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FOREWORD: THE GUY WHO SAW IT ALL

Let me tell you something about show business. You think you know crazy? You don't know crazy. I know crazy. If you want to know what this life is really about—the egos, the drugs, the sex, unadulterated insanity of rock 'n roll—you talk to the author, Lou Volpano.

There is no one better qualified to write this book. He's an award-winning rock n' roll manager who didn't just produce the shows; he survived them. Sinatra. The Blues Brothers. Areatha. Jerry Lee. The Beach Boys. A couple of thousand classic rock shows during its heyday. And I'm not talking about small potatoes in the middle of nowhere. I'm talking about three of the world's largest music festivals—Chicago, Milwaukee, and Memphis. Lou was exposed to a sheer volume of rock artists that would make an ordinary roadie's head spin. He saw it all, and he wrote it down.

I first met the author back in 1993. He was in the trenches, handling the bookings and the contracts for twenty-three superstars at the Bob Dylan Tribute at Madison Square Garden. It was a zoo. We were backstage, and who do we run into? Donald Trump. He was Lou Reed's guest, if you can believe that. We're standing there, amidst the menagerie of sycophants and their egos, looking at each other, nonplussed by the pandemonium. Later, at dinner, we're sitting there talking. Is this backstage shit insanity a book or a movie?

We got our answer soon enough. Because of the history he made with The Dylan Deal, Elvis Presley Enterprises calls up. They want a show. Tribute to the King. We joined forces. We put one small blurb—one tiny item—in a column in USA Today mentioning the event. Just a tentative title. And then the floodgates opened. Thousands of letters arrived at our office. Some were asking questions, sure, but most of them contained checks. Cold, hard cash from fans paying for tickets to a concert that didn't even exist yet. They were convinced. They believed this wasn't a tribute. They thought it was IT. The Comeback. They knew Elvis was still alive.

I know a lot of you are saying, “Another fucking Elvis book?” There have been over 400. But Lou dug into the gossip, his family, and his entourage. He tracked the fanaticism, and he found the truth. He kept notes on all of it. I can say without a doubt that the author has seen it all. And lucky for you, he decided to tell the story.

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