

Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, Money Becomes

"If you reach back in your memory
A little bell might ring
'Bout a time that once existed
When money wasn't king
If you stretch your imagination
I'll tell you all a tale
About a time when everything
Wasn't up for sale

There was this cat named Johnny
Who loved to play and sing
When money wasn't king

We'd all get so excited when
John would give a show
We'd raise the cash between us
And down the road we'd go
To hear him play that music
It spoke right to my soul
Every verse a diamond
Every chorus gold
The sound was my salvation
It was only everything
Before money became king

Well I ain't sure how it happened
And I don't know exactly when
But everything got bigger
And the rules began to bend
And the TV taught the people
How to get their hair to shine
And how sweet life can be
If you keep a tight behind
And they raised the cost of living
And how could we have known
They'd double the price of tickets
To go see Johnny's show

So we hocked all our possessions
And we sold a little dope
And went off to rock and roll

We arrived there early
In time to see rehearsal
And John came out and lip-synched
His new lite beer commercial
And as the crowd arrived
As far as I could see
The faces were all different
There was no one there like me

They sat in golden circles
And waiters served them wine
And talked through all the music
And to John paid little mind
And way up in the nosebleeds
We watched him on the screen
They'd hung between the billboards
So cheaper seats could see

Johnny rock that golden circle
An all those VIP's
And that music that had freed us
Became a tired routine

And I saw his face in close-up
Trying to give it all he had
And sometimes his eyes betrayed him
You could see that he was sad
And I tried to rock on with him
But I slowly became bored
Could that man on stage
With everything
Somehow need some more?

There was no use in pretending
No magic left to hear
All the music gave me
Was a craving for lite beer
As I walked out of the arena
My ears began to ring
And money became king