



# Diary of a Teddy Boy

Mim Scala

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London, 1950s. Mr Tobias, the Fulham tailor, makes young Emilio Scala a fingertip drape and he fills it, a Teddy boy extraordinaire. By day he still serves cornets and wafers on the North End Road at Scala's Ice Cream Parlour, but at night he's in Chelsea getting bloodstains on the suit, tearing out cinema seats while 'Rock Around the Clock' plays on. His two worlds collide when Diana Dors and Dandy Kim visit for a Knickerbocker Glory. Soon he's out in 1960s Soho taking Purple Hearts with the cool set: Michael Caine, Chris Stamp, Patti Boyd, Richard Harris, Sabrina Tennant. Now a King's Road gambler and junior playboy, he sees Paris and Tangiers, runs into an old Hemingway - and Burroughs - right on time. For Mim it's a baby step to becoming an agent. In a whirlwind of fame, only some of it temporary, he hires Dennis Hopper, devils with Ronan O'Rahilly, gambles with Lucian Freud, evades the Kray twins, turns down Hair in New York on Salvador Dali's say-so, and listens reverently to Cat Stevens, Jimi Hendrix and Marianne Faithfull. In 1968 he persuades Jean-Luc Godard to film The Rolling Stones and witnesses the May riots on the streets of Paris, as Nicholas Roeg's Performance is scripted and enacted next door to his London flat. Sharp suits turn to caftans in the 1970s. When his friend Brian Jones dies it marks the end of an era, but Mim himself is reincarnated. He had promised Jones they would discover the most beautiful music on the planet, and he sets off for Morocco to find it alone. With his miracle vehicle Shadowfax, he becomes part of a different world. A psychedelic nomad now, he sojurns in Sri Lanka, and watches and listens to desert life in north Africa, its sunsets, windstorms and one unforgettable eclipse. He returns to London with the ceremonial recordings of the Berber Ganoua, a world music before 'world music', and becomes head of marketing at Island Records. He discovers the post-punk band Warsaw Pakt, organizes Marianne Faithfull's comeback appearance on Saturday Night Live in New York, and adjusts to the 1980s. In the right place and the right time, Mim touched the lives of the twentieth century's most famous pop stars, and their glory touched him. Diary of a Teddy Boy is a vision of the styles, moods and drugs that defined three decades. The brilliant picaresque memoir of a working-class hero, it is a personal story of what fame can bring, and what it takes away.

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