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The Half That's Never Been Told: The Real-Life Reggae Adventures Of Doctor Dread



Synopsis

"Impassioned and engaging."--Booklist"A heartfelt tribute to Caribbean roots music and those who keep it alive."--Kirkus Reviews"In 1972, Gary Himelfarb...heard reggae music for the first time and fell in love. He embraced the music...with a passion that he matched with a genuine curiosity about Jamaican culture and sincere friendships with musicians there....There is a sweetness and sincerity to the best parts of the book....Dread's serious case of 'reggaemyitis' gave him some remarkable experiences."--Publishers Weekly"The book is a tale of business, family, ethics, health, and survival...an entertaining read."--Washington City Paper"A gem...Real music heads will truly enjoy this book....For anyone who is a fan of Reggae music, this book is a must-have."--Baltimore Times"A nice read...hilarious and spellbinding."--Caribbean Life"Doctor Dread may just prove to be as gripping a storyteller as he was a record producer. In this revelatory vignette-filled offering, he bends the rules with an unorthodox literary style, unveiling a torrent of chronicles that are spontaneous, colorful, richly authentic and brazen. This is a unique work on many levels. Doctor Dread does offer new and intimate insights into the legends of Jamaican culture....Highly recommended."--Jamaica Gleaner"Full of heart and soul as well as photos from many of the author's greatest moments, it is a must for anybody interested in reggae music and its cast of characters or the music business in general."--Reggaeville"This book should be on the shelf of any serious lover of reggae...Not only is Himelfarb a great storyteller...he is also a talented writer."--FDRMX"An inside perspective of the reggae music phenomenon...[Dread] explains how his decision to form the RAS label came at a tragic but important moment in music history, as the death of Bob Marley in 1981 led to a market eager for the earthy sounds of reggae. Dread also relates fine portrayals of legends like Philip 'Fatis' Burrell, the many Marleys, Freddie McGregor, and Bunny Wailer."--Insights"This easily readable memoir does far more than chart the label's ebbs and flows....Delightfully candid and brutally honest, this is a must-read for all reggae fans."--MOJO Magazine (UK)"Hugely compelling page-turner....a no-nonsense tome that gives intimate portraits of Jamaican music's most colorful characters, and sheds light on the individual world view of Doctor Dread, with many 'twilight zone' incidents, lots of confliction, and a good deal of redemption too....Recommended reading for all reggae fans."--Riddim Magazine (Germany)"Absolutely not to be missed!"--HotMC (Italy)With an introduction by Bunny Wailer.Doctor Dread has committed his life to producing reggae music and releasing it on his label, RAS Records. He has become one of the world's foremost reggae producers, and has worked with almost all the genre's icons: Bunny Wailer, Black Uhuru, Ziggy and Damian Marley, Gregory Isaacs, etc. This book, full of behind-the-scenes stories, has shocking chapters that will reveal aspects of reggae never before explored.

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Customer Reviews

"Doctor Dread has been a very serious contributor to the global value of this great reggae music...Apart from being a serious businessman, Doctor Dread to I is a brother..."--Bunny Wailer, from the Introduction"No reggae fan can afford to miss this lively, rich, from-the-hip account from one of the industry's most unlikely visionaries. And no human being can afford to miss this story of spiritual questing, cultural boundary-crossing, and the transformative power of music."--Adam Mansbach, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller Go the F**k to Sleep"From the very inside of the Jamaican music business and its gnarly secrets to his intimate contacts with its greatest movers and shakers, Doctor Dread has told a story only he can fully elucidate. Amusing, insightful, deeply revealing, and certain to be controversial, Doc's book pulls the covers off Bunny Wailer, Gregory Isaacs, Freddie McGregor, and countless other world-famous iconic figures, giving us the day-to-day tussles and rewards of being one of the prime expositors of Jah Music in North America through his award-winning RAS Records. Essential to an understanding of what really a gwan inna yard. Highly recommended."--Roger Steffens, founding editor, The Beat; founding chairman of the Reggae Grammy Committee (1984-2011)

Doctor Dread was born and raised in the Washington, DC area. Upon first hearing reggae music in 1972 he became completely enthralled by Jamaican culture and the tenets of Rastafari. This was reinforced when he became a deejay on the DC-area progressive radio station WHFS, where he first took on the moniker of Doctor Dread (his real name is Gary Himelfarb). He next founded RAS

Records, which was responsible for distributing and producing reggae artists from Jamaica to every corner of the earth. Doctor Dread forged very intimate relationships with the artists of Jamaica and to this day remains committed to the culture and people of this country he has come to call his "true home." He also founded his own line of Jamaican food items, Doctor Dread's Famous Jamaican Jerk Products, which include seasonings, potato chips, and peanuts, with many more products in the works. He is the author of *The Half That's Never Been Told: The Real Life Reggae Adventures of Doctor Dread*.

I DJ'd for many years flinging reggae 45's. During the nineties I visited Yard many times. First time I stayed at a resort, then all the other times I would stay with either Reggae connected family or stay at m'driver's' house. I have met most of the people in this book. Dr. Dread's documentation of the lives of these great people is Spot-on! Hey Dread, I know I musta met you. I just don't remember. OL

Fine

Great book. Dr. Dread aka Gary Himelburg, has been a player in the production of reggae music and distribution of reggae music around the world for many years. Through RAS Records and Tafarian Music Publishing, Dr. Dread has introduced reggae artists and music from Jamaica to the rest of the world. This book is an extremely well written, easy to read and digest autobiography of Dr. Dread's relationships with artists and with the Rastafarian movement. One of the most refreshing aspects of the book is that Dread is a Rasta himself and spends some time explaining what true Rastafarian beliefs entail and mean. For him, and for other involved, there is a depth of spiritual practice that goes far beyond the suburban teenage belief in Rasta as an excuse to smoke pot. In fact, although the herb makes appearances in this book, it is in the context of its place as part of the religious practice. Another refreshing aspect is that while Bob Marley is mentioned in appropriately reverential tones as one of the founders of the Wailers and an important figure in Jamaica and the reggae movement, the book does not overly focus on him, thus allowing many other acts who have made important contributions to reggae to have their day in the sun. The first third of the book covers the authors travels through South America, Colombia and ultimately, finding his way to Jamaica. In many ways, this third is also a love letter to Jamaica. By that, I mean that he really takes you there so that whether you have been or not, you have the feel of the people, the smell of the beach and the jungle and the sea breeze, the taste of the food and the feel of the sand as well as the sound of the music firmly entrenched in your mind. These are important elements to all world music as they

establish for the reader, the setting in which this music is created. The second third of the book is about the author's interactions with individual reggae artists and groups. This encompasses everything from individual songs, to production of albums, to touring issues. It takes the reader from ska, to traditional reggae to dancehall reggae to rap and hip hop that have been influenced by reggae. Readers will probably be surprised by the number of acts they recognize. If not the acts, then many songs mentioned will be familiar. This is also a valuable introduction that all musicians should read about how the music business works. Dr. Dread worked from a particular philosophy that was greatly influenced by his beliefs in Rastafarianism and personal spirituality. He takes the opportunity to point out how artists are frequently duped out of monies they should be receiving from their music: from publishing, performing and touring to merchandising and promotion. The final third of the book focuses on the realities of life. While Dread made money in music, he also lost it. How being an artist doesn't really pay and many artists and producers are forced to get "real jobs" in order to afford to be able to do what they love. Hands up all artists that have taken those jobs they hate for the same reasons. He talks about his loathsome experiences in working for the man and how his personal health issues played into his need for health insurance. Hands up again, artists. A great read for lovers of reggae, musicians, artists and those leading the life on the road less traveled or those wanting to love it vicariously through others who have done so already.

I enjoyed this book. Dr. Dread has traveled along roads that interest me and might interest you if you are into reggae, the music business, and exotic travel. His unique position as a reggae producer allowed him an insight and perspective that few have had on the Jamaican culture, its artists and the especially twisty reggae music industry. Fortunately he has chosen to share it with us. Gregory Isaacs, Bunny Wailer, and more musicians are portrayed in a not always flattering but always loving light.

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