

TOO LATE TO TURN BACK

In *DAYS OF RAGE*, a play by Larry Kirwan, rock singer Stevie Hero makes his last stand on East Third Street. In this extract, he confronts his old friend and manager, Howie The Horse.

HERO The problem is, nothin's real anymore! The world is like a great big video store and people rent all these dumb movies and go home and stuff their faces with someone else's stupid ideas. Just take last year's dumb concept and put a new beat behind it and look out...you got "this year's sensation"! Well, I've had it, man! I'm gettin' the hell off this assembly line!

HOWIE But it's always been like that!

HERO No way! Remember that first day, back in your basement, we heard Hendrix doin' Purple Haze?

HOWIE Oh man...I can't deal with that now.

(Hero violently sings the guitar intro of Purple Haze.)

HERO That was real and it was original and skinny little Howie Metzenbaum was crazy about it!

HOWIE Yeah, well now I'm the Horse and I'm a player. And players play the game!

HERO It was real life, Howie, and you know it. It wasn't some Lou Harris takin' a poll on what kind of ass paper America likes to use!

HOWIE What are you talkin' about?

HERO I'm sayin' that's what this country has turned into!

HOWIE Just run that one by me again slowly, okay? What has ass paper got to do with Jimi Hendrix?

HERO You're not real any more, Howie.

HOWIE So what the hell am I then?

HERO Do you have any idea why I'm holdin' you hostage?

HOWIE 'Cause we're makin' a stand against...against...

HERO No, it's because you never listen to what I'm tryin' to tell you.

HOWIE I'm listenin'! I'm listenin'!

HERO So what was I sayin' just now?

HOWIE You were....It was...eh....Listen, I caught the gist of it. That's all a guy like me needs, the bones of the thing, the broad strokes. The lawyers and the accountants can handle the small print...For Chrissakes, will ya stop wavin' that thing around. You could hurt someone already!

HERO This is America, How, - home of Wyatt Earp and Ollie North. Not only do I have a right to carry this gun - I got a god-given right. And I got a right to defend this country against the Ayatollah, the Sandinistas, and even the Rose of goddamn Tralee should the humor hit me.

HOWIE The who?.....