

Reggie Royce

“Yeh mate, I know just what you mean. I really feel for those guys.”

John looked critically at Reg. At best, he was an aging rocker with greasy shoulder length grey hair and a somewhat ill-defined purpose. Initially, it had been about sex, drugs and playing for adoration, but as life slowly slipped from the bright lights of the Hordern Pavilion to the rather more dimly lit Rooty Hill RSL, Reg had never found his purpose.

“Those Ukrainians, poor bastards. I really need to do something.” He swivelled in his chair and leaned back, putting his feet on the mixer. “I know. Why don’t we give them a percentage of the new album sales.”

A percentage of album sales? WTF. The last album hadn’t even covered the costs of the studio. He clicked the mixer off before Reg’s worn runners made more adjustments.

“What about something more substantive?”

Reg looked up at the ceiling. “More substantive, eh?” He said it like he was breathing in the concept and savouring the thought. Generally, Reg’s brain was completely empty. New information was assessed in terms of its ability to deliver alcohol or drugs, or ideally both. “I saw that U2 guy play in a subway. I could do that.”

Whilst in his heyday, short as it was, the band drew a reasonable crowd, with a small contingent of persistent girls lurking around after the show, John felt it was unlikely that Reg Royce would be popular in a Ukraine subway.

“Not sure you’d draw much of a crowd, Reg.”

“Don’t the poor buggers live in the subway.” He laughed. “A captive audience so to speak.”

“I’ve got an idea.”

Reg looked at him sideways. In his experience John’s ideas seemed to stray away from the central themes of alcohol and drugs.

John continued, “What about we donate the proceeds of your Toowoomba Workers’ Club show to the Ukraine.”

Reg squinted his eyes and rocked his head from side to side. “It’s a great idea, a really great idea, but I’m not sure it’s what they need.

“What, money?”

“What about something more symbolic?”

“So, not money.”

“Well, we could charge for the subway concert.”

He put his hand on Reg’s knee, who looked at him nervously in case his manager was about to make a revelation he’d prefer not to hear. “Reg, I’ve watched you over the years.” This was not making him feel less apprehensive. “Ever since the untimely death of Barry,” Barry Smith the legendary drummer of Drugs and Sex was expected to die from a drug overdose, but instead he died in an

unfortunate hay bale accident. "I feel that you have not re-reached your potential. Donating the proceeds of the Toowoomba Workers' Club show to the Ukraine would be brilliant. We'd advertise. You on the radio talking about your concern for the Ukrainians. A new Reg Royce."

Reg nodded his head. It was indeed an opportunity. He sat up straight in his chair.

"I'd rather do the subway."