

ThE STORY SOFA

In the 1950s music was dominated by a coterie of people like Doris Day, Frank Sinatra, Rosemary Clooney, that sort. In private there were all kinds of shenanigans, the Mob, really cool stuff. But if you were a kid in the Fifties it was like attending a dinner party thrown by your dad's boss, except on the radio. Until they invented the guitar, and someone had the great idea of nicking African-American rhythm and blues, putting the two together, and creating Rock 'n' Roll. And then there was Elvis Presley. And King Elvis ruled until four kids from Liverpool staged a British invasion across the pond to America. The only thing that could stop the Beatles in their tracks was The Ed Sullivan Show and Bob Dylan offering them a joint in the Hotel Delmonica. While the Beatles were turning on, back in Blighty The Who was getting people really radged up with My Generation. It felt like they'd only just invented the guitar and here was Pete Townshend, wearing a Union Jack suit and smashing his instrument all over the place. While The Who were inventing Mod, The Rolling Stones were taking a bit of that ol' rhythm and blues and making it their own. Then they went over to America and sold it back to them. The Beatles responded by making an album called Revolver which was

basically an acid trip, with Tomorrow Never Knows the bit where you're hiding under the sink, hugging your knees and calling for your mummy. The Sixties officially ended when Hell's Angels battered to death Meredith Hunter at the Altamont Festival, so it was no surprise that the Seventies started with Marvin Gaye asking, What's Going On? Everybody started growing their hair and making really aggressive heavy metal, until David Bowie decided the way forward was to change personas like the metallers changed their underpants (roughly once a year). In 1974, Kraftwerk, who may or may not have been actual German-engineered robots, invented electronic music and people started going out to dance in nightclubs. Disco was pretty cool, but it didn't really speak to the working class kids in Britain's provincial cities. In fact, nothing did. Then a band called The Damned released a single called New Rose, and punk was born. The Damned were considering a young chap called Sid Vicious as lead singer, but he never turned up for the audition. In February 1977, though, after a chap called Glenn Matlock had departed from a band called The Sex Pistols, Sid was invited to try out for the spot of bass player...

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