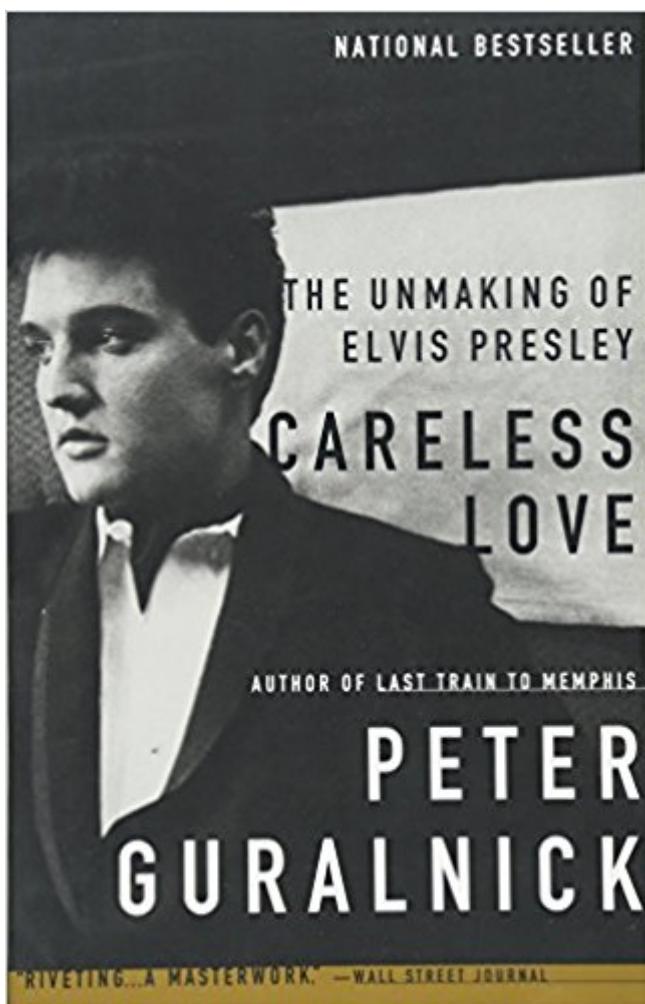


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Careless Love: The Unmaking Of Elvis Presley



Synopsis

Careless Love is the full, true, and mesmerizing story of Elvis Presley's last two decades, in the long-awaited second volume of Peter Guralnick's masterful two-part biography. Last Train to Memphis, the first part of Guralnick's two-volume life of Elvis Presley, was acclaimed by the New York Times as "a triumph of biographical art." This concluding volume recounts the second half of Elvis' life in rich and previously unimagined detail, and confirms Guralnick's status as one of the great biographers of our time. Beginning with Presley's army service in Germany in 1958 and ending with his death in Memphis in 1977, Careless Love chronicles the unravelling of the dream that once shone so brightly, homing in on the complex playing-out of Elvis' relationship with his Machiavellian manager, Colonel Tom Parker. It's a breathtaking revelatory drama that for the first time places the events of a too-often mistold tale in a fresh, believable, and understandable context. Elvis' changes during these years form a tragic mystery that Careless Love unlocks for the first time. This is the quintessential American story, encompassing elements of race, class, wealth, sex, music, religion, and personal transformation. Written with grace, sensitivity, and passion, Careless Love is a unique contribution to our understanding of American popular culture and the nature of success, giving us true insight at last into one of the most misunderstood public figures of our times.

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Customer Reviews

Until Peter Guralnick came out with Last Train to Memphis in 1994, most biographies of Elvis Presley--especially those written by people with varying degrees of access to his "inner circle"--were filled with starstruck adulation, and those that weren't in awe of their subject invariably went out of

their way to take potshots at the rock & roll pioneer (with Albert Goldman's 1981 *Elvis* reaching now-legendary levels of bile and condescension). Guralnick's exploration of Elvis's childhood and rise to fame was notable for its factual rigorousness and its intimate appreciation of Presley's musical agenda. Picking up where the first volume left off, Guralnick sees Elvis through his tour of duty with the U.S. Army in Germany, where he first met--and was captivated by--a 14-year-old girl named Priscilla Beaulieu. We may think we know the story from this point: the return to America, the near-decade of B-movies, eventual marriage to Priscilla, a brief flash of glory with the '68 comeback, and the surrealism of "fat Elvis" decked out in bejeweled white jumpsuits, culminating in a bathroom death scene. And while that summary isn't exactly false, Guralnick's account shows how little perspective we've had on Elvis's life until now, how a gross caricature of the final years has come to stand for the life itself. He treats every aspect of Presley's life--including forays into spiritual mysticism and the growing dependency on prescription drugs--with dignity and critical distance. More importantly, *Careless Love* continues to show that Guralnick "gets" what Presley was trying to do as an artist: "I see him in the same way that I think he saw himself from the start," the introduction states, "as someone whose ambition it was to encompass every strand of the American musical tradition." From rock to blues to country to gospel, Guralnick discusses how, at his finest moments, Elvis was able to fulfill that dream. --Ron Hogan --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Opening with the 25-year-old Presley's nervous return to the United States in March 1960, this second volume of Guralnick's definitive and scrupulous biography then circles back to describe the singer's military service in Germany, where he encountered two elements destined to define his post-Army life: prescription drugs and 14-year-old Priscilla Beaulieu. His manager, Colonel Tom Parker, was by now a major factor in Elvis's career, and Guralnick is the first to explain successfully how the Colonel, a one-time carnival huckster, maintained an enduring hold on a man whose genius was beyond his grasp. Presley believed that they were "an unbeatable team," and the Colonel's success in keeping Elvis's popularity alive during the Army stint seemed to prove it. The subsequent results of the Colonel's go-for-the-quick-buck mentality?crummy movies made on the cheap, mediocre soundtracks rather than studio albums?shook Elvis's faith in his manager, but he remained loyal through the inevitable artistic and commercial decline. Guralnick's meticulously documented narrative (which draws on interviews with virtually everyone significant) shows the insecure, fatally undisciplined Elvis to be his own worst enemy, closely seconded by the Colonel and the entourage of hangers-on who feared change and disparaged Presley's tentative efforts to

grow, especially his spiritual apprenticeships to his hairstylist, Larry, and to Sri Daya Mata. When Elvis roused himself?for his 1968 television comeback, for the legendary Chips Moman-produced sessions of 1969, for the early Las Vegas shows?he was still the most charismatic performer in popular music, with a voice that easily encompassed his rock-and-roll roots and his desire to reach beyond them. But as the '70s wore on, Guralnick shows, he became imprisoned by laziness and passivity, numbing his contempt for himself and those around him with the drugs that finally killed him in 1977. As in volume one, *Last Train to Memphis*, Guralnick makes his points here through the selection and accretion of detail, arguing in an author's note that "retrospective moral judgments [have] no place in describing a life." While some readers may wish he had occasionally stepped back to tell us what it all means, the integrity of this approach is admirable. Many writers have made Presley the vehicle for their own ideas; Guralnick gives us a fallible human being destroyed by forces within as well as without. It's an epic American tragedy, captured here in all its complexity.

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This is a very interesting well researched and well written book on Elvis Presley. It is very touching and gives you context for understanding Elvis Presley and his role in popular American culture and music. I recommend this book without qualifications.

There are many interesting points in this book about the different periods in his life that not many people never knew about except the ones that were with him at that time in his life. The end of the book and the struggle he went through are heartbreakin, if you're a true fan. We all know the outcome of the book but what his "friends" and "manager" did and didn't do for him were awful. I think every fan should read this one. It's an excellent read and very well researched. There is one point in his life that I think could've used a bit more research but she already has several books about her life with him and after him. I am a true Elvis fan and have been all my life and this is one of the few books about him that I would highly recommend to anyone. Thanks for taking the time to write and share it with us.

What a story. This is book two of Guralnick's massive achievement to cover the life and times of Elvis and it covers what has become known as the fat/Vegas years. It kicks off with The Kings release from the army and ends with the fried bacon and penut butter days. A cautionary tale if ever there was one...nobody ever said no to The King...and the final years were a car crash. Riveting.

Interesting but sometimes a too detailed look at the slow, sad decline of a legend. Elvis's recurring nightmare which he had for years was an image of being left all alone at Graceland with the Colonel and his extended family long gone and no fans lining up at the gate. His bizarre eating and prescription drug abuse habits made sure he would be dead long before this could happen. The author must have got hold of extensive accounting reports when writing this book because he liked to give detailed percentage cuts of the profits on movies and songs between Elvis and his manager Col. Parker, this kind of slowed the reading down a bit but I guess it showed how inept both Elvis and his father Vernon were when it came to business. It was surprising to see how Elvis's spending habits had forced him to take out another bank mortgage on Graceland which must have added to his bleak outlook of things near the end.

The author as 'there', the entire time, as events unfolded. And was then reborn and told us all about it. A truly wonderful read. Meticulously researched. An exceptional body of work that draws you in, within each and every page. Exemplifies the very best that biography has to offer ... about a very public journey with a telling that thoroughly involves the reader. We, too, become actual spectators, so good is the pictured painted. You just can't put this book down.

This was a great book. I appreciate the research and hard work that went into writing this book. Yeah I am an Elvis fan, and proud of it. I heard about the generosity and kindness Elvis displayed to others even when I was a child but he was also one of the coolest guys who walked the earth. I always felt if I had to decide right from wrong I would say to myself "What would Jesus do?" but personally if I had to decide what's cool or not cool I would say to myself 'What would Elvis do?'. This book helped answer the latter.

I purchased this for my husband for Christmas. I am sure he will love it. The book was in very good condition and a great price. Fast shipping. I am happy with this book. Thank You

I've read a number of the Elvis Presley Books - and this is one of two of the best ... the other being "The Inner Elvis" which explains SO MUCH about why Elvis was the way he was and why he did the things he did. Careless Love was, of course, not a "happy" book - the last years of his life were tragic. I do feel, however, he lived more in 42 years than most of us live in 82...he actually did have people around, was able to do most of what he wanted to do - with his friends, travel...had houses

in Los Angelos, Palm Springs, Memphis - vacationed any time he wanted in Hawaii - how many of us get to do that! Elvis was literally a sick man when he passed away - he suffered from many things - and, of course, the drugs did not help. READ "THE INNER ELVIS" About the book - it can be confusing at times, as the author drops in too much information and interrupts his sentences when he is telling about an episode...i.e,he will mention a name and then go into a two-page discourse on that person before he gets back to what he is saying; and, in that sense, I think it could have been edited better...sometimes, I had to just skip pages because it just wasn't making sense. Also noticed several mistakes in historical history in the book. But, still an interesting read - and, yes, the last half is just so sad to see this VERY gifted man just destroy himself. Just so sad.

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