

near greatness

THE DAY I WAS FREE-FALLIN' WITH TOM PETTY

I was overcome with pure lust and desire when the legendary rock star smiled at me in Tower Records

by Janice Eidus | Tuesday, October 3, 2017





(Getty Images)

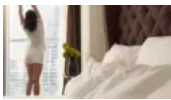
It was about 25 years ago, on a beautiful fall day, when I strolled into Tower Records on the Upper West Side. I wasn't planning on buying an album that day. I was working as an adjunct teacher at a local college and money was tight. I was there just to peruse the merchandise. My musical taste is eclectic, including blues and folk, but that day I was in the rock and roll section. Back then, I was big into Guns n' Roses, Aerosmith—and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.

And then, like a vision conjured from my rock and roll fantasies, he appeared beside me. Not Axl Rose; not Steven Tyler; but, yes, incredibly, Tom Petty (without the Heartbreakers). He was tall and thin and wore a tailored beige coat that fell mid-calf. It fit him better than any glove and looked custom-made. His straight, long hair was bright blond and it looked bleached, but not in a harsh or artificial way. The color complemented everything about him: his skin, his eyes, even the coat.

In photos, he sometimes looked a bit goofy, with his long face and that overbite, but in person, he was regal, handsome and poised. The overbite was the perfect final touch on the work of art that was Tom Petty.

RELATED: [Free Fallin': Remembering Tom Petty \(http://www.purpleclover.com/entertainment/8049-free-fallin-remembering-tom-petty/\)](http://www.purpleclover.com/entertainment/8049-free-fallin-remembering-tom-petty/)

SPONSORED CONTENT



Here's What Perfect Sleep Feels Like [See More] [↗](#)

BY PUFFY MATTRESS

He knew that I knew who he was, of course. He was right beside me. Our bodies were practically touching. He'd begun sorting through the row of records next to the row of records through which I was sorting.

Did he know, though, that my being in such close proximity to his physical beauty, coupled with the fact that his songs about disillusioned American girls "raised on promises" and American boys living like "refugees" really, really spoke to me—and that my knees were going weak? Did he know that I was practically swaying in place, unable to right myself fully for a moment? Did he sense the tidal wave of pure lust and desire that was overpowering me?

I think he did know because he deliberately caught my eye and gave me a full, dazzling smile, overbite and all. Unhesitatingly and happily, I smiled back, meeting his soulful eyes. I believe he also knew that I wasn't planning on bothering him, that I didn't feel the need to ask about his "creative process" and where his "ideas for songs came from," or gush and tell him I was his number-one fan.

I kept to myself how much I enjoyed the video for "Don't Come Around Here No More," in which he played a sexy (and truly mad) Mad Hatter chasing pretty Alice around Wonderland.

I didn't tell him that in my opinion some of his friends, like George Harrison and Roy Orbison, were among the coolest people on the planet.

I didn't say a word about how much I admired him for maintaining his integrity in the face of the ugly, corporate music business and for remaining a populist at heart.

In fact, it felt like church as we stood together, side by side, handling those record albums as though they were sacred objects (which in fact they were). We stood that way for quite a while; he didn't move away and neither did I.

Finally, though, he did move on, nodding ever so slightly at me. I nodded back, memorizing every moment of our time "together," thanking him silently for allowing me to free fall into a state of pure, unadulterated lust for a rock god whose beauty, talent and art never ceased to move me, no matter how much time had passed and no matter what changes the world had wrought upon us all—musicians and fans, alike.

TAGS: MUSIC

SPONSORED CONTENT

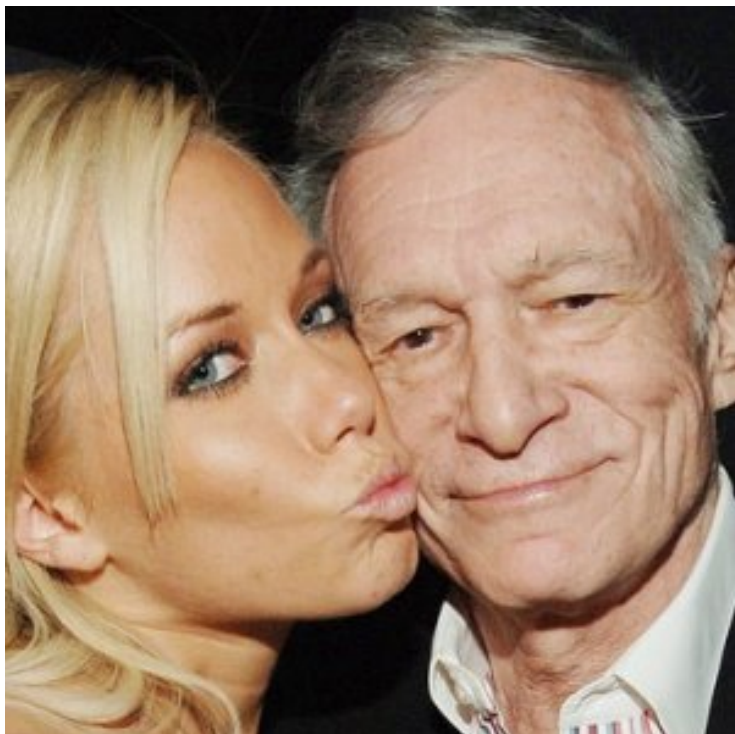
THESE POINTS WILL
LEAVE A GOOD TASTE
IN YOUR MOUTH.

THESE POINTS WILL LEAVE A GOOD TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH [↗](#)

BY JETBLUE

AROUND THE WEB

POWERED BY ZERGNET



Kendra Wilkinson Breaks Her Silence on Hugh Hefner's Death



CBS Exec Fired for Despicable Post About Vegas Shooting