
my vocals, ever. I won't have that.
Roger was always tough,
assertive, masculine.
So there was always that sense that
you had to be cheerful what you
said around him, you really did.
Pete's a very
complicated character,
incredibly complicated, as you
can see by the songs he writes.
They had an addiction to friction.
It's almost like
they're two jigsaw pieces,
and when you bring them together
they fit together.
It's an absolute love-hate...
Not hate, but it's
a love-anger relationship.
And I think
if you take away the love-anger,
you take away the creative source.
You take away the driving dynamic.
So he steals a boat, in the story,
and goes out to sea
and almost drowns.
It's clearly written as,
is this going to be what happens

to this boy whose life's
kind of fallen apart?
Who's twice schizophrenic,
pilled out, lost, he's got nothing,
doesn't have a girl,
doesn't have a bike,
doesn't have anything.
And that's kind of
what we're shooting.
And then he's now really adrift.
And then this,
which I just kind of love.
Love Reign O'er Me.
Only love...
What's interesting about...
the opening here is
that what you hear from Roger
is incredible tenderness.
You don't hear the
heartfelt bawling,
screaming bear
that you hear later on.
Only love
Can make it rain
The way the beach
Is kissed by the sea
Only love
Can make it rain
Like the set of lovers
Laying in the fields...
Then you get
to this impassioned scream.
..Love!
Reign o'er me...
If nothing else, Love Reign O'er Me
shows that Jimmy's a man.
..Love...
A boy wants to be noticed at a club,
wants a jacket.
Here, at the end,
Jimmy is finally becoming a man
and asking for things
that men want.
..Reign o'er me

Only love
Can bring the rain...
Jimmy is the hero, at last.
It's not about the Who,
it's not about Roger,
it's not about Pete,
not about John, not about the mods,
it's not about Ace Face,
not about drugs,
or any of that stuff.
It's just about Jimmy and what it is
that he's finally got to,
is that he realises that he's been
looking outside himself,
and what he has to do now is to
try to ask the question internally,
and that what this song does.

..Love!

Reign o'er me
Reign o'er me, reign o'er me
Love!

Reign o'er me
Reign o'er me, reign o'er me...

The poignancy for me was that,
as a composer, working with the Who
was so great because they used to
give me this unbelievable licence.
They didn't share my spiritual
beliefs - that's fine...
they didn't share my spiritual
beliefs but they allowed me
to have them, and to express them
through my work.

And when it came to a song like
Love Reign O'er Me,
which is a spiritual
prayer to nothing and everything,
Roger gave it his bollocks.
This is Roger coming in
in a second.

'I did it as a scream
from the street.'

I wanted it to be like the ultimate
anger, the ultimate passion,

the ultimate orgasm, you know.
'I wanted it to be like every
emotion we've ever had.'
..Lo-o-o-ove!
Reign o'er me
Reign over me, over me, over me
Whoa! Love!
Because then it's
unconditional to the track.
And love should be always
unconditional.
O-o-o'er me...
You get this sense of Roger
producing this deep scream
from his heart,
from Jimmy's heart.
..Love...
The end of Quadrophenia
is left ambiguous.
The illusion of drowning and water
is throughout the album,
and that can be death or rebirth.
The question of what happens
to Jimmy next,
I really like the fact that
it's in the hands of the listener.
We're going to go on the road again.
We're doing a tour of Europe.
Then we do America
and we come back to Europe
and then we do America again.
We've got two American
tours lined up.
The day that we finished
the stereo mix,
our managers booked a fucking tour.
So I had two weeks to rehearse,
to develop the
stage's quadraphonic sound,
which was impossible.
We didn't have the time.
So they overworked us.
I didn't take into account properly
at that time

the load that Pete had,
what with the
mixing and everything else.
I was trying to help them survive.
Speaking for myself,
I was dead meat.
Actually completely exhausted.
I'm sure Roger was exhausted too.
We had employed a bunch of people
that were our friends
to film the rehearsal
and I think we got through
to Doctor Jimmy
and they'd been sitting
on their boxes with cameras
and I just said to them,
"You can sit on your arses
all fucking afternoon
'cos I'm not singing this again.
"I thought you were supposed
to be filming this?"
I don't know why,
but for some reason
this other side of Pete came over
and started poking me.
"They do what I tell them to do!"
And doing this to me.
All the roadies jump on me
and start holding my arms.
I started to scream at him
and I can't remember the details but
we ended up in a physical grappling.
He pulled his guitar off
and, as he brought it down,
he tried to hit me
on the head with it.
And it glanced off
my shoulder, like that.
Then he threw a punch and it went
one way and I moved that way.
Then he threw the other punch,
and as he was coming forward
with his right hand this way,
I upper-cutted him.

And he hit me and I passed out.

Here they are... the Who!

At the shows, you could see
they'd introduced our new work
and the audience were going, "Yeah",
and it would start and they'd go...

We'd like to carry on
our present act
with our new album,
or parts of it.

I don't know what they expected,
but the audience, it was new to them.

'Then what started to happen is that
Roger started to tell the story.'

This one's about his feelings
when he gets down to the seaside.

Every time we played a song,
he was stopping and saying,
"Now Jimmy has fucked off
with his dad.

"He's going to go and get a job."

The next song is about a guy
who sees an old gang leader
who's working as a bellhop.

When somebody's talking on stage,
you can't hear it.

Half the time you're,
"What did he say?"

So you had that confusion
going on at these Quadrophenia shows.

So I probably gave Pete
a load of problems he didn't need.

After that, things fell apart.

It was the first night
of the Quadrophenia US shows
and Moon takes elephant tranquiliser
and he starts off strong enough,
and a few songs in, he collapses.

He's out cold.

I think he's gone and eaten
something he shouldn't have eaten.

It's your foreign food.

I'm afraid the horrible truth is,
that without him, we're not a group.

Yeah, he did that
kind of thing all the time.
It's just that this time, the drugs
were too powerful for him.
He's still a bit sort of dodgy.
But he'll be all right.
He is dragged off stage
and they take a break
and they come back
and he makes it through
and then by the end of
Won't Get Fooled Again, he's dead.
He is lifeless, he's Jell-O.
Can anybody play the drums?
And then they had this fan, Scott
Halpin, come play drums with them.
Scott!
And that's how they kicked off
what already was a difficult tour.
We managed to kind of soldier on.
We could put a brave face on it.
I could tell funny stories about it
and we could all have a good laugh,
but it was tragic.
It was really tragic,
cos Keith was being a fool.
We got good reviews and the album
sold well,
but when we came back to Europe
the following year,
we weren't even playing it.
Went back to playing Tommy.
And what's interesting about this
album is it kind of worked.
We never really ever made
a truly great album again.
You pulled this letter out,
it's a painful letter,
but this is the man I was
at a point.
Ted Oldman was our lawyer
at the time
and in this last week of recording
here I think I just thought,

"I've had it with this.
"This is not going to happen.
We're not going to get an album.
"We're screwed in some way."
I probably had a bad day,
but it says,
"Dear Ted, I'm writing to you in
strictest confidence to ask advice
"and to seek guidance on a matter
I feel only you can help me with.
"I've spoken to my wife and very
intimate friends about this,
"but I found the making of this
current record a great strain.
"The studio building problems,
the writing problems
"and, of course, Kit and Keith
have been aggravations
"to an already difficult time.
"I've been building up to this
for many years now
"and I feel that, as of now,
"the record we are making and the
current tours we are undertaking
"will be the last I want to be
involved with as the Who as a group.
"I'm losing any impetus either to
write for the Who as a vehicle
"or play with its members
as a musician."
You know we were done.
We were definitely done.
And this letter is
indicative of the fact that
I would have gone home in that week
and taken my wife aside
and said, "You know, we haven't had
a holiday for fucking two years.
"I've hardly seen you.
"We probably haven't made love for
six weeks, six months,
"God knows what.
"I probably missed you at Christmas.
I probably missed our anniversary.

"I'm sorry. It was all a fucking
complete waste of time."

That's probably what
I would have said to her.

And she probably would
have said to me,

"Well, if that's how you feel
you should stop, sweetheart."

And I write this letter
and I didn't send it.