

not tender but limp. The album only really came alive on the final track, the red-blooded, rasping hedonism of "Meat City", whose dirty, R&B-inflected rock energy was relief from the album's prevailing musical torpor.

Meanwhile, the infamous 18-month Lost Weekend was just round the corner. And the boys were waiting

YOU CAN PROBABLY TRACE Lennon's growing disaffection to a party in November 1972 at Jerry Rubin's place on the night Democratic Senator George McGovern was defeated by ghastly Republican Richard Nixon in a bid for the US Presidency. An avowed opponent of America's involvement in Vietnam and a passionate campaigner against hunger and malnutrition in the USA, McGovern was among the most decent Democrats of modern times, staking his campaign on a pledge to ensure that every American family receive a basic income. For this modest welfare proposal, the US electorate effectively told him to go back to Russia - he took only two states. Nixon was re-elected, albeit under eventually dubious circumstances.

Uncaged by booze. Lennon was a vicious little scouse fuck... a heckling, waitress-slapping, Jew-baiting little fuck at that

As an exercise in People Power, this was depressing stuff. Lennon snapped. He got hugely drunk, and - as a mortified Yoko later recalled - grabbed a girl, pulled her into the next room and fucked the living daylights out of her.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, by the release of *Mind Games* in October 1973, Lennon and Yoko were living apart. As Yoko likes to recall fit, the rift was a beautiful and premeditated gesture, intended not just to heal but to empower a relationship whose roots were assured. It's even suggested that May Pang, the secretary with whom Lennon embarked on a fling, was picked out by Yoko, that in her capacity as "Mother Superior" she packed the two of them off to Los Angeles like a couple of children going on holiday.

Lennon told fit differently. In his version there was no consultation. "I went out for coffee and some papers and didn't come back," he said.

Many things could have contributed to the couple's split - Lennon's drunkenness, the stresses of the deportation order, Yoko's own desire for creative »



Family affair: (from left) Julian, John and May Pang



The Lost Weekend: John with May Pang and a worse-for-wear Harry Nilsson in LA

'HOW DO YOU SLEEP?' The post-Beatles relationship between John and Paul

LENNON'S FEELINGS OF RESENTMENT and rivalry towards McCartney began late in The Beatles, triggered by a whole raft of grievances, including "Hey Jude" taking precedence as an A-side rather than "Revolution", Lennon's remarks about the fortunes of Apple, McCartney's refusal to sign up to have the band's affairs managed by Allen Klein, the Let It Be sessions and McCartney's pre-emptive 'breaking up' of The Beatles.

Lennon was further incensed in 1971 when he heard McCartney's *Ram* and perceived fit to be riddled with slights against him. He counter-attacked with "Crippled Inside" and "How Do You Sleep?", in which he bluntly declared, "The only good thing you did was 'Yesterday'", said his songs were "muzak to my ears" and accused him of associating with "straights". Although Lennon caricatured his erstwhile partner as an MOR crooner, McCartney could, in his defence, point out that he'd been the one to introduce Lennon to the avant-garde, while his own subversive credentials were sealed when he had two tracks banned in

was more than Lennon managed. The pair were never absolutely estranged, with Paul and Linda hanging out in New York with Lennon following his Lost Weekend escapades. But there was never any serious prospect of them working together again. One of the last times they met was in 1976 when McCartney turned up, unannounced, at the Dakota apartment clutching his guitar, only to be turned away by his erstwhile songwriting partner. "This isn't Liverpool, you know,"

sneered. Macca left in a huff. When informed of Lennon's death, McCartney's first utterance was unsatisfactory to many: "It's a drag, isn't fit?" But while Paul has subsequently stressed the comradeship he feels towards Lennon, the pair were never really reconciled. Yet, whatever he said, Lennon always respected McCartney's work, even late efforts like "Coming Up", which prompted him to get his finger out and make his final comeback.



Three's a crowd: strained relations between Yoko, John and Paul