

Well, I Just Had To Laugh

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. TUBE STATION - DAY

A sign over the entrance: 'ST JOHN'S WOOD UNDERGROUND'.  
People coming and going, most dressed in vibrant colors.

SUPER - LONDON ENGLAND AUGUST 1969

At a newsstand, SID(60) chats with his regulars as they buy their papers, cigarettes and sweets. A tall young man, ERIC(25) dressed nattily, lingers, watching Sid.

SID

Thanks Nancy...cheers Ron...

Eric steps up to the counter, holds up a copy of *Rolling Stone*. Sid stares back at him.

ERIC

Do I get a family discount, sir?

SID

Well, if it isn't the prodigal.

ERIC

Great to see you too, Dad.

They stare at each other before Sid extends a hand.

SID

Long time between visits.

ERIC

I'm sorry. I guess...well, you know how it is. Life and stuff.

SID

No, I don't know. I'm only your father. I don't know shite.

They stare again before Sid shuffles out from behind the counter, gives Eric a hug. Looks him up and down.

SID

At least you never got into any trouble over the years. Unless...

ERIC

No, Dad. Nothing like that. I just wanted to see you. I've got the day off from the post office. And I'm keen to go to your local tonight.

SID  
Oh? What's on there?

ERIC  
Comedy night. Cash prize. Always  
fancied myself as a stand up  
comedian. Should be good.

SID  
Well, you were always the smartarse  
of the family. That reminds  
me...how's yer mother?

ERIC  
She's good. She said to say hello.

Sid muses on this. Walks behind the counter.

ERIC  
I'll let you get back to work and  
meet you this afternoon.

SID  
Sure. Oh...it might be worthwhile  
walking down to the Beatles studio  
later this morning.

ERIC  
What's the big secret then?

SID  
Just be outside at eleven.

ERIC  
I...ok, sure. If you insist.

SID  
I do. Listen to me for once.

Eric LAUGHS, nods, heads off along the street.

LATER

EXT. ABBEY ROAD STUDIOS - DAY

Eric sips a Coke as he approaches the EMI building. There's  
a handful of fans, tourists and passers by, nothing out of  
the ordinary. A POLICEMAN loiters nearby.

The front door opens. A MAN emerges carrying a small step  
ladder and camera gear. The policeman nods at him. The man  
sets up the ladder in the street, facing the crossing.

ERIC

What the hell is this?

All of a sudden, the front door opens again. And out come the BEATLES: JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE and RINGO.

The boys smoke, laugh, chat to fans who are awestruck. The PHOTOGRAPHER stands on the ladder, checks light and angles. He nods to the policeman who begins to halt any cars.

ERIC

Well, damn, this is pretty cool.

The photographer gives a signal. The Beatles start walking across the crossing, in varying directions. Fans take photos too as the photographer snaps a series of shots.

During a break, Paul slips off the sandals he's wearing. Eric stares at the footwear, a crazy idea forming. An AMERICAN COUPLE comes along. Eric sidles closer.

He's over the sandals. One last look...all clear. Bends, grabs them. He looks up to see the American lady watching him. Nodding, he shuffles backwards, edging to freedom.

AMERICAN WIFE

Honey, that man just stole Paul McCartney's flip flops.

AMERICAN HUSBAND

Huh? Hey you, stop!

Eric runs. Soon, he's out of sight around a corner. The policeman is oblivious. A fan whispers to the Fabs, telling them what happened. Paul looks miffed.

JOHN

Someone nicked yer footwear, Macca?

PAUL

Only bought them yesterday. Bugger.

George and Ringo LAUGH.

INT. THE DUKE OF YORK PUB - NIGHT

Sid and Eric stand at the bar, enjoying a pint. There's quite a few in tonight. A small stage at one end with a sign: 'COMEDY NIGHT - REGISTER HERE'.

SID  
So you liked my advice?

ERIC  
I have to admit it was a surprise  
seeing the Beatles close up. How  
did you get the tip off for it?

SID  
Ah, no revealing my sources. What  
else did you get up to?

Eric lifts his foot. He's wearing Macca's sandals...

ERIC  
Scored myself some new sandals.

SID  
Wonderful. Now, you want some good  
jokes for your act? I got plenty.

ERIC  
Plenty of old ones, Dad.

SID  
Bloody cheek.

One of the BARMAN goes onto the stage, turns on the mike.

BARMAN  
Good evening all. Welcome to the  
Duke Of York stand up comedy night.

A smattering of APPLAUSE.

BARMAN  
Now, each contestant has ten  
minutes to make us laugh. Keep the  
swearing to a minimum, please.

He reads from a sheet of paper.

BARMAN  
First up is...Eric.

Eric drains his pint, saunters to the stage. A table of  
young ladies smile. He winks at them as he takes the mike.

ERIC  
Ah, thank you. I'll get straight  
into it. So, I knew this bloke...

TEN MINUTES LATER

The room is filled with LAUGHTER. Eric has a huge grin on his face, loving the vibes. The young ladies CHEER him.

ERIC

Thank you, you've been great.

He steps off the stage, walks to the bar expecting Sid to be flushed with pride. The small audience APPLAUDS him. Sid is deep in conversation with another MAN, back to the stage. Eric frowns then his jaw drops. It's Paul McCartney.

SID

Old friend of mine, son. Met him  
and his mates back in sixty three.

PAUL

Aye, we met today, didn't we, Eric?

Eric just stares. Next minute, the American couple and the photo shoot cop enter the pub, searching.

AMERICAN WIFE

That's him, Officer. That's the  
thief who stole Paul's flip flops.

POLICEMAN

Right, lad. You're coming with me.

The Americans suddenly notice Paul. Then the rest of the pub goers see him. Soon he's surrounded by them, all trying to chat. Paul grins. Eric eases his way towards the door.

SID

Drinks are on my boy, the stand up  
comedian and casual sandal thief.

CHEERS as the drinks are poured. Then someone realizes...

POLICEMAN

He's scarpered again, Mr McCartney.

SID

Sorry about this, Paul.

PAUL

It's ok, mate. Just a bit of fun.

BARMAN

That'll be fifty quid all up.

PAUL

Well...almost fun.