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As a young man, Joe Lavender often wondered who he was. As son to Howling Matt he'd fronted the Lavender Blues Shakers - but that was in his head, and maybe he'd moved on. Because if his thoughts were real, they came from somewhere else. And, as he told Mia and Cass, his life was undercover, or not all-there.

Get busy the teacher told him. Put yourself out there. Tick all the boxes. Be pro-active and make yourself known. In his mind he could hear it - speeches from the coach, the team leader, the accountant and advisor, BE A WINNER they said.

Welcome to the machine.

In his pre-teen years Joe played big bro and prof. With Mia he looked up names of insects and plants. With Cass he talked, seriously. Together they were the Lavender Kids camping out with crazy-hipsters Matt and M. And Joe sang along to Dylan and The Kinks.

But then came Joy Division, with Joe in black lying on the floor. He could hear things going crash. The world was full of broken glass. And his thoughts were tunnels into nowhere.

Then at 16 Joe heard Thom Yorke sing, "I wish it was the Sixties." Listening to that lost aching voice, Joe heard his own inner thoughts in caps and tags sprayed on walls. It was sad; it had wings. Everyone everywhere was broken.

All his friends were like that. For them Radiohead signalled pills and soul-loss and voices in the head: "I wish, I wish, I wish that something would happen." Not for them those simple truths when kids fought the system in wild naked moments resisting the man.

For them it was heads down and get used to it, because life wasn't like that. In any case his dad had told him about the Sixties with its fat cats and rip-off merchants and big-money hippies. By the Eighties, Matt said, they'd all given up or had passed away.

I hope I die before I get old.