When Paul Met Artie: The Story of Simon & Garfunkel

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Book Review
When Paul Met Artie: The Story of Simon & Garfunkel

Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel grow up in Queens just a few blocks from one another and go to the same schools. They meet in sixth grade in the cast of their school play, Alice in Wonderland. Artie has perfect pitch and a beautiful voice, and Paul plays guitar and masters his own voice. Together, Paul and Artie explore the world of music and find a perfect harmonic blend for their voices. Paul and Artie begin writing songs together and performing on the streets and at school. Later, they manage to be on TV under the name “Tom and Jerry,” performing “Hey Schoolgirl.” After going their separate ways for college, the boys meet up again, this time recording “The Sound of Silence,” which gains popularity until it is the number-one song in America. They begin writing more songs and releasing albums under the name of “Simon and Garfunkel” and perform in front of historically huge crowds.

When Paul Met Artie: The Story of Simon & Garfunkel documents the reality of the difficulties of seeking success in the world of music. The details surrounding their many successes and failures prove the importance of hard work when seeking one’s dream. Additionally, the book highlights the musical, social, and political change occurring during the adolescence of Paul and Artie’s lives and describes how these two musicians integrated the changes around them into their music. The events of the 1960s are reflected in the backstory of the songs written by Simon and Garfunkel. “He Was My Brother” was written about the civil rights movement, and “The Sound of Silence” was written in the wake of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. This adds another theme to the book, one of the importance of self-expression and the use of talents and the arts to inspire positive change in the world.