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# Elvis - Face to Face

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With love by

Wanda June Hill and a Few Friends

USA

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# **ELVIS — FACE TO FACE**

**By**

*Wanda June Hill & a Few Friends*

2011-2013

Revised Manuscript

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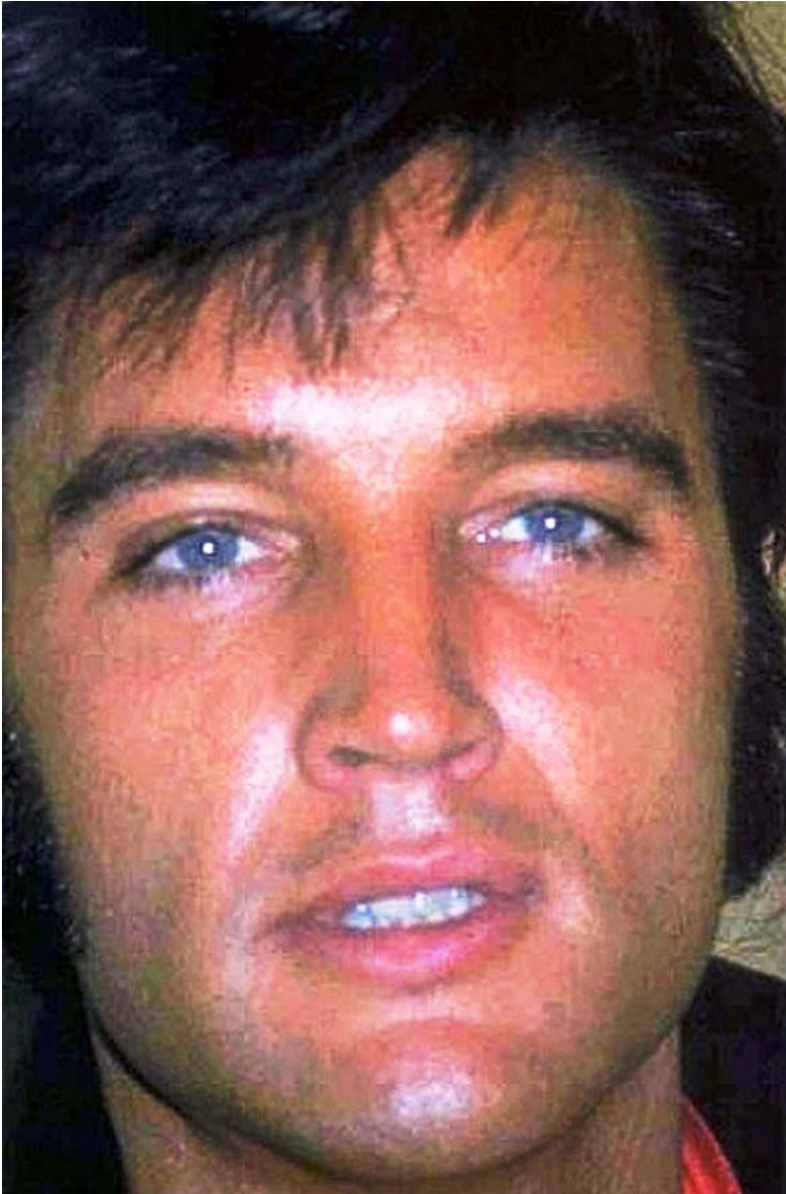
## Disclaimer

There are some people who call this book a work of fiction, although it is inspired by a true story and includes stories from other people. There is truth sprinkled throughout, to provide some fun, and serious thought. It is filled with opinions, theories, and some unanswered questions. There are people who have said, it's the ramblings of a raving lunatic, the work of a delusional old woman who never knew Elvis; (she must be a psychic!) Believe what you will. Be warned, reading this work will cause smiles, laughter, and a few tears. Remember, the author is not a professional writer, nor has she had much medical training, or sought to pitch her hat into the "paid celebrity" circuit. And this book is offered free. The author as always remains a private person.

*For Elvis with love, you will never be forgotten!*







***Elvis' prayer for help, "Lord! Send me some light ... I need it!"***

This is Elvis' prayer, in his own words and using his unique reasoning abilities.

“Lord, My God, Thy will be done. Please help with your almighty power. I ask for my friend who needs you. Grant your love, heal with your fiery breath of life, and give them the strength of your blessings today. God, I ask in humble gratitude, and give thanks to my Father in Heaven. Thy will be done. Amen.”

**Elvis' suggestions:**

“Go out into the night, look up into the glory of God's Heavens, a treasure freely given, to each of us to behold, to find faith and strength in knowing that our most High One who made such beauty for the world to share, can also bring enduring peace to each needy soul who asks for help with a heart full of tears and a spirit surrendered to His will. For His Son has promised, ‘even as I do, ye may do, if ye believe’.

This prayer is for all who need God's help. Be it for another or yourself; the key is in having faith, believing with a humble heart, and in accepting that - *it shall be done.*”

**St. John, Chapter 8, Vs 32.** “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”

**St. Matthew, Chapter 17, Vs 20. 1951 King James Bible, underlined by Elvis...**

And Jesus said unto them, “Because of your unbelief: verily I say unto you. If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”

Elvis explained the above: “Jesus said they doubted their own faith; it is not required to have a masterful sense of faith in order to be strong in deed and thought. He said, even a little faith will be sufficient as long as you are willing to try, you can move “mountains” and change your life. We are endowed with God's grace and we have everything we need to be whatever we desire, but we must believe in ourselves enough to bring it about. Faith as a grain of mustard seed...man that says it all!”

He spoke of faith in ways I had not thought about even though I had spent a lot of time in revivals and church services when growing up. He read Bible scriptures that were from the original Hebrew writings; the meanings of some of the verses in King James Version were slightly different and gave a different view of what was said. Elvis said that we aren't supposed to depend on our own faith, but to put our trust in Jesus' faith in his Father's word which was forever and never falters. Elvis said that when Jesus took the stripes on his back it was for our healing, when he was beaten and crowned with thorns it was for our belief in him as our Lord, who loved us so much he went to the cross to give us eternal life. And when we are told to have faith, it is not our personal faith we need to build up, or our lack of being able to build it up. It is our trust, our belief in him as the Saviour who died for us and promised to return again. Jesus had the faith for us, he believed his Father would keep his word, would accept his son's willingness to die for us, his children and that Jesus had the faith strong enough for all of us. All we have to do is accept him, believe his words and trust him for all things that we need, including the faith to believe that he is all powerful, our Saviour and our Lord forever. He told me that God lives in all of us, we should listen to our heart as God lives within and we need to "be still, and know that I am here" as that is God talking to us. We are his children and that cannot be denied, disproven or taken from us as long as we look to Him for our needs. Like little children, we are to trust our Father for our needs. People don't get healed he said by their own faith, it is Jesus' faith in his Father that we need to depend on. All we have to do is say thank you Jesus, for your faith in me, for taking care of me. And then let it go, put it all into his care and he will take care of it for us. Elvis did this himself when he was nearing his last days, he said, "I put it all in God's hands; His will be done." And he kept trying to do his job, depending on Jesus faith and power to get it done.

He said, "God ain't gonna let me die on stage, he won't be that mean to me, I'm gonna be home, with my friends an' it'll be all right, you'll see."

And so he was.



(Elvis gave me a plaque with the *Desiderata* upon it; apparently it had been hanging on the dressing room wall at a studio where he had been working on a film. He told me to read it every day because it was “useful rules to live by. Practice living accordingly” he said. “And life won’t be kickin’ your ass because you won’t be screwin’ up so often.”)

***DESIDERATA* - Elvis’ rules to live by---**

Go Placidly Amid the Noise & Haste, & Remember what Peace there may be in Silence. As far as possible, without Surrender be on good terms with all Persons. Speak your Truth quietly and clearly; and Listen to others, even the dull & ignorant: they too have their story. Avoid loud & aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lessor persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. You are a child of the Universe, no less than the trees & the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the Universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors & aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace within your soul. With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

Max Ehrmann 1927 & 1954 Copyright

He spoke of the early days when he was suddenly so “hot” and everywhere he went people recognized him, wanted to be around him and were screaming his name. He said he finally got over being scared by the passion his fans felt toward him; then he had real trouble he said very seriously, “Man, my head swelled up, ma’ hats felt like steel bands clamped ’round it” and he laughed. He started thinking he was something else and his momma told him he’d better get over it or he would be turned into a silly fool and it would be all over when people realized he wasn’t worth all the fuss. And he was soon exhausted by trying to keep the schedules and be on time; sometimes ready to work at a moment’s notice. And this man who had been that “big headed boy” admitted that in those first early months of “stardom” he had failed many times to be the person he was intended to be, he let it all go to his head and he had behaved in an “unseemly way” (his words). He said then one early morning he woke up with a raging headache and was “throwin’ ma’ guts up” when he wasn’t laying on the floor moaning. He had finally gone to a “real” Hollywood inspired party and “once was enough!” He said he never went again, made a point not to get involved with “those folks” and realized that he just wasn’t “nothin’ but a simple kinda guy” who did not belong in that “party kind of world”. They, he said, didn’t understand that wasn’t how he was taught or that he felt uncomfortable being in that type of situation. He had a lot of comments come back to him that were supposed to either shame him for his beliefs or scare him enough to make him come around or “they’d make” him quit the business. “But” he said, “they didn’t know me, an’ I’m still here!”

He also admitted that he was “not a saint” and that he had done things he would be ashamed to admit and that “it took a while”, but he “grew out of that hot urgent age” and realized that there was more to life than “foolin’ around”. He didn’t talk a lot about when his mother died, but that was a defining moment in his life, one he never fully came to grips with in many ways. He said that he had failed to “protect her” and that “when she needed me most I was too busy worryin’ ’bout myself to notice that she needed help.” Her death was a very heavy burden for the young man to deal with right at the time he was going overseas to complete his army service; he said he had to go and that it helped him “grow up”.

He said he was very lonely all of his life, had this sense of missing a part of himself and he wondered if it was because he was one of twins. He was close to his mother because he had been a “sickly child” and she tended to his needs and gave him confidence and taught him from the Bible to have faith and trust in Jesus, the Christ. He never gave up his religious views nor forgot what she taught him via the Bible and he said he used those teachings every day of his life. People who got to spend time with him and who listened to what he had to say, realize that he tried to practice his faith in how kind he was to everyone, treating everyone with patience, even when they didn’t take time to understand him, or like him as “just a human being, like they are”.

This book has been completed through the blessings and generosity of many persons, especially a young man from Florida. He worked hard building a computer for me and sent it at no cost to me so I could finish my work. Thank you, Gabriel. The younger generation *is beginning to appreciate Elvis' music, his unique style and unbelievable vocal range*. I am pleased to be able to let them know the man we knew behind the image via this manuscript. Many people of all ages have contributed their thoughts, poems and memories-- for the love of Elvis. It is not always easy working with and through a publisher; they have their ideas and often those are not the writer's intentions. So doing it "myself" was fine for me, I didn't have to agree to leave out or change things. However, I am not a perfect speller, don't do editing well and tend to say what I think; I have tried to keep it "true to memory" for the reader by trying to recall the small things as well as the larger. It has always been my wish to make these memories free to his fans, old, new, and in the future - and now it is reality- my purpose here is finished and I thank you, Elvis for taking time to say "hello" to me on that dazzling day now so long ago.

*Elvis – Face To Face, by Wanda June Hill & A Few Friends  
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The earlier current download book manuscript does not have everything in it that I have put into the revised manuscript-- please remember that when reading either one. This final rewrite will be on line, for free as long as I am. The bound copies of **Elvis, Face to Face** were never intended to be out for sale to the general public. *They are my personal keepsakes* that I have given to the contributors of this manuscript. [Wanda June Hill, 2013]

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Thank you for your patience,

Wanda June

**Note: Be Advised**

(I have included throughout this manuscript, Biblical references, Chapter and Verse, where I thought what Elvis believed would apply via **the Bible** that he gave to me. It was an older Bible, **King James** and published in 1951. Elvis said he'd had it "for a while" when he gave it to me. Over time, he gave me several other books he had been reading, most of those books were of metaphysical, philosophy or poetry, and all uplifting to the spirit or inspiring some deeper study. Some were novels; most all were a work of inspiration in one way or another, and most of them I truly did enjoy. His interest in and personal thoughts and scientific theories have become more interesting as our world has progressed. **I was raised Pentecostal**, though my beliefs have not changed drastically **I have accepted many variations of other religious views**. I am inclined as was Elvis, to the belief that Jesus had "many names relating to those he studied with from other cultures and countries" that if one reads and studies other religions it is enlightening in many ways, and can be comparable to our Christian teachings. It well might be known some day that **Jesus Christ** was more traveled, and was known to many other people than is told by many preachers, as being just "a hundred miles from where he was born", and he was not just the Saviour for those of strictly Christian belief. As Elvis said,"it is not so far fetched and it is possible we **will understand** someday". He explained that God lives in each person, even if we don't believe it, He is there; looking after us, waiting for each one of His children as the Father whose child has left home waits patiently for that child to return. God, he said, only wants us to do well; it's up to each of us to figure out the best way by trusting our Lord through prayer and patience.

(These are verses he underlined in his Bible; some chapters of different books were more heavily underlined than others- such as St. John and St. Matthew, Psalms and Corinthians.

**Saint John 21, Verse 25.** "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.")

*Elvis spoke of his wish if it were to come about, to be part of the Army of God saying, “I want to be in front, riding the best damn white horse available, carrying the mighty sword of God and wearin’ the full armor of the Lord! Gawd! What a day that will be!”*

There were a few other times he mentioned the Army of God and how the angels will come and following them will be the whole Army of God coming on white horses with “eyes” as dark as sapphire and carrying the army of the Lord into battle where they will be victorious forever and ever. He would get excited talking of such things, and it was always a joy and treasured memories when I was lucky enough to hear him expelling the love, joy and passion from his heart and soul.

I miss those moments. I have had many people, male and female mention how “fortunate, lucky and privileged our family was to have that special time with him, to be able to listen to his stories and hear his “heart speak” as one dear lady said, with tears glistening in her eyes. It is true. That was a time of wonder, of learning and great joy and anticipation for me, Jimmie and our little girl as she grew older. Would we do it all again? “In a New York minute!” To quote: “**Cholly**” **Hodge**, the guy who gives me my water ‘n scarves” as Elvis introduced him when they were on stage.

What I want to express here is that it was NOT anything that I did or said that brought Elvis into our life. He said it was “destiny, ordained by God” and that we “knew each other in past lives” and “we were all here for a purpose in this lifetime”. He could be right. This book of memories is perhaps, a sort of “fulfillment” of our purpose in this lifetime and was meant to be available for those who come after us. That is my hope. Wanda June - 2013

*Welcome to- our memories...*

***Dedicated TO MRS. SUZY LLOYD***---in memory of her “boy”

Mrs. Lloyd was known to everyone lucky enough to be among her many, many friends as “Just “Suzy”; thank you!”

***FOR MY GRANDMA SUZY***, By Juliann Starla Hill

Suzy and Conny, her Italian born 2<sup>nd</sup> husband, came into my family's life in the mid sixties; with the help of a few mutual friends, one of them was Elvis Presley.

**Elvis** had known Suzy for a while; she was a little older than his mother would have been had she lived. As a young woman Suzy spent several years around musicians and movie stars from the early '20's through the mid '50's. She and her first hubby “Woody” Wines who was a guitar player, traveled around the country with **Gene Autry**, a western film star/singer and his country western band. When in his “hay days” Mr. Autry was making those **Republic Picture** films and he became well known as “*The King of the Cowboys*”. Quite often Gene would ask Suzy to “sit with his mother” who had health issues. Suzy and “Woody” lived near the Autry's and they attended Hollywood parties together. Suzy knew about Hollywood and “groupies”; she understood the ins and outs of the “business”. Suzy's girlish, spontaneous laugh was used in the sound track of a few of those black and white western movies. She and a lady friend, who married film director **James Darlvley**, were at a studio lot when she first saw **Elvis Presley** who was starting his first film, (“*Love Me Tender*”). She said he and a couple of other men were walking down the hallway and she and her lady friend got a good look at him. She said he ducked his head down as if shy but he “was cute as a bug's ear” when he looked up and smiled as he passed them. (**James Searle Darlvley changed his last name to: Dawley for use in film credits because his true name was “always spelled wrong anyway” said Suzy.**)

A few years later Suzy was no longer married and working for a doctor when young **Elvis** was brought into the office. She was the back office therapist and said, “I made him soak his foot in hot water for 30 minutes, and then I held his foot while the doctor took care of him.” Elvis suffered from severe ingrown toe nails caused by wearing shoes too short in the toe as he was growing up; he had an infection from an ingrown nail and it had been bleeding. He liked her kindness, and motherly concern; she thought he was so sweet and polite even though he was in severe pain, and facing “the knife”. She cleaned blood from inside his shoe, helped him with his sock and to get his foot with the bandaged big toe to fit in the shoe; he thanked her and was anxious to get

back to the movie lot as soon as possible. She watched as he left, he was trying hard not to limp; that was the last memory she had of him for several years. (It has been noted by several people who knew Elvis well, including his daughter, that he sometimes limped when tired, though he tried not to do so in public or on film.)

Suzy reconnected through mutual friends years after Elvis returned from the army; Elvis quickly realized she understood him pretty well; he began calling her “my baby”; she called him “my third son” as she and “Woody” had two sons during their marriage. Suzy had remarried and was Mrs. Conny Lloyd. Grandpa Conny who was born in Italy, came to the USA alone, as a young teenager who finished growing up working in the shipyard learning to be top notch welder and became a United States citizen, and then changed his hard to pronounce last name to Lloyd as did many immigrants who wanted to fully “embrace the freedom offered by their new country”. He was married for a while and had a son from that union but became divorced later on. His son was a young teen when he met Suzy through friends; they were married after dating for a year and then lived in the valley above Los Angeles and later they moved to Garden Grove where she worked as a physical therapist while he did pipe welding; his work is visible towering above many big oil refineries in Southern California. In 1965 she said her “Hollywood connections were “drying up” and things had changed so much she hardly knew anyone “up there” anymore and so didn’t miss LA at all. Elvis thought she and Conny “should meet Jimmie and Wanda, they got a little girl doll baby an’ you ‘n Conny’d like them.” And of course, he was right. I was barely 5 years old when they became my “Grandpa and Grandma”.

Conny took to Jimmie, my dad. They had a lot in common, including welding but the most unusual “link” was the fact that my dad closely resembled Conny's only child, a 20 year old son who was killed in an accident shortly after Conny married Suzy. Elvis somehow realized that Conny needed a son and my father who didn't grow up knowing his dad- needed a father...so like Elvis to “fix that” for the two of them. Suzy hung out with my mom and an army of other ladies. They often had “depression night” at a local “happy hours” and several of them made trips to Las Vegas to see Elvis perform. Grandma Suzy came to my soccer games and cheered when I scored; she'd tell everyone, “That's my granddaughter!” As I grew older and became involved in music, it was Grandma Suzy and Grandpa Conny that loaned me money to record my first demo recordings. As our band traveled and performed, Suzy and Conny often came to hear us and visit with friends. Grandpa Conny could actually hear us without hearing aids! He got a kick out of that!

It was hard on everyone, but Grandma Suzy was especially stricken upon his death. She had been close with him; he had shared intimate worries, sought her counsel and spoke of his personal hopes with her as sons often do when they care close to their mother as was

Elvis who had lost his beloved Gladys so suddenly. Suzy said, “He is with his mother now; that’s good, he needed her.”

When we shot photos for our record cover Grandma Suzy was there to give good advice and directions. Suzy and Conny lent me money a few times without any hesitation and I always paid them back with interest. I remember Grandma Suzy had a note on her cork board back in the Garden Grove home that said: “A debt is never too old to repay.” I read this comment when I was a teenager and it has stayed with me.

In recent years, Suzy and Conny invested in our white horse, Artic Foxx. They “owned the tail” and for several years during his showing days, bought the shampoo and conditioner to keep that 11 foot long tail in full glory. Foxx won three large trophies performing at *The 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Cherry Festival* held in Cherry Valley, California – that was the last *Cherry Festival* that Grandpa and Grandma were able to see together and the bragging “rights” on that tail were priceless! We were so glad that Grandpa Conny lived long enough to see that horse take all the honors in their home town. Conny so enjoyed telling everyone “*his horse* took every top award”! I kind of think that Foxx showed so well that day for the judges on purpose- because all of his “family” was there to see him.

In the past few years I had grown closer to Grandma Suzy and made a point to spend more time with her. We'd often go to lunch, always looking for a new place to try- even though we had some favorites. We'd have a cold beer and a “visit”, people watch and just relax. We went to see the “*Lion King*” at the **Pantages** with my mom, and also took a trip to Las Vegas to see the new hotels and the fountain at the **Bellagio**. Last May, and the season before, we went to the **Anaheim Stadium** to watch the **Angels**. I bought an Angel jersey and Ball hat for her- of course they are red, her favorite color. I took a great photo of her under the big helmet out front of the stadium, she looks happy; it's one of my favorite photos now. Other times we'd just go for a drive or sit at **Starbucks** with a Frap- chino.

Our last trip out in late January we went to one of our favorite places, “**B J's**” in Moreno Valley. We had our “usual”, chicken tenders and a cold beer. The staff there is friendly and we had fun watching the horse races, and laughing over the unabashed excitement exhibited by the racing enthusiasts.

If my life is seen as one of value it is due to the four major influences in my life: my mother, father, Elvis and Grandma Suzy. They shaped me into the person I am today. Although I miss Grandma very much, I am glad she is free to come and go as she pleases; she was never happy unless she was helping other people, inspiring them and giving them purpose in life.

I tell people that Grandma Suzy is on a hot beach with blue water and a cold drink. She has an army of friends and family around her; my grandma is “working the room” entertaining everyone in her very special way--

“All ways, and forever Grandma”,  
Juliann Starla Hill

[The husband of Suzy’s woman friend was **James Searle Darlvley (Dawley)** famous in the early days for directing silent films based on many children’s books, including “**Snowwhite**”; he made one of the first “**Frankenstein**” silent films and received many awards and credits for his directing of early “talkies” and directed well into the 70’s. Mrs. Darlvley had quite a bit to do with costuming for those early stars, gave Suzy one of the “flapper dresses” with real seed pearls, fish scale sequins and blown glass beads hand sewn all over the skirt of olive green dyed silk and worn by **Mary Pickford** who was the silent film “darling” in those days. Suzy was going to a film premiere but instead chose to go on a **Gene Autry** band tour with her guitar playing hubby; Suzy was the “fix it, mend it and cook it girl” for the group and loved traveling around the country. “When “Woody” did “radio time” he always sang a song for her, “**Sue, City Sue**”. Later on, in “just talking” she told **Elvis** this, and he “fired up” his organ as he put it, and did a version of that song on tape; he asks on the tape, “You ever hear a country western organ? Well, you gonna hear one now!” and threw in a couple of “steel guitar” sections of “**Sue, City Sue**” just for her. He can be faintly heard singing along, having a ball doing it.]

Elvis loved the organ because he could incorporate all types of instruments into his playing, he used “all my appendages” he said, meaning his hands and both feet when playing. And he liked the fact he could switch musical types, combine things and make “my own music when I feel like it.” I asked him for a little tape of him just playing piano and music and he complied by putting a few minutes on tape for me 3 times in nearly 15 years! I thought it very generous of him and though he often did not sing, in fact never did on microphone when he played for me, he could faintly be heard in the background singing here and there or humming kind of as he played. And sometimes he’d laugh because he messed up but he always finished anyway. He was excellent on the organ and very good self taught pianist also, though not professional enough to suit him most of the time. He was a perfectionist and would practice and practice until he felt if there was any more practice done; it would screw up the whole thing.

Some of his songs were uniquely different because Elvis was versatile and willing to give and take here and there, and he put his personal stamp on whatever he did. We are so lucky to have lived during his time here, and that we got to see him perform live when so many people today, wish they could have done so. Thank heaven there is video, film and those sneaked tapes of his shows... There were times when he from the stage saw



someone sneaking tapes of his show and he would try to warn them if he saw anyone who might notice nearby! What a generous fellow. Amen.

**Graceland EPE** has now (2011) brought Elvis' upstairs organ down to display for his fans though it is surprising as his daughter did not want the upstairs rooms touched as her memories with him are there. I hope she will "stand her ground"; so often if one "gives in to "keep the peace or whatever, it opens up a whole can of worms", her father said he'd "learned that the hard way". He spent many happy hours playing that organ for his own enjoyment and for invited guests. One year he recorded several pieces of music on it and gave it to us! We were delighted, though he did not record his voice he can be heard having fun with a phrase here and there of song also. He didn't think he played very well and said so on the tape. If he thought that he was so wrong! He said he didn't read music, preferring to play "by ear". He also said that he heard musical arrangements and instruments in his head and he could go to a piano or guitar and play them well enough to show someone that would understand and put it down on paper. He explained it as just being able to "play by ear" and that a lot of musicians could do the same..."it's no big thing, really" he added. To most of us, who could not read music or play instruments it sure did seem like a "big thing".

People who worked with him in concerts said that he could pick an instrument out during practice and "hear just it" and then would ask whomever was playing that instrument if they could do this or that or bring notes out more here and less there...a few of those musicians said "it took some getting used to" but they did and so far, I have not read or heard of anyone of them not thinking well of Elvis, his talent or his requests from them. Many of them said he "opened" their eyes to having fun while they worked on stage with him. And they really did love being a part of his group; one violinist said she had never enjoyed her work more than when she was on stage with Elvis. He was she said, "A man with a loving heart, a great sense of humor and fun to be around but he wanted them to appreciate the audience because without them, there would be "no jobs for any one of us!" She said he worked harder than anyone on stage; the bottom line was, people were there to see him and he tried to do his best every time he walked onto that stage. He was, she said, "an inspiration to all of us out there with him, and he never failed to say "thank you for helping me get through the show tonight, kids. See ya tomorrow."

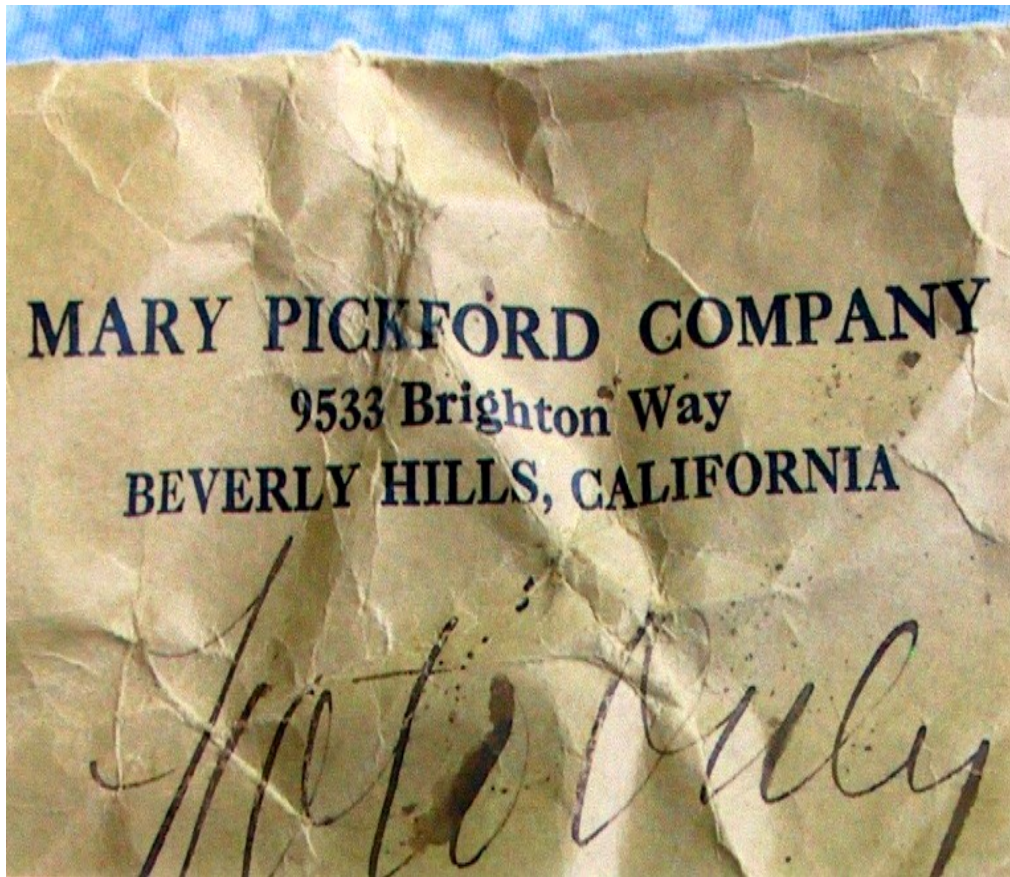
It is not my intent to imply or say that Elvis was a "perfect human being"; no one but **Jesus Christ** was "perfect" as Elvis believed. He was a "star" talented and acclaimed for his efforts to please his fans. He was fun loving, energetic, and in speaking of his many female fans he said, "I love women, Lord knows they love me! Sometimes, well, I kinda wish it was easier to get around, ya know, but yeah, I love 'em all! I'm a man, how can I not be happy they like me? God only knows why!" (Laughs) "I just had to learn how to

keep a tight hold on my heart...’n my wallet!” (Elvis was “always too generous” said his Father.) He flashes that smile and winks. “I gotta go; thanks for comin’ by.”

Grandma Suzy’s “Hollywood” mementos-

**Mary Pickford** was called the “Darling of the early films” because she was the first female actress to “make it big” beginning in the non talking early short little films that were “big hits” in the early film years. She was the first female “sex symbol” of those days and when they put sound to film, her “little girl voice” style of speech continued to add to her star quality. ‘She began it’ all said Elvis, and in fact she did.

Grandma Suzy met her, also knew the fellow who developed the style films that she and other early day actors and actresses were in. Suzy said that gentleman would ride in the back of a horse drawn wagon driving up and down the street, banging on a metal tub with a hammer, yelling loudly, “We need some background people, anyone want to be in my moving picture?” She and her husband and lady friends would get in their car and drive to the studio lot that wasn’t far from where they lived. She was in several films in back ground shots, or walking on a street and a few times her unique style of laughing was used. Once she ran into a street and was “knocked down” by a horse drawn cart...she actually fell to the side and the horse ran past and neither horse nor cart touched her. And when their friend and employer **Gene Autry** made films, Suzy’s husband was always on the stage with his band when he performed on film, and Suzy traveled on the road with them when they “toured across country” at least three times a year and sometimes more. She had been in every state in the United States she said, and slept in nearly every motel and hotel along the way. She was young and loved it all. Her memories of those days gave her an “inside look” at what Elvis had experienced in his early career days. She loved “her third son” Elvis and I let her share her memories herein and I know she is smiling when his fans read her Hollywood day’s stories. She had quite a time; those “were the good old days”. But with all the celebrities she had met and those she considered friends, it was Elvis who she said, “stole the show and my heart, right from the first day!” (He sure did have a way of doing that!)



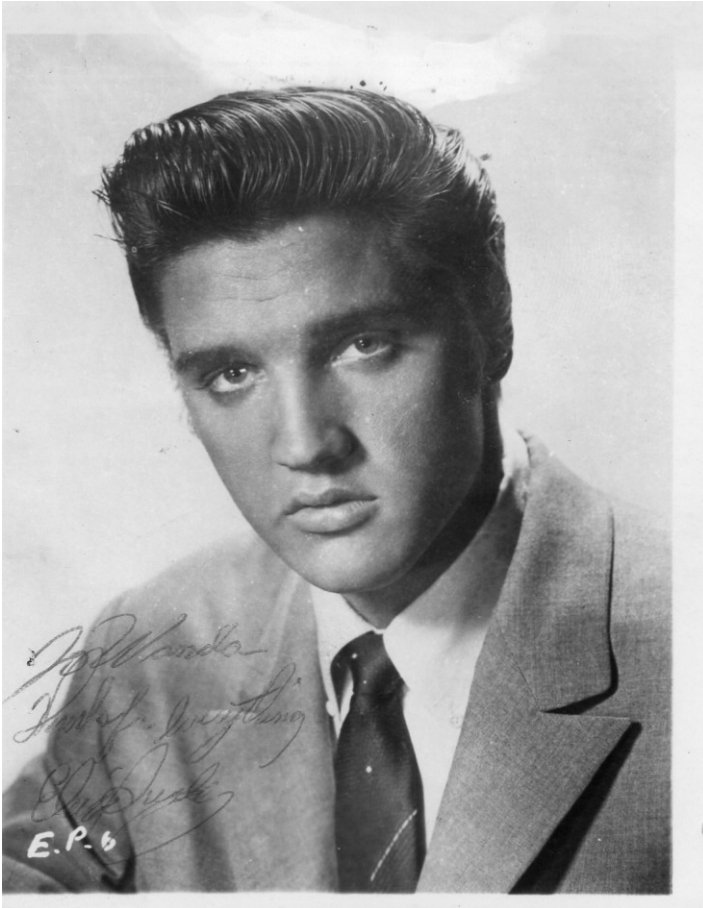
(Wrapper holding Mary Pickford dress, worn in early black and white picture is, made of Raw silk with hand sewn fish scale sequins and seed pearls, given to Suzy to wear to a "Hollywood shindig" in the 1930's)







My favorite photo of Grandma Suzy taken at our last game;  
we had a great time!



*One of three 2" by 3" photos of Grandma Suzy's "boy", he lay them on his knee and signed each one, then looked back through them and selected this one to put my name on- he had no way of knowing it was my favorite early photo of him. I told him they were some of my favorites from that time frame; he nodded, and handed them back to me. Years later when asked if he could go back in time what year would he choose?*

*He said, "1956, ever' thing was happening...man, it was then everything changed".*

*It was a fact, undisputed and it all happened so fast that he and his daddy would say, "It was quick man; we didn't know what to do...it came like lightening!"*

Elvis called Suzy "my baby" and she would say, "He's my boy now -my middle son" since she had one older boy and one younger one with her first

husband who played guitar for **Gene Autry**. Recently, (2010) I was told that when a youngster Elvis was very fond of **Gene Autry**, and liked to go see any movie he was in; I don't recall Elvis ever mentioning him to me, even though he knew that Suzy had gone on **Gene Autry** tours, been to the Autry's home, "baby sat" his mother when she was feeling "low", and on his movie sets and often attended Hollywood parties with the Autrys back in those early years. The last big Hollywood party she had attended was one given for **Frank Sinatra** and his then "latest new wife", **Ava Gardner** of whom Suzy said was known as a "man trap". She also knew **Roy Rogers and Dale Evans**, but spent more time with Gene and his family, though Roy and Dale with other of their friends did attend the parties Gene held during the holiday seasons. Those parties sometimes lasted for several days, with various celebrities and managers attending throughout; parties were great places to "discover" new talent and for actors to mingle with film directors and producers. It was she said, "All about the business".

Apparently, Elvis had met Mr. Autry and from what Suzy laughingly told me Elvis said, they two male "sex symbols" had "shared some groupie stories" and had other things in common also. No, Elvis did not "brag" or tell her anything "racy" that was said or exactly what they "fellas" had in common. Believe it or not now- Gene Autry needed "security" to get in and out of hotels and places where "fans" could gather and wait back in the '50's when he was "on the road"! Suzy laughingly told us that "Gene was the "bed'um king" of his day; he had young women waiting at back stage doors all across the United States! She went with her guitar playing hubby so she could keep an "eye on things" because the "back door left overs" would try to take up with the band members once Gene had made his choice.

She also told about Gene picking up the tabs for meals for the band group if he was staying over before going to the next "gig". And that he always invited them to come to their home for Christmas and sometimes Thanksgiving and he was known to replace worn out cars that often made the trips across country to back him up on stage. She liked him, said he was a very kind fellow, had a good heart and "knew how to have fun". She also liked his wife and his mother and admired how Gene Autry took care of his family, especially his "momma" who lived with Gene and his family.

Suzy was a very wise and good hearted woman; she had lived through hard times and times of plenty and spent a lot of time doing all she could to help other people. She and Elvis were a like in that way...they understood each other from the first day they



reconnected. Elvis shared with Suzy intimate details of the many health issues he had to deal with on a daily basis; she kept most of the intimate details in confidence, letting him open his heart without fear of betrayal. Sometime after his death she told me some of what he had said to her, we both were awed by how much strength of will and heart this man had and used to continue performing as he did in those last months of his life. I will not betray her trust or his in detailing further than I have in this book; it is a miracle as he said many times, that he lived as long as he did.

Some that were around him, employee/friends who tend to recall him in a negative light obviously have no reality as to what and why Elvis looked as he did, especially during his last two tours; Apparently they were “blinded by the spotlights” or HE DID NOT LET them know; even if one was an Atheist and near deaf and blind, it would be hard not to see what this man did, while dealing with the multiple health issues he had- all conditions *that he was born with*. It was a miracle that he lived. God blessed the world when HE sent us Elvis, say his fans. They speak the truth.

The next page is a list of **King James Bible** verses that I kept but not in sequence. Elvis often read or quoted passages from the Bible when he was explaining things he had been reading or questioning different interpretations of others who had written the books he had read. He liked to study all types of spiritual interpretations and run them through his own mind and that of other people who were interested. Unfortunately it seemed to me, some of those persons gave him “lip service” but not really “listening or bothering to understand” this guy who so wanted to share the things that he found of value through his studies. I hope there will be some readers who will enjoy and find interesting enough to look up and think about what is written; Elvis wanted to share, in this small way, I can let him do that.

I am not certain of this 1st book chapter title- but I had jotted it down as below.

Sarah (?), vs. 1 – 22    Aaron & Jesse    vs. 24

Elvis’ favorite verses and chapters appeared to be, based on what he read to me most often, were Corinathins, Matthew, John, Paul and of course, Psalms. He studied the old Testament, compared it to the new, and he was getting heavily into Revelations toward his last years of life. He knew people who were scholars of the Bible and all its aspects and spent quite a bit of time locating writers of the books he was most interested in. Often he did make connections, but he was careful not to exploit or allow any kind of exploitations from the press about these people. Some have spoken up, saying he was so interesting, very ahead of his time and that he had insight in some things that they were intrigued by and discussed. Elvis dearly loved questioning and wondering about the past of our Earth and its beginnings. He had some “far out ideas” and thoughts, and many



questions that never seemed to have answers that would satisfy his wonderings, mainly about “why am I Elvis?” “Why me?” “Lord it’s a – a heavy weight tryin’ to carry it all around and do right by the honor...an’ it is one...of bein’ here in this...this place.”

He had it wrong. **WE, “his people” were honored to have lived during his lifetime...**

BIBLE VERSES: Elvis liked to discuss the Bible, studied it and said he always found comfort therein: Here are some parts that he read and explained to me-  
Listed by chapter & verse because so many people have asked me to let them know.

KINGS, Ch. 11 “King Solomen loved strange women” –“700 wives & 300 conubines”,  
**“a guy who couldn’t make up his mind” concluded Elvis; in his quick way of understanding.**

JOB, Ch. 28 “how earth and the heavens were made”

PSALMS 23, Verse 24 “Lord is my shepherd.3 – 5”

PSALMS 25, Verse 12 -21

PSALMS 27, Verse 11- 14

PSALMS 38, Verse 1-22

PSALMS 39, Verse 4, 8, 12, 13

PSALMS 40, Verse 8 -14

PROVERBS, Ch. 9, Verse 8 & 13

PROVERBS, Ch. 10, Vs. 12, 14, 18, 21

PROVERBS, Ch. 13, Vs. 1

LUKE Ch. 6, Vs. 27,28,29,30,31,32,35,36,37,38, & 41

St. Luke Ch 15, Vs. 13 -14

St. Luke Ch. 18, Vs. 25 & 27

St. Luke Ch. 22, Vs 16, 17 & 33

St. Luke Ch. 23, Vs. 42 -43 (22-42-43)

St. Luke Ch 24. Vs. 4

St. JOHN Ch. 16, VS 12 – 17

St. John Ch. 16, VS 23

St. John Ch. 19, VS 23, 24, 36

St. John Ch. 20, VS 22

St. John Ch 21 Vs 25

St. John Ch. 1, Vs 14 & 15

ACTS 20, Vs. 35

ROMANS Ch. 4 Vs 29

Romans Ch 10, Vs 18, 19, 20

Romans Ch. 10 Vs 1

CORINATHINS Ch 6, Vs 3

Corinathins, Ch 7, Vs 1, 6, 18, 19, 33,36,37

Corinathins, Ch 8, Vs 4, 9

Corinathins, Ch11. Vs 9-14. 20 – 34 (taking communion)

Corinathins, Ch 13, Vs 1-13

Corinathins, Ch 14, Vs 1 – 5 (speaking in tongues)

Corinathins, Ch 15, Vs 39 & 44 – 50

Corinathins, Ch 5, Vs 18 & Ch. 8 Vs 9 (Jesus had money; was not poor)

Elvis enjoyed Matthew and though he read the entire Bible several times, he still had favorites but to list those in the book of Matthew it would take too long- just read it for yourself...you will know which ones he was drawn to again and again.

He also was into Revelations and knew a few fellows who studied it; he wanted to learn all he could from those he felt knew more than he had time to learn for himself.

Elvis was devout in his beliefs and tried to follow the teachings of Jesus, but he never claimed to be special in any way, or said he was “perfect” and “without sin” ever. Just the opposite; he would tell anyone he wasn’t perfect, but he tried to never hurt or offend anyone, most especially God. **He was the first to say**, “I am just doin’ what everyone should be trying to do, the best I can with what God gave me. An’ help others get to a better place, that’s all. If people come see us perform, and buy my records an’ see those fim’s...then I’m very grateful they find me worth caing about, that’s all. Man, I am just a fellow human, tryin’ to do the best I can, jus’ like all you folks, that’s all. Man, I got to go...it’s getting’ past my bed time! Thank you for coming.” It was 3:45 in the morning!

**Recorded by Maria Fielding, a young reporter visiting from New Mexico. 1969 Las Vegas: she wrote me telling me her story-her editor would not use the above-he did not “like Elvis” and called him a “liar and a degenerate sob”. He had never met nor seen him perform.** She said she quit that job and the same day got a better one with a news service who “appreciated the Presley talent”!

I realize there are people who will not appreciate the religious content I’ve included; however, if those folks will just look at it as “learning about Elvis’ and his inner being, what he tried to live by and practiced daily” then you won’t find it as offensive as thought. After all, Elvis tried to follow the teachings of Jesus, his personal idol and really, is that so bad? It worked well for him, gave him confidence, soothed his spirit and his often troubled mind; he never denied or tried to hide how he thought or what he felt toward his belief in **God, the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son.** The point I’m making is that to KNOW Elvis the man, one must also accept that he believed, though you personally, might not feel nor think the same as he.

**Elvis:** “If we all had the same ideas, saw everything the same way, man it would be pretty dull around the world. Somebody bigger than us planned these things out; made us all the same but still different, that’s so we wouldn’t get bored out of our minds an’ do somethin’ stupid... or give up to easily and dig a hole un’ stay in it! Life’s full, you just got to go out and enjoy it while you can; the way things are goin’ these days, ya never know man, it could all end before we know it. It won’t hurt to ask the Almighty to step in and help us out in that fighting over there; those folks need all the help we can give them. Prayer is always a way to help.”

(He was referring here to the military action in Vietnam with all its added parts and countries talking about getting involved.)

### *Gift from Elvis - 1976*

White gold necklace with crystal and wings w/garnet (It IS a garnet-not ruby) set in center that Elvis gave to Conny Lloyd, Suzy’s husband. It was one of Elvis’ and it has never been cleaned or polished. After Conny passed away, Suzy gave it to me as it was way too long a chain for her to wear;. Suzy was about 4’6 inches in height, “with heels” she’d say, but she was a “giant” in personality and the varied experiences and trials she encountered during her lifetime.

Elvis said of her, “She reminds me of my mother; always ready to do somethin’ to help someone along the way.”





**Beautiful young Elvis...notice no caps on those “eye” teeth.**  
A 5 year old girl saw this photo and said, **“Look! He’s a Vampire!”**  
He would have laughed and hugged her.



From TTW it is television show; he looks “neat” -hasn’t “got into” it yet; hair is perfect and no “sweat runnin’ in ma eyes”.

Those “Bicentennial suits” –

Elvis said he had more than one of these suits and “they are different”. Well, guess so because they did have “different” color sleeves and body - light blue and white and white and light blue - and he said they were “my Bicentennial suits” for 1976. He did wear them for nearly every appearance it seemed to us...and we have pictures to “prove it”...

Following pages present two Photos **by Pat Kilpatrick**, Tucson, Arizona (Pat drove over, found a “motel” and was there to set up right directly in front so he could get good photos; Elvis noticed him down front, Pat thought he posed a few seconds longer when doing his moves and antics, so he could get good shots

This is the white suit with blue sleeves...one of several sets and he said they were “very cool” I said, “yeah they really are cool looking” and he said, “I mean, they are not as hot; don’t sweat as much because they are cooler.” Of course I said, “They are real cool, huh?” He said, “Aww, knock it off...you know what ‘um sayin’!”

It was difficult not to tease him, it was sooo easy. And those “Eqyptian Vulture” designs were pretty cool looking!



There were times when Elvis looked very tired, usually after a few days on the road and especially in the last two years of his life. He had trouble going to sleep when he was working, saying he “couldn’t shut off ma f-‘n brain!” And I know he did take prescribed sleeping aids when he would finally be exhausted from trying to rest and get some sleep. It was hard for us to realize just how tiring it could be; it all seemed exciting and fun to



us who knew so little about “going on the road” but Grandma Suzy had done it, she knew and understood.

Grandma Suzy: “I loved traveling, seeing the sights along the way and meeting people of all types and views. I was just a girl when I “joined the band” (she laughs) and traveling with my husband kept me informed of what everyone in the group needed. I liked to cook and often did make meals when we stayed someplace where there were cooking previliges. I took a big black iron skillet with us and the condiments we might need, like seasonings. We camped a few times along the way when money was tight (she laughs) and sometimes we had “catsup soup” with crackers. Other times if the take was good, we’d feast at a nice place and hobnob with the other class. It was fun, exciting though we’d come home tired and ready to just plop down and sit there! I never said no to going, except when I was expecting and travel would be too much for me- it was not easy staying behind....”

And it wasn’t easy for Elvis-he wanted to go! Once the dates were set he was chompping at the bit said his daddy. They couldn’t get him to take time off even though he looked forward to being home “in ma own bed”.

People around him often complained that he was “demanding” and “kept them waiting around in case he wanted something”. They were on salary, they never had to pay for rooms and hotels supplied their food, they often got new shirts when Elvis did, and when he cleared out his closets he would give his clothes away to them, some never had been worn. You can bet they hung around for that! He picked up their tabs on tours, paid medical expenses should anyone need it and he never expected to be paid back when he made loans, though he was pleased if they DID manage to make a few payments. He said that was what “havin’ money is for, helpin’ folks out when they need it. “Sharin’ what God gives us, that’s lovin’ one another.” But his daddy complained of freeloaders” quite often and Elvis would say, “Aw daddy, it’s only money; don’t worry ‘bout it.”



Prehistoric Bird suit with the white sleeves, Presidential Insignia belt and of course, the suit is blue.

Long Beach California, photo by Pat Kilpatrick, 1976 the entire front row was filled with us and our friends-he was barely 4 feet away and he could see that row well. We got a lot of eye contact, smiles and some very shy but pleased expressions for his efforts from him. It was great.

It was amazing how his suits would take on a “life of their own” when he put them on; hanging on their hangers, they were heavy and very ornate depending on the designs, however the actual cloth they were made of was not that attractive just hanging there. It was I’ve heard, Egyptian cotton and “supposed” to be cooler than linen although it was a type of linen apparently. Elvis said they were hot; especially the colored ones and he did like the white better for that reason; and also because he felt white looked best on stage. Some of them weighed several pounds with one hitting the scales at 37 pounds and since that one was done, there were those that were heavier, especially if they had capes that were adorned with “glory” as he would joke about it. There were plenty with “glory” all right; and when he put them on, those suits began to glow with a life of their own. It

could have been his “inner light” bringing out their “glory” as one young man said after seeing Elvis walk out onto the stage in Las Vegas.

The first shows he did in Las Vegas, he wore a simple black Karate styled jacket and pants with black tights under it all- why the tights, I am not sure unless he was afraid he might split the seat of the pants out! A rather recurring event through out his stage career! He finally made it a “funny” if it happened when he was doing his “thing” on stage. Those deep squats and leg stretches did create some strain on his pants, but he kept doing them as long as he could...the last time we saw him perform one of those was in 1974 and the suit was leather. It didn't split- but the knees and seat of the pants surely did stretch out! He began to do less of that type thing though he did always remain as active as his health would allow and felt he'd let his audience down if he couldn't be “the Elvis” they came to see and hear. He was so concerned, so frustrated with himself when dieting and lots of exercise would not get rid of the thickness of his midsection and he could no longer look “lean and mean” as his health began to fail him. He should not have worried, we came anyway and thousands of other people felt the same, and came to see him no matter how he felt about his appearance; “just more to love” said one friend, “he's our Elvis, how could we not still love him?” Elvis was so concerned about “looking fat” in those last years; he was a man who took pride in his appearance, was physically active and wanted always to look his best. The last years of his life his health conditions caused his body to retain fluid, sometimes making him look as if he was “blown up with an air hose” said one of the security guards who worked guarding him at a So. California concert and he added, “The poor guy was so weakened physically; he should not have been going on that stage!” Yet Elvis did go on, and gave a super show that literally created a wild frenzy at the end of the show. More about that in the last pages of this book; please continue.

I don't have any photos of him from his first Vegas concert, at least none that are clear and good enough quality to reprint here and I don't want to use photos without permission. I tried to take some, he looked like a tiny little figure on stage and we were seated near the middle front section! It was my puny camera! There aren't many available from that concert, but I know there are a great many out there- the place was lit up with them even though cameras were “not allowed”. I asked NBC if I could use one photo they owned; they said “yes” but attached to that yes was a list of costs for using it- like a year's income for us!

Question: What do you do to keep things “fresh” night after night?

Elvis: “I remind them that this is a new audience, people who haven’t seen us before so we have to be at our best, to do a good show, make them happy, you know.”

Question: How do you manage to keep going, I know people get sick on the road, what with all the many places with deadlines to get there, staying in so many motels and hotels and probably not sleeping well, then too, eating things on the run...”

Elvis: “an’ gettin’ the runs!” (He laughs) It’s tough, but we like it, we enjoy the ups an’ downs most of the time. An’ if you’re a professional you learn how to put physical things aside an’ go on out there with one goal, to perform well and give the audience what it came for...that’s how it is, really. “n it’s always different, ever town. Their excitement touches us also...n’ we feel charged up with it.”

Question: Do you always get excited about going out on tour? Or has it lost some of its edge for you after all this time? (1976)

Elvis: No...eh...it’s always different ya know, never really can understand unless you’ve been there...eh on the road I mean. I-eh-sometimes everyone feels bad, wishes maybe they could take a day off an’ get over whatever it is, but touring is different, shows are set up so you do them one after another because of time factors an’ too, it’s pre-arranged so equipment and everyone can get there on time. Time is the factor and costs, of course. It’s easier to follow a pattern and keep things going than to set somewhere and run up bills. But we all just want to get out there and get it done-that’s how we do it, it’s a form of mind over matter. An’ so feelin’ bad doesn’t matter so much because at show time, everyone is so charged up about the show, we jus’ put how we feel aside and do the show. The goal is the important thing, not our personal problems; we don’t let them get in the way.

Question: How about you-do you ever just wish you could say, “No not tonight?”

Elvis: (Snickers) Depends on what we’re talkin’ ‘bout...really. (Laughs) I mean, eh...as far as doin’ the shows, no. I look forward to bein’ on stage...eh...I – I- eh...feel alive out there ya know; it’s like goin’ into another...eh...place. And it’s one I look forward to ya know; we all do, not just me. An’ it’d be a – a borin’ show if it was jus’ me out there. We’re a team, we need each other...eh...God knows I need them! It-it’d be hard tryin’ to get along with out the group, man; they are 2/3rds the show, really! I’m jus’...eh...well, one time a – a lady told me, “You’re the icin’ on the cake!” So guess that makes them all the cake!” (Laughs)

Elvis: “I never...eh get tired of meeting...eh, the – the public, the fans ya know. They take the time for me...eh, to come, go see those...eh...’fims...an write to me, send me eh...cards for my birthday, Christmas, an’ eh...other holidays. An’ some of ‘em are eh...intimate in how they put their feelin’s ...sure...eh... But I realize it’s...not really me, but ELVIS ya know, the image thing. They think they know me...eh...feel that they do because we...eh...on stage ya know, we try to relate with the audience...’un it...it makes it be like...eh...an intimate gathering of...of...friends...ya know? I want that feelin’ to be felt by everyone there, eh...try to bring them into the ...the...atmosphere of...of being one with all...kinda. Well, I’m not good at...eh explaining it. One has to live it, be a eh...part of it to understand what...or experienced it to know what I’m...eh...tryin’ to express...I’m no scholar man, I jus’ barely got through high school.... Eh...I read a lot. All types and styles really ma’m, jus’ what interests me...really. I got to go...I’m gonna be late...thank you for waitin’ here...really...it means a lot...really.” (This conversation was taped outside of a Las Vegas 1975 hotel elevator.) [Thanks Jan!]

I realize that many people will find this book confusing in that there is neither “rhyme nor reason” in how I have laid it out. It’s random, but it is how I remember things; one leads to another or reminds me of something that happened earlier, or later. This book can’t be called a “novel” as it doesn’t have a real beginning but does have several beginnings from page to page and chapter to chapter. The latter doesn’t apply as there are no “real” chapters listed herein...so look at it as just “memories” spaced in time from beginning to end, and enjoy everything that Elvis wanted his fans to experience. And have some book marks handy to jot down page numbers, in case you are one of those who like to keep things in sequence.

The type set and style vary in this work because it lets the reader’s eyes “rest” from the task of reading continuously, and was suggested by my eye doctor for helping keep one’s vision strong.

A friend who has read this work says it’s a good idea to keep kleenx handy-some things in here are tragically heartrending, especially after one learns of the physical and emotional pain Elvis was enduring on a daily basis and- still he came on stage and sang his heart out for us, flashed that devastating smile and when we responded...he was glowing with joy. He often said it was the fans who never let him down that kept him going; “they love me” he said, “It’s worth it all, really.”

Also, keep in mind that some folks tend to jump around when reading, they may miss something doing that; I have said things about his physical health and mental state that might be duplicated here and there, though said in different ways. I believe it is very much important to highlight the facts of Elvis health, why he was medicated and why he ended up as he did. So please, be paitent with my tendency to “repeat” certain material though in

various ways. I want people to “get it” and “keep it” and “pass it on” to those who don’t read books and so tend to believe what they hear from those who “talk” for money.

Yes, I AM a “momma lion protecting her “cub”...and I always will be. wjh

## ELVIS FACE TO FACE

By Wanda June Hill and a few Friends

Final Revision 2012

First written 1985, and was combined with 1978 contents from the hard bound book- “We Remember, Elvis” and by special request, was given Xerox copy form, at binding cost & shipping as a spiral bound manuscript for a very few people; at that time it was a “rough” manuscript and was never intended to be sold by the very few people who asked me for a copy of “We Remember, Elvis” that was no longer available (1985). Time changes everything. “We Remember, Elvis” revised in 2006 is now available in paperback (with lots of type-o’s) on Amazon. It contains The Interview wherein Elvis talks about his career, life and hopes; he is so honest at times “it hurts and so funny one cries” said several readers. Revised for 2010 “Elvis-Face to Face” is now available via this Internet “download” service; if you have no computer access-let me know, I’ll make you a cd to take to a print shop where you can have it printed and made into book form. I believe his fans *deserve to know the guy we knew*, and so this is for his Loving Fans from all over the World.

This book is NOT written as a novel or biography type book; it is done in sections with each one revealing moments of time and telling stories throughout Elvis’ life as the author’s experienced them. In reading these writings, random as they may appear to be, you will by the end know and understand a lot more about this man who left a huge “footprint” on this planet named “Earth”.

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Members of the website: [www.Elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.Elvislightedcandle.org) : Letters from people who read our books: Memories from people who met and knew him: Friends and family of

**Author who knew him:** People who knew him and remain anonymous, (By their choice).

***Thank you all for making this available To Elvis' world of fans***

**Comment:**

People who spent time with Elvis say he could tell some good stories, keep people laughing and sometimes spent a lot of time talking about spiritual subjects. In fact, he had the nick name of “Preacher” though it was not always used in a complimentary light. It has also been said by some who talked with him a few times, that Elvis had a “limited subject matter” and when that was exhausted; he didn't have much to say.

Elvis' talking points:

Music and all related to music.

1. Karate and related martial arts.
2. (8th Degree Black Belt and continued study.)
3. Religion, man's relationship with God, search for, etc. and related subjects:
  - a. Astrology
  - b. Numerology
  - c. Spiritual growth via all senses and God given gifts.
  - d. Football! Tennessee and Packers, many others...
4. Women, “finding the right one”, “soul mates”, etc. and etc.
5. Purpose of life and “the Plan”
6. Mystical events, historical and ancient myths vs. reality.
7. Books of many subjects, word meanings, hidden meanings and etc.
8. Medical knowledge, methods and research. (Used to find things to help him be ELVIS, to maintain his looks, to remain young and desirable, all career demands.)
9. Law Enforcement, weapons: guns, rifles etc. (He had an official badge.
10. Was a License carrying Shelby County Deputy Sheriff and liked to give out Courtesy tickets to: “Offer good advice and maybe save somebody's life.”)

That's a wide range of “talking points” for anyone to be versed in, and should have kept things going for some time. Although there was one fellow who shall remain nameless due to his “prestigious position in life (he thinks), who said Elvis could talk only on 4 subjects: “Music, Karate, Football and Women”. Perhaps *that was* all the “company” at the time preferred--?

**Elvis:** I don't know why people--eh-- women think I'm--eh--something special, really. Used to bother me ya know, tryin' to figure it out an' why. Eh--then it just got worse an'

had to have eh--protection-just goin' in an' out of where we were stayin'-- That became kinda tedious. It was dangerous, not--not for me so much, but lord, they'd be hurting each other trying to -to--touch me, or somethin' so we had to be careful so nothing bad would happen. An' I--I --jus' ran for the car!"

(In this section entitled "Snippets" the reader can decide if he was limited in his ability to converse--or not. Wanda June Hill)

Seldom did I see Elvis without much to say; he had so many interests, some mundane, daily activities, some hilariously silly and at times he just wanted someone to talk to him. I enjoyed his moods, even the few "bad" moments left an impression. To say that he "lit up my day" can't really explain 'the joy' as Grandma Suzy called it, Elvis could bring into my life just by saying, "It's me..." as he often would when calling. I saw a lot of changes coming into his life on a daily basis, not that he called daily; it just seemed that way because he didn't forget "where we left off". Some were happy moments, some when he was estactic, and then some very heart-rending; I'd do it all again and not regret a moment. I guess that says just about everything in that I have no regrets, no feelings of being "used" etc as some said when he wanted them to be "there" for him. But then, I was not "there" and I don't understand their complaints and their lack of noticing anything "wrong with him" or that they can't understand why he'd call me and spend hours "just talking". My guess is that he did not want to tell them; perhaps he wanted to "escape his world by joining mine? I believe that it was easier for him to speak of things bothering him, etc to someone "outside" his world by telephone- he didn't have to pretend or fake anything for "my sake" as he might have to do when speaking face to face with a person. I understand that and it's enough for me.

{After looking through a copy of *"Careless Love"* on my Kindle, I was shocked to read so many stories of Elvis' use of all kinds of drugs, stimulants and other varities. I spoke with him quite often, sometimes he was depressed, other times he was funny and joking and often very serious and studying spiritual writings from several sources. He read to me from



**Manly P Halls** works on one of the first times we talked any length on what Elvis believed and tried to live by; it was not only the **King James Bible** but what he gleaned from what he considered to be “great minds who know”. Occasionally he would be trying to relax and fall asleep, at those times he always said if he had taken sleeping pills or not, and yes he did take them. Not because he was so “hooked” but because he needed to sleep and was not able to “shut off my damn brain”. He was plagued with a mind that seemed unable to stop thinking, questioning and pondering on whatever was going on in his life...and future plans. But he was lucid, able to carry a conversation, not slurring words as if “drunken” or anything like he was “stoned out of his mind”. I resented the the writer of “Careless-love taking the word of those around Elvis who actually DID take drugs and acted like it. Also, that the writer did not consider the many illnesses and the constant stress he was under in their analysis of his “drug use”. Instead it was implied as if he did it for fun, or because he could or he was only functioning when “high”. A few times in more public settings, he felt bad, but he went all out to try and look good; Elvis had a lot of pain in his last 4 years of life and even some pretty bad moments before that. He took medication his doctors gave him in order to do his job, to go out and be ELVIS for all of his fans and also- the press. At certain times he had to BE ELVIS even when he was sick from the severe migraine headaches he was prone to having, but he went out and did his best. In later months there were moments when he was on medications he had to take; some would limit how quickly he thought, that slowed his speech and he being a shy and reserved kind of guy under all that glitz, he stammered a little over certain words. This was NOT due to him being “stoned” etc but to his having need of medication in *order to be able to do his job*. Like many people who have internal issues that are not visable take every day in order to do their job and support their family. Elvis was no different...but he was in one of the brightest spotlights ever considered during his entire time as a super star-the first one to change the way young people “saw” music in action and in their futures. Elvis began it all, but his efforts gave a “step up” to those right behind him who inspired him to step in front of a microphone and then onto those stages all over the United States.

And he did it all while combating one of the most devastating physical problems, *from birth and for his entire lifetime*. Elvis was ill from the moment he was born due to a “glitch” in his colon’s nervous system; anything he ate was not processed as a normal colon would, therefore from an infant forward, Elvis was always feeling not so well; he suffered severe constipation his entire life and as he got older, was under pressure to be ELVIS and had to be “perfect and look good”; he often was put on the floor by the pain from that blocked colon. He saw many doctors trying to find out what was wrong with him; they gave him medications that only aggravated his condition because back then they did not really know what that condition was since there were no MRI’s and fancy xray machines that did more than take “shadow” pictures. His problem only showed up as “probable irritable bowel syndrome” due to his being under stress etc. Doctors told him he needed to relax, so they gave him depressants... from the age of 26. Those drugs were likely to increase the constipation. And so he took a lot of laxatives that caused more cramping, didn’t really do the job and sometimes he had to submit to embarrassing and personal treatment to resolve the problem for a while. So it was from the beginning a vicious circle but because he loved his work he didn’t quit; he had a lot of people on his payroll, he felt obligated to continue being “ELVIS” in order to be able to pay them. They depended on him; he liked being needed, being loved and having friends who cared about him. In the last years he told me he was “sick of taking” the medications prescribed by doctors, but he did get off most of them and was taking only what he had to in order to stay alive and continue to do his job. I very much resent the opinions of those who had and have NO idea what this man lived with every day of his life, and did so because he loved his fans, he loved his friends and that included those who worked for him in various aspects. He defended them, excused them and often times, ignored their behavior rather than create a rift among them.

He forgave their lack of “seeing” and “understanding” and went about his life, doing his job, and “loving them in spite of their faults”. People who have this type of internal “malfunction” spend a lot of time having their colon’s flushed out, either at special clinics that do that sort of thing or at hospitals when they wait so long it has to be done under medical

supervision. Elvis was in and out of a lot of carefully checked out hospitals, especially in his last few years...The unconfirmed by his family, estimate is that he was hospitalized 181 times in his last 3 ½ years of life... Usually it was said to be due to the “flu” or that he had pneumonia, and indeed he did have that a few times because the stress of it all weakened his immune system. However, from what little he did tell us, he was in the hospital because of the blocked colon so he could keep working. (His physical problems were kept secret, very few people knew anything about his health problems other than he had a “low immune system” and “didn’t eat right so he had constipation issues” just as many other people experience.) Plus he went before huge crowds of people, breathing the same air more or less, and then too, he kissed the women who were lucky to get close enough, because he said, “It makes them happy!” He was “exposed” to many kinds of viruses his doctor warned him, and finally in his last year, he didn’t do much “kissing...its too dangerous...” he told me. “I can’t afford to cancel shows...” But as time passed, he had to cancel some shows because he was too ill, too dizzy and hurting too much to try; though keep trying he did for as long as he could. And the only thing he complained about was he couldn’t go entertain his fans, and this fact hurt him because he loved his “people”, felt he owed them for all the wonderful things he had and got to do because they loved him. So, he kept trying to be ELVIS to the best of his ability.

Ed Parker, his Karate teacher and good friend who went on some of the last concert tours because Elvis trusted him and wanted him there, said that Elvis was “begging his manager” to cancel because he was afraid he couldn’t sing and he was losing his balance and could barely get up and down, or walk very far without gasping for air and couldn’t control his speech very well. Apparently, no one could see that beneath the façade of ELVIS- the human being- the man was seriously ill. Obviously, because Elvis never wanted to give up, he’d go out “sick as a dog” said one of the policemen hired to protect him. “He should take some time off; he’s exhausted!”

It cost money to cancel shows, but finally the Col. did cancel some of them after Elvis had to be rushed to emergency and then flown to Memphis for treatment. At least twice it was a real emergency, but the press was never

told anything but he had a “severe case of the flu”. So they “hung him out to dry” and “revealed” what they believed to be “the results of drug addiction” when in fact he was NOT a druggie! Often his prescribed meds stopped working, therefore a new type would be slowly introduced and he’d “pick up” and go on for a while longer. And while in the hospital, his colon could be professionally and medically treated as well as was possible in that time frame. Elvis was at the mercy of his own body, it didn’t matter what he ate...or if he ate “the wrong things” as so many said, it was out of his control and had been from the day he was born. His daughter though a child at the time, remembers that he didn’t eat very much at all. Other people around him in those last years also confirm he seldom finished a meal and often “ate alone in his room” and did not eat much at all. He was human, as he said “no different, ‘n no better’n anyone else” and as anyone who has experienced pain and distressed health knows, often we are prone to take more pills to stop more pain. Elvis was human, but under great stress to stay young and appealing to his fans. His job he said, “was to look good”. He heard that everyday from various sources and he believed his fans would desert him if he didn’t remain ELVIS in every way possible. He over medicated at times, just to rest, to sleep- to be able to go out and be what his fans wanted and what his manager and the business end of things, wanted. It was his job; he tried to do it right to his last day.

It is too bad that some of his “closest friends” could not see past him being ELVIS. Perhaps they would have realized how serious were his health issues that to them seemed trivial, “the flu”, colds, taking drugs, get more sleep etc but they looked at him and judged his actions and life from the view they had of their own. Some of them still believe their own “stories” even when confronted with the glaringly bright truth. Elvis said, “They don’t see because they got too much other stuff to look at; it’s hard to picture what another person’s life is like when your own is so messed up. So I jus’ cut ‘em some slack” an’ go find somebody else with a little less goin’ on.”

Some people will read this book and say that I am just defending a drug user; yes- he took medication *because* he had severe pain constantly in those last 4 years. All prescribed by doctors that were trying to help him but really

in those days, they had no true idea of what was wrong with him. *He had no recourse but to trust them.* If you or I were in his shoes, under the kind of stress he was from the time he was 20 years old, being told from that time forward that he HAD to always “look good” or end up in the “forget him file” and lose everything he’d worked so hard to have- wouldn’t we trust doctors to help us? And wouldn’t we take anything to end the constant pain? Truth fully? Yes! Elvis was no different, he just found himself in a place that no other person was before...and it was he who changed the world of music in ways that will never fade away. And he did all he did in less time than most people can imagine, and did so while physically “falling apart” as he put it. Could we? Nope! Because **he was ELVIS** and there will never be another like him.

**In the last pages of this book you will find an article written by a doctor concerning what was wrong with Elvis, and you can look up the medical facts of this condition for your selves. No more “hearsay” gibberish! Learn the truth- then tell them to “shut the .....up” ! He would do it for you...**

**Wisdom from Elvis ---**

**{ He said, “If you can’t find somethin’ good in a person, maybe you’d best just let ‘em pass you by unless your willin’ to look real hard, find out what it is that’s botherin’ them, ‘n maybe help ‘em get to a better place just by listenin’ and givin’ ‘em the benefit of the doubt. It don’t ever hurt to extend a hand to someone in need, ‘n if a hand don’t work, try givin’ ‘em your ear. Listen to what they don’t say as much as what they do...sometimes that’s all it takes. And don’t forget to smile now and then.”}**

When three of his long time male friends/exemployees “needed income” after being “layed off with 2 weeks pay”, they were easy prey for “yellow journalists of that time” and so came out with an

unflattering book about him and how he had conducted his life/career/etcetra, Elvis was hurt deeply, but he offered an excuse for their reasons, saying that:

“Sometimes people can’t see clearly because they are too close to the picture, like sitting in the front row of a theatre. You got a view, but it’s too much to really take in, so things sometimes get missed, or misunderstood in trying to see all of it at once. Two people can be in the same room but different locations and neither will see the same view; that’s how it always is. In this case, they don’t see past what they experience, sometimes they can’t see anything but through their own ideas. Life is tough, everyone thinks their life, needs and wants are primary, ‘n maybe they never can really understand what goes on behind the door when they aren’t in the room. People judge one another based on what they think they know; most of the time it’s based on what the one bein’ judged *wanted them to know*, so they don’t look any further. Reality and imagination are not the same things...’cause the image is one thing...the man another! It’s that image the world knows...not the man who’s behind it. I’m no saint, but I try not to embarrass my family and friends or my God, by actin’ like a darn fool, in public or at home.”

A lot has been said by some disgruntled persons about the firing of what had been “long time relationship” employees, most of it not exactly why they were “tossed out” etc however there were reasons Elvis said, “but nothin’ that needs to be flyin’ in the wind” so he didn’t elaborate or discuss them. Mainly, they were fired due to the number of law suits filed due to rough handling of fans, some who were injured in the process of “handling” fans.

And some broken bones to prove it; I was at quite a few concerts that made me wonder how there were not more injuries, broken bones and legal

actions! It was scary and somewhat dangerous everytime Elvis did his finale song and stage goodbye. However, security people should not be doing drugs or drinking while performing their job...should they? Elvis would never point the finger...but there were a lot of “fans” who would- and did.

Elvis was even called a “glutton” because he “appeared to be gaining weight-it was not fat, but fluid build up in his ailing body. He wasn’t often at the table to eat with his employee/friends choosing instead to stay in his room; they said he had a “refridgerator full of all types of junk food, cupcakes, candy, cookies and even pies his cook made” and they concluded because he had those things, he ate them. Other people who spent time with him said he would offer them those items but they seldom saw him eating anything other than something cold to drink now and then. His daughter remembers that he ate very little and sometimes nothing at all; saying that he wasn’t very hungry. Elvis said that he needed to “watch his weight” therefore he had to keep an eye on that; but the main reason was his internal problems, trying to keep them “from actin’ up.” Those “internal problems” probably were the cause of the violent migraines he said started when he was 9 years old; he said the pastor would pray for him and “make ‘em go away.”

Elvis was a Christian and loved spiritual conversations, and teaching his beliefs to his friends, and anyone else he thought might be interested. And he was an excellent teacher in that he explained things in a simple and direct way that anyone could understand. He often said, **“The greatest commandment is, “Love one another”, keep it an’ you don’t have to struggle tryin’ to keep the rest!”**

“Snippets, to taste the flavor of this book”

## **1974 – Conversation**

*Elvis:* “Readin’ a book of sayings, some of them I like a lot; Linda gave it to me---” (Snickers) keepin’ me busy ‘til she gets back, ya know.”

*Wanda:* “Sure-- Poems?”

**Elvis:** “And ever has it been that love knows not its own depth until the hour of separation.” (*His voice is dramatically soft as he speaks these words.*)

**Wanda:** “Nice and pretty correct.

**Elvis:** “Um---Humm “For in the dew of little things, the heart finds its meaning and is refreshed. A good one!”

**Wanda:** “True--that’s all the book is, one liners?”

**Elvis:** “Sometimes one line is all it takes--to make a point.”

**Wanda:** “Okay--”

**Elvis:** “This one’s for you-- “A friend’s soul will keep the truth of your heart, as the taste of the wine is remembered when the color is forgotten and the vessel -- is no more.” (*His voice drops to a husky whisper.*)

**Wanda:** “Very sweet---thank you!”

**Elvis:** “I like this one, it’s true. “Better to pray in the full joy and love of spirit; if you pray for no other purpose than asking, you will not receive.”

*Some of these are “one liners” from **Khalil Gibran’s** writing entitled “The Prophet” that was one of Elvis’ favorite books; he gave copies to many people.*

### **Conversation by telephone, 1970’s:**

**Wanda:** “Elvis, of all the Bible verses, sayings of Jesus, the Christ, which one or ones, do you believe or maybe I ought to say, have the most faith in- or respect for—do you have any that come to mind?” (*My comments are not included in this conversation; they added nothing of value to Elvis’ thoughtful explanation of the Scriptures he selected.*)

**Elvis:** “So many--eh--besides the obvious regarding our salvation and eternal life in Heaven---well, eh-- Guess it might be the part in Matthew 21 an’ verses 21 and 22. “The first deals with the power of believing--having faith--so that if a mountain is in your way, prayer and faith can move that mountain, whatever it might be. The word “mountain” is being (used to represent) “troubles, somethin’ bad or somethin’ good that you need desperately. There is the danger- bein’ so



desperate you forget to wait on the Lord. He don't say he'll do it immediately, but in time, when its right for you, he will reply 'n not always exactly as you might think you want---in the end though, its usually for the best whatever the outcome. Now, the next verse Matthew 21 'n verse 22 is our assurance that his word and your faith will always be if you believe an' it goes somethin' like this, dependin' on which Bible you're readin' from--all same, just worded a bit differently [in today's versions] for those with younger minds. "And all these things, whatsoever" an' that word is important. What-so-ever is all inclusive of our needs-not wants you see, but needs--- an' it goes on---"whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive." The Bible is all ways--now I am not sayin' always--it refers to "all ways" and there is a difference-- "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer" here it stresses "believing, having faith in all ways, there's that unspoken phrasing that is important to know in reading the Bible. His declaration, "you shall receive". You, it says SHALL receive. Shall--that is shh-ALL, share all is one interpretation; it uses the all which is right up there with Allah, reference to our Lord, our Father in Heaven. You got to study on it--look up words to know the true interpretations--God ain't dumb, 'un his chosen ones who wrote down all this weren't either, so study and learn. Ya know, you can say prayer for that too-- See, the word of God is written by many people, we know the names of some of them--there are lesser known names. We have some of the best writings in our Bible--what I respect most is God's style of declaration for what he wants us to take heed of--like in **Matthew 21, verse 22**. All through the Bible there are his stated declarations for us to hold on to and cherish, seek in our time of need and to receive power and patience through study of his word. I love it-man! It--it's what keeps my heart happy, my soul at peace when ever'thing is rattlin' and carryin' on around me. When I forget---I get in trouble--fortunately there's the Word for that too!

I like reading **Psalms** when I get--eh, angry at somebody's stupidity-doin' so lets me have at 'em, with God's word and promise beside me. Ever read **Psalms 39** where it says, "I will guard my ways, so I keep from sinning with my tongue. I will put on a muzzle as a guard for my own mouth" an' another'n, "My heart grew hot inside me, I could not open my mouth!" Man, that's so true! Can't say what I'm thinkin' a lot of times--an' I ask for help 'fore I say the wrong thing an' regret it! "Forever the evil in one's heart shall linger, like a serpent an' spring forth an' its bite is vicious to those who hear." So I don't let 'em hear what I'm thinkin'--between me 'n God! He knows me---my heart an' temper--God made me, he understands an' if I slip, he forgives me. I'm his son, too. That's how it works, we are all his children, 'n like the good parent he is, he forgives-- and forgets. Thank God!" (Laughs)

**Elvis:** I don't know 'bout some versions of – of the **Bible**, there are some that have been done where the true meaning of what Jesus said, or has been written that he said, they-they altered words, changed them and that has made what he meant to mean somethin' different. Now to me, that is wrong to do, but I guess maybe who ever did it was thinkin' it would be easier for people to understand; it just isn't the same statement of facts. I like the **King James Bible**; you know it was done from the original word, using the old language meanings for words. I know modern is easy, but sometimes it isn't exactly correct in translation. I am reading some of the older versions, tryin' to anyway, so I will know the correct word meanings. I wish I could get hold of some really old writings...I'm workin' on doin' that, I'd like to be able to read it in the language it was written...(Laughs) But that could take me a-while...I'm no scholar of any sort! Its jus' somthin' I'd like to do...sometime...for me, ya know...just so I'd know what the **Word of God** really says..."

He reads from his **King James Bible** the following:

**King James Bible: EZRA** Ch. 6, Vs, 13, **King Darius** speaking: "Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this."

**Elvis:** "Man, that was pretty plain...though this is from the **Old Testament** an' **King Darius** is defending the rights of the Jewish people to build their temple...an' they did it...'n one day comin' soon, they're gonna get it back too... because...because God promised 'n he ain't gone back on his **Word** yet!"

\*\*\*\*\*

**Elvis:** "Ya know, if you read the Bible and take the words as they are meant, you will learn that Jesus didn't make things complicated, really. He said only what was necessary, and if it might be that some people wouldn't understand then he would tell a little story to show you what he meant. A parable they call those stories; they are pretty plain if you stop worrying about the way they spoke in those days. Like the parable of Jesus telling those questioning anyone working on the Sabbath. He told the story of the shepherd whose sheep got lost on the Sabbath; the guy went out and found his sheep like a good shepherd would.

We are God's sheep see, and Jesus said we always come to the aid of anyone of his flock-his children who are all of us human beings, regardless of what day it might be, Sabbath or not. Like a good shepherd, God will be there for us, see.

As his children, all we have to do is ask and we will receive more than He already gives us. You ever think about that? I mean all the blessings we are enjoying already as His children? Think about it, every day though we are not promised tomorrow, the sun rises, we go 'bout our business and do our thing with out much thought of how these things work; the sun rises, warms and gives life, the air flows and we breathe, the sun sets and gives us a time of rest or work, and the next day it begins again. Blessings man, think about all that you have...and thank Him; dwell on the good things in your life, the rest will take care of it's self...really. It's what's up here that matters (touches his head) and "what's in here" (touches his heart), really. It don't hurt to get on your knees once in a while either, not just when you are desperate...God appreciates a happy heart as well as just a simple "Thank you Lord for all that you do for me." I gotta go now, 'um gonna miss class if I don't leave now."

(He was on his way to Karate schooling. It was on a Sunday, he was "caught" very early coming out of a little church not far from his Bel Air home; apparently from what was said, he often went there to pray before anyone else had arrived. That special day an early arrival secretly recorded part of his conversation and shared the transcript here.) **1966 Thank you Carol!**

(She said he was wearing a gi (karate clothes) and was more handsome without any Hollywood makeup artist assist and standing there in the early sunlight he was "glowing as if lit from within; so handsome and his eyes were the purest sky blue! The eyes of an angel", said the still awed, and lucky woman.)

### ***BIBLE SCHOLAR...***

Elvis believed in Salvation, Love, Forgiveness and Mercy, as did his Savior and guide for living, **Jesus, the Christ** taught when he was on Earth. He didn't argue or fuss over those who did not believe as did he, he listened, discussed and learned from those differences in opinion and belief. He treated everyone as an equal, trying never to put anyone down because they were "different" in any way, skin color, religion, station in life or lack of one, they were his fellow human beings. "My brothers and sisters" he would say, "how can I not care about them? We are all God's children, kin

folk livin' together, tryin' to get by the best we can. Can't fault a person for tryin' -- that's what we're here for so we need to get along together an' look out for one another when the need arises. Man, livin' is tough enough; we don't need to make more trouble for anybody!”

He read thousands of books, most of which were of a spiritual nature, or of uplifting philosophy and as he put it: “Things that take my mind off every day cares, something I can learn from. I didn't go to college, but I like to learn things--Education doesn't end when school is out-the library is open, anyone can go there and read, add to their knowledge and in doing so, become a more powerful person. By that I mean, one more able to adjust and make decisions regarding their life that can give 'em a step up or a step back, its up to each of us which we take. Education is a means to make the right ones in life. Make it count, life's a gift; don't waste it.”

He spoke of wanting to do college concerts, using gospel and uplifting type songs as a means to teach young minds. He thought music was a “universal language” and could be a teaching tool, one that had become a primary influence on young people. In the '70's he feared the way music was heading, away from one of being a “soothing or uplifting influence to one that was destructive and jarring to the senses, especially the harmonic rhythm of our magnetic energies”. He tried to arrange his performance songs in such a way as to produce a “rolling” type of excitement and energy for his audiences, with highs and lows that would leave them feeling good about being there. He often said that he wanted to give his audiences a “time away from their cares, somethin' they can remember and relive now and again. After all, they went to a lot of trouble comin' to the show, it's the least I can do. We all try to give our best, to show our appreciation an' besides, if we don't care; they ain't gonna come back!”

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[Elvis- speaking to a group of people in his home in 1966. It was recorded by a young lady who was invited with a few other people to come back to his Bel Air house after a game of tag football in a Beverly Hills Park. She was included in a small group of girls that Elvis took into his bedroom and closed the door. This is used via her permission because she (and I) wants his fans to know the spiritual side of Elvis. Around this time he was studying, learning to read ancient scriptures written in Hebrew so that he might further his understanding of God's words for his children. Elvis read books written by renowned authors, and spoke of what he learned to anyone who would listen; he was delighted when he found someone to teach or met someone who knew more than he---so he could learn from them.]

**“What Does God Require of Us?”**

**Elvis:** “Our Lord doesn't expect perfection but he does want truth in our every day living. He has said clearly what he expects from his children-us, made in his image. God doesn't give us more than we can handle, now maybe he expects more from us than we think we can give, but that is where prayer and faith comes in to give us strength of will and purpose. God has never given us more than we can bear or more than we can overcome because He is there to guide, uplift and support us in all our attempts to be the person he wishes us to be. In the verses of **Micah**, Chapter 6 and beginning with verses 8 He is clear in what he requires and it is explained as follows.

**What does God require of us, what does he wish us to give to him?**

What does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness and mercy and walk humbly with the Lord? To do Justice is to listen to others, to practice fairness in our judgment of their intentions; we have to trust our fellow man, and treat them fairly. Everyone has their trials, and each must reason their way through them, doing the best they can. We need to be gentle and patient with their outcome and be fair-minded to their cause through understanding where they are in life's great journey.

Now to practice kindness and mercy is to turn aside when someone is angry and saying harsh things they don't really mean, though their distress has caused them to toss those things our way. Mercy is to be given freely to those who are in need, whether physically, materially or emotionally. To practice fairness is to be just; to follow one's heart is to be kind, and to consider another's plight as if it were your own is to practice mercy. All three bring understanding of our Lord when He has said, “What does the Lord require of you, but to do Justice, to love Kindness and Mercy, and walk humbly with the Lord”. Understand what is said in that last line--”to walk humbly with the Lord”. It is not because of anything we have done, or do that we can walk with the Lord. It is through His Mercy, Kindness and what is good that He finds in us, his child that allows us to be able to walk humbly---not behind but WITH the Lord. Praise God, for He acknowledges our gift to Him, which is our willingness to keep His requirements, to love kindness, be merciful and just in our judgments of others. In doing those we are keeping the most important of all; to love our fellow human beings. This includes all God's creations. Earth was created and all living things, animals of all types, including those of the ocean and on land, and in the air, including all plant life---before man, before woman. Consider this fact; should we place any of His creations less worthy of Justice, Kindness and Mercy? Oh lordy! Think about it!” [From the heart and mind of Elvis Presley-]

There was a young couple from South Carolina, who took buses to get to Las Vegas and didn't have enough money to get a room once they got there. Elvis heard about them through a hotel employee who knew they were waiting to see his performance. They were wearing their best and yet, "stood out" as being dressed very differently from what the usual well dressed fan wore. Elvis said, "Get 'em front row or the best you can, make sure they have free coupons for meals, an' get 'em plane tickets home." This was only one of the hundreds of times he "picked up the tab" for his beloved fans--no matter their age, position or lack of one--they were his fans, and he loved them, considered them to be friends, "like family" he said, "we're all related in one way or another--God's family. We're all related. Better to be nice to people, they could have a closer connection with God than you or me-- ya just never know."

**Elvis:** "I'm just a man, a human being like anyone else, really. I just happen to be there at the right time--an' man, it was – was like something big reached out and – an' touched me. I think 'bout it now--'n it's been like a- a dream. Hope I don't ever wake up!"

**Elvis:** I dun no, man. I was just like any other young guy, no different an' no worse really. Just had different kinda circumstances an' opportunities; you know, everything comin' at me so fast an' man, it went to my head! I guess; I- I liked goin' home--Hollywood is something else-- you know, everything is-is -well; it's called "tinsel town" isn't it? Guess who ever named it that lived there!"

**Question:** How does it make you feel when you see all those- those women and girls going hysterical over you?

**Elvis:** (Snickers) "Well now, there's more 'n me on that stage--could be it ain't me at all!"

**Response:** Oh, you know better than that-be serious, okay?

**Elvis:** "Serious-- eh--I feel good about it ---because I know they enjoyed the show an' that's what it's all about--givin' people somethin' for their time, the trouble they went to in coming to our show. They're just feeling good and having a good time, that's all, really. If I started thinking differently--eh--actin' like I was somethin' real special an' all that, who'd bother coming to see me? Ya know, it works better keeping my head down to size--or none of my hats would fit!" (Laughs)"

**Elvis:** (Peeking at the crowd from back stage.) “Whew--.gawd! A lot of people in there! Tell me, is---is there a game after we're done? Basketball---or somethin'?”

(He was always amazed when he continually sold out huge venues across the country, and he was always jittery, anxious before he walked out onto those stages. But once on stage he exclaimed, “Can feel the love comin' off those folks out there. It's all worth it, baby, ever' thing it takes--it's worth it!”)

### **Anxiety--could he---**

He had been feeling bad, “the flu” and yet he kept doing the show night after night in Las Vegas in the dead of winter and people who had seen the shows the night before were in line again and talking with people who had not seen his show; they were doubting his ability to perform as they were waiting. Well, Elvis heard about their fears and so as the band played the opening for him, he was wheeled out onto a semi darkened stage---on a hospital bed where he was laying covered with a sheet. As the audience gasped and then began talking, the music softened, a search light fell upon the bed. The music began to lift, and so did the sheet, slowly, teasingly as Elvis raised the microphone up- at hip level under the sheet. People began to snicker, and then laugh as the microphone stood straight up-- Suddenly Elvis sprang up, throwing off the sheet, and said, “Didn't think I'd make it, did ya?” He had a few other comments, but no one can recall exactly his words that were designed to get the laughter and applause he received. He did a fantastic job that night, leaving no doubt that he could---perform!

### **Elvis relating memories of making that first “fim”--”Love Me Tender”--**

“Wasn't nothin' I wouldn't of done to get into makin' movies! Man, it was, was, way beyond anything I thought about-I mean, sure, there was talk but when it-it happened, man, that was-was like fantasy! Drivin' through the gate--Gawd! I was comin' unglued-- 'n tryin' to be cool--ya know. I did a screen test with a-a “seasoned actress” they called her-- (Snickers) Nice girl--that sweater--wheww-- 'N readin' lines- wasn't very good at it, I guess 'cause they did another'n with jus' me-- an' I was playin' this guitar that had 'bout two strings-- just beat away at it anyway. So, then it was a little wait an' next thing I know there was another one-- I was all set to do the “Rainmaker” ya know, an' it kinda shook me up losin' that one. But it all worked out except you know, I thought it was a straight role--no singin' an all. That's what I was told when I signed for it--so-- Well, in that business things change--learned that one good! Now - eh don't get set on anything much because when it gets time to do it, well, never know sometimes lines change 'n usually for the better 'specially if we got any say 'bout it! (Laughs) Man, some of that sh--eh stuff they write--nobody'd be able to make it real!

**Edith Head\*** was the one fixed my clothes for it, 'n she helped me along with my hair an' stage make up, things like that. Nice lady, if not for her, could be I'd of flopped right off. They made up suits for me, costumes an' such. I was was scared, nervous--eh--didn't know nothin' 'bout films--only did television an' compared to films--that's easy, just got to hit the mark an' look at the camera lights. Turns out I got the star treatment, me'n Mr. Eagan (**Richard Eagan**) an' **Debra**--we's the stars in it accordin' to them. Man, I was scared doin' that fim--dumber'n shit--'n havin' to be told stuff. Mr. Eagan was helpin' me every step of the way--nice fella. He made me a belt--hand tooled it 'n ever thing an' had ma name on it--I mean, he sat there 'n done it jus' for me! Man -that got to me, really. Him a big star an' thinkin' that much of me! Teachin' me how to move natural 'n tellin' me stuff helped me through it, man. He was impressed how I could remember the lines-knew it all by heart an' all that. He'd ask me what was on page such 'n such an' I could tell 'em--- an' he was winnin' bets on me!" (Laughs)

\*(**Edith Head** was in charge of studio costuming for many, many years, and she worked on some of the most loved and notable films, including several of Elvis'.)

#### **Elvis' comments about Debra Paget, his co-star -**

**Elvis:** Gawd! "--'tween you 'n me, man, I was hooked on her--first day seen her; she came in lookin' like--like--gawd, ever thing was perfect, ya know. An' she was wearin' some kinda perfume that made ma head spin ever time got close to her. An' her eyes were beautiful, clear down to her heart, man! She'd talk to me, like I was jus' normal ya know, easy and all. Then Mr. Eagan told me she was engaged to **Howard Hughes** an' I liked to died--'cause man, I was havin' a hard time not just droppin' to ma knees an' beggin' her to be mine! Gawd, I'd of crawled 'cross the desert for her if she'd be waitin' at the end of the trail! Whewww--! Stayed awake thinkin' was gonna make an ass of ma self in front of her-or somethin'. Then had to do that scene hittin' her--she wanted me to really slap her - not hard or nothin' but contact--couldn't do that at first, then she made me practice and she was good, I mean a real good actress, man. They put paddin' down on the ground an' covered it with dirt so I could knock her down an' not hurt her much--it was hard doin' that--but we got it done so it looked okay. First time had to do it made me 'bout cry an' she got up and took me to her dressin' room and kissed me an' hugged me 'til--lord--ma heart was poundin' so hard thought it was gonna leap outta ma chest! Thought she was wantin'--ya know, cause man, I was" (giggles) but that wasn't it, damn it! (Giggles) Too bad it wasn't--I'd of done that film for nothin' just to have her be mine! She told me it was puppy love, I'd be feelin' it a lot makin' films an' it was just something that made the films work better an' all that, an' I'm shakin' and tryin' to tell her how I feel an' she's sayin' it's just



infatuation an' I'd have to get used to it 'cause if I don't ma heart'd be broke all the time. Then she started takin' off my shirt, undid ma pants an' said, "Okay honey, just this once" an' she locked the door. (Pause) (Giggles) Naw--that didn't happen! (Laughs) I's just puttin' you on--we didn't do none of *that*--really. She's a nice girl, serious 'bout that old guy she's seein' and he had so much money, gawd-- I wasn't nothin' but a--a *parkin' attendant* in her eyes." (Elvis knew my husband had been a parking lot attendant, we met when he parked my car and so he chose this job description.) Man, if she'd done that, I'd of been a lost cause! I thought I loved her, man! Momma talked to me, tellin' me it wasn't real love; jus' workin' with her an' how I wasn't used to them kind of girls--dressed nice, 'ever thing perfect an' classy, an educated an' all that. Hell, she's right- I wasn't. An' that's what I wanted--one of *them* kind of girls! (Giggles) Met lots of 'em after that--seems like most girls are that kind in Hollywood--least that's what I was lookin' for--'course there's lots of other kinds too. Thank God! (Laughs) They the ones kept me runnin' on over drive!"

(He said he came to his senses quickly and he was glad because he had a sweetheart waiting for him at home who was "every bit as pretty"; he just got "caught up in the glow of the moment an' got over it fast- and it never happened again".)

"Then (I) was sent over to a speech coach to clean up my speech eh--imperfections they said, I had too much "drag 'n drawl". (Southern Negro sounding dialect, Elvis grew up hearing and speaking with Southern style, and had lived in what was known as "Shaker town". He often attended a nearby black church, loved the gospel singing, sometimes took his dates with him, and had lots of friends among the congregation. He spoke of wanting to be married by the pastor of that church; he always said he wanted a "real preacher, a man of God" to perform the marriage ceremony, but that didn't work out as he had planned) "All that (he used the "N" word casually, *never* was it a put down in any way coming from him) "nigger" comin' out see, wouldn't do, so even though didn't want it, had to. And that took some weeks, finally said it was the best they could do an' I was damn glad of that! And then went to classes to learn how to be "natural", but the teacher said I was natural enough-to make changes would "ruin my innate abilities", whatever the hell that meant! Then went to record some stuff 'n found out was gonna hafta sing in the film! I didn't want to, I mean I signed an' acting contract, didn't want to be singin' an dancin' making those type films, but there was scenes put in for it an' all, so was kinda upset 'bout that, an' momma said "Go on an' do it, she thought if I wasn't gonna just quit an' come home, I better do it. Did the recordin' down there at (Studio B), little ole place with real good acoustics - did some the other's there too. Then was out on the road workin' sellin' records an' the movie ticket sales went real good so they lined up 'nother one, "***Lovin' You***" 'n lovin' her 'n lovin' 'em all" --naw-- naw-- really." (Snickers and laughs.)

He said he thought he would be good enough, given a chance, to do something that told a good story and let him “emote” as he put it, to show that he could be a real actor. But all he ever got to do was “silly films an’ it all amounted to the same role, same story line, just different supporting actors and sets...nothing challenging or exciting. It all came back to money, he said, the “bottom line affect”. And yes, he did try to get that across to the Col. several times, however he didn’t have the “kind of money it would take to change things”.

He was involved with another young lady whom he deeply cared for; infatuation never lasts long and he knew that. He said “Hollywood kinda makes ya forget reality ‘til ya get used to the phyness of it, ‘n it was just a passin’ thing, really.”

He liked making “*King Creole*” even though he had to sing in it, and he thought it was his best film, with “*Jailhouse Rock*” a close second. But he never stopped wishing for a role to come along that would be something he could be proud of doing --“A good script-- that says something--”

Elvis was an avid movie watcher, renting copies, getting first copies if he could and watching them over and over, sometimes hours at a time. He wanted to write a script for something he was mulling over mentally he said, in 1975. He said it was an idea he had and he thought it would be a good script with things in it that regarded everyday living as well as problem solving of things that happen in life. He didn’t want to have the starring role (that surprised me) but he wanted to be the important “sidekick” and the one who “learned” from the experiences shared in the film. It had a military theme he said, and it was about two men of different ages who had served together, one being the officer and the other under him. And they both returned to civilian life, tried to make it in the “real world” but were not having much luck until they ran into each other and joined forces to make life better. The end was sad, the younger (him) came down with an illness that could not be treated and he was dying; the film begins there, and retraces their lives apart and together back to their first meeting in the military on the battle field. He related it to the Vietnam War times.

His ideas were vivid, better than I can relate them and I do not have much written about that conversation to say more. At the time I thought he had talent for script writing because of how intent he was in telling me the outline.

He mentioned wanting to make “fims” that told a story about life, seen through the eyes of those who lived them and not just somebody’s idea of what it would be like say, to live in a neighborhood that is on the verge of “fallin’ apart because the folks livin’ there can’t find work paying enough to feed their family much less fix up there

homes. Most folks in that position usually rent” he said. “They work ever’ day, rain or shine, sick or not, because they have to take care of their family.” He spoke of living in such an area, how they were better off because they were just 3 to provide for, but that when they had extra his mother would always know of someone with less and she would take some of their extras to that person. He learned to share, to care for other people he said, by the example of his mother, and also his grandmother used to watch her mother hand sandwiches and bowls of bean soup to people who stopped at her well for water. Most of them were transits, trying to find work so they could go home and feed their own families.

Elvis thought that in our time most people had not experienced the need to find a job, a need so intense that sometimes the dad, brother or even sister would resort to stealing in order to get money for that roof and food for those at home. It wasn’t because they were innately bad people he said, only that they were desperate. As I listened to his ideas and what he had seen growing up and experienced later as he became famous with “more money ‘n I ever thought about havin’” coming in from people who admired him and enjoyed his records, my impression was that he felt “indebted” in many ways to those folks. He wanted to “repay them” and the only way he could was to be the best singer and showman that he could, to never let them down and to always try to be someone they could be proud of- because he said, “They made me what I am today; God gave me my voice but it was those folks out there, who go to work at a job every day, pay their bills and feed their families and then they go out and buy my records too.” He could never quite get over how fast his records sold and that “those fims always make money”. **It was God he said, “God let me be Elvis Presley, why I don’t know but I’m thankful for His hand on my life, an’ I know it wasn’t anythin’ I did or could do that would have done it-it was God, knowin’ that makes it all worth it to me. I can’t let Him down ‘cause He sure never lets me down!”**

So many people, often men both older and some younger than Elvis have said after meeting him, speaking with him, they had “never met a nicer guy.” I certainly agree; of course he was human and the first to admit he wasn’t “perfect as they think”.

I said, “oh really! Well, just what awful things do you do when not in public?”

He looked kind of “taken a back” then grinned and said, “You want to come home with me...un I can show you.” Then he laughed because I didn’t expect that reply, though it wasn’t a surprise answer coming from him. I declined saying that I already had seen “that guy” and he laughed. Then seriously said, “I don’t know what they think I do at home really; I watch tv and read, maybe practice singin’ some an’ I talk to folks when I can. Nothin’ that anyone else doesn’t do when they are at their own

home, really, ya know. I'm no different, I just happen to step on a stage an' sing for a livin', that's all. There are more of them than there is of us..." He meant people who sing etc. He was always a little awed by the number of people who would come and hang out around his gate just for a chance to see him drive in or out, and maybe be lucky enough to be there when he stopped to chat.

Yep, it was pretty amazing! That he was so "normal" and did not have an over blown idea of himself because of it, that was the specialness of the guy. He thought he was "normal, no different an' no better". "God took a lot of pains and went to a great deal of time and trouble makin' that guy!" said one of his "admirers" who happened to be a grown man who said he wasn't a fan, he just came down to the gate because his daughter and her friend wanted to see if they could get Elvis' autograph. They did; and the man left as a fan of Elvis! He had never met a "nicer man or one so good looking!" he said, and added, "He is just a nice guy who is the best lookin' damn man I ever laid eyes on!" And he said, "He's no sissy, he's just damn handsome!" His daughter wanted to move to Los Angeles so they could "camp out at his gate in hopes of seeing him again!" There were some folks who actually DID move there! And some, who drove for miles, lived in their car and came everyday to see him drive in and out on his way to the studio. Amazing! And if he had lived, they'd still be doing it! Super amazing! He said he didn't know why, but if they cared that much, they were welcome to stay out there as long as they did not bother the neighbors. He had to move a few times because of "bothering the neighbors".

Next photo-

**(Photographer unknown) 1969-70 time frame .**

He must have just come off stage very recently because he would be "flushed with red splotches" for quite a while after performing-even after he would "run through the shower" so he could meet his guests without them having to wait a long time for him to "cool down enough to be able to converse etc..." he said. And he would continue to sweat for a while even after showering.

People who check into and do jobs requiring observing and tracking people doing active and difficult jobs, physical as well as mental, have said that Elvis' body put out more energy and effort than most jobs requiring such strenuous exercise and that in his case, he was working his body and inner organs harder than one would if :

One were chopping timber with an axe, walking behind a plow and team,

Playing football, baseball, relay racing and mountain climbing, and this is only a few things they compared with what he did. They were concerned that he would suffer a heart attack or other organ failure as he was pushing his body so hard for that length of time. I don't know if he was told this;

Elvis did began to carefully plan, either after being on stage several minutes more moments of letting his body relax and rest, and catch his breath by choosing slower tunes, walking back and forth saying "I'm catching my breath now folks, so just watch me" and by joking and playing with the audience as he shook hands and kissed the waiting ladies.

The first two years of his live performances in Vegas were very active as he incorporated Karate into his movements. He wasn't one to "cut himself any slack" said one worried man watching his performances. He said, "I don't know how he can keep doing this-he's going to regret it later!" ( I don't think Elvis ever regretted a second he spent pleasing his audiences! )

Elvis knew about the necessity for providing his body with water when exerting physically; he had experienced dehydration during his early days as he "climbed up that shaky ladder" he said, of "fame an' fortune". But he didn't think about the physical abuse his body took during those times he was performing; even had he not moved, danced and exerted as he did during some songs, his heart, lungs and physical body was under stress due to his "just bein' on stage in front of audiences" he was told this by a college professor who apparently was trying to express concern for Elvis' well being. Elvis shrugged it off, saying he loved being on stage and had always put a lot of energy into singing, it was part of the show and "no body would come if it wasn't excitin' and made 'em feel good bein' there." He was right, but he failed to realize he was working too many shows; it was his job.

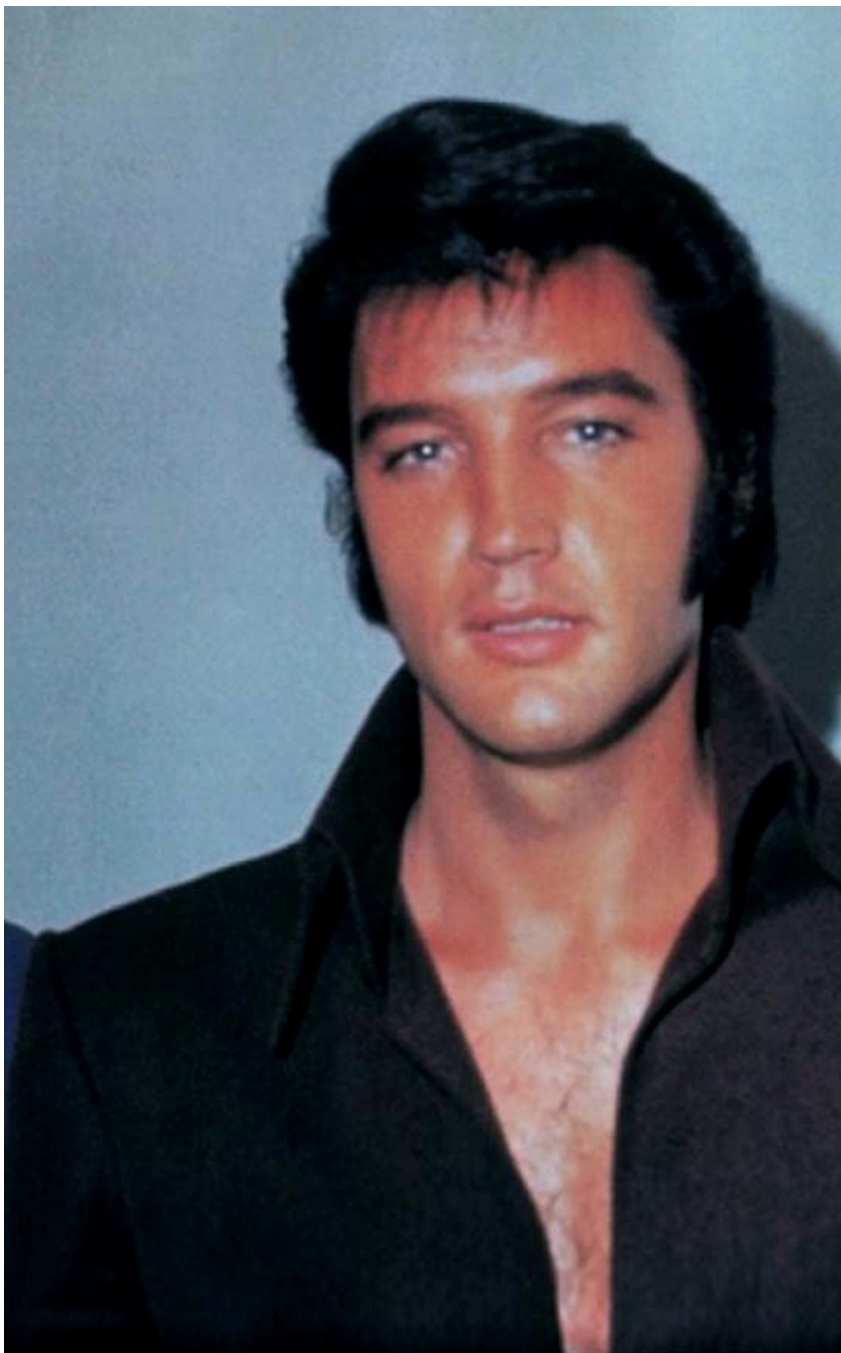
Today, and shortly after Elvis was gone, no entertainer "in their right mind" as said by a producer of huge production shows in Las Vegas, would do the type of shows two times a night for 30 days! It was mind boggling to think about when Elvis began doing it, and also going on long tours, doing up to 100 shows on one of them, in different cities! Elvis loved performing, but even he had to rest, recoup his strength and calm down his overworked

heart, mind and body. But he had too many “bosses” all of them wanting that money to roll in; so he was back out on the road way to often and for too long a run. One of his comments : “I’d like to do every city and state in the U.S., you know, even little places so those who’d like to see us but can’t make the drive across country to do it, could go. It’d be fun doin’ some smaller venues...closer to the people, I like being with ‘em.”

One of his favorite places to perform was Tahoe; the room was smaller and he could see the people and it was like “bein’ in a big livin’ room havin’ some fun with friends”. He had loved Las Vegas during the big opening of his back on stage career; after a while, several years, ups and downs with personal problems and then, new ownership of the International Hotel, he began to chafe at the bit. On top of that stress, he wasn’t feeling well physically, the problems within his body began to as he put it, “fight with me ever’ step of the way”. He was so amazed and grateful that his fans kept buying tickets, flying, taking buses and driving miles from home, to come see him in Las Vegas, which was the main venue for most. However, the tours around the country were also sold out, lines of people waiting to get any tickets that might be left over, or from someone wanting to sell their tickets! He was amazed, to the point of being overwhelmed with wonder and also, gratitude, because when he looked in the mirror in those last years of touring, he didn’t see the “guy I used to see; it’s like I don’t know that fool starin’ back at me...what happened? Gawd, what happened...”

Elvis: “I’m a human being...like all you folks; not better, maybe worse”, (Snicker) an’ I don’t like growin’ old either...gawd, it’s a bitch, ain’t it!” He got a lot of laughter and applause, with some very vocal denials of his “fallin’ apart” comments. A friend who was there taking photo’s said Elvis looked a lot happier after the audience “stood up, yelling how he was still young and handsome to them”.

His fans were family to him, he loved them, needed them and tried his best to please them. And they didn’t let him down that day, or any day after it- we sure won’t either!



Las Vegas, after a performance-his skin is flushed red...

## **1977-early summer conversation:**

*Wanda:* It sounds like you have company--so bye for now.

**Elvis:** Naw--don't-- Really, just me 'n Ginger 'n she went downstairs--don't have to go, do you?

*Wanda:* Oh, its late there--are you having dinner now?

**Elvis:** This time of day--no way--more like breakfast! (Snickers)

*Wanda:* I know that--just not thinking at the moment--It's been so muggy here, it seems later than it is, and you're earlier than we are--crazy time zones.

**Elvis:** Uh-huh--that's why I never change my schedule--get up by my inner clock much as possible. Jus' minute--hold on.

(He sounds like he's across the room, maybe at the doorway and whistles--as if calling the dog.) He says loudly, "Yeah, please bring me something cold to drink--some ice honey, thank you.

**Elvis:** Okay, sorry, had to get something

*Wanda:* Were you whistling for the dog?

**Elvis:** Uhhh--not really--why?

*Wanda:* I heard you whistling like you were--don't tell me, you were calling Ginger that way?

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Okay, won't.

*Wanda:* Elvis! That's not nice at all--good grief--she lets you!

**Elvis:** Lets me--uhhhh--what?

*Wanda:* Call her like she's a --dog!

**Elvis:** (Snickers, laughs and then whistles again--) like that--huh?

*Wanda:* I'd slap you silly---you are darn lucky she doesn't!

**Elvis:** Really-- (Snickers)--that'd be fun--nothin' like a little mad get 'in things hot 'n heavy.

*Wanda:* Good grief--I can't believe you do that! I thought snapping your fingers were the worst thing--but this takes its place! You are a chauvinistic pig!

**Elvis:** (Laughs loudly) Gawd--you think so-- (Giggles and laughs more) Oh Gawd--She comes back up 'um gonna tell her she's lookin' at one 'n see what she says!

*Wanda:* Oh for Pete's sake"--It's not funny! She must be nuts over you to put up with it!

**Elvis:** Yeah--nuts-- (Laughing) Lord, um gonna ask her that--'n tell her she's nuts--too-- (Giggling)

*Wanda:* Okay, that's it; I'm done here! You just enjoy being the "king of your hill top" because one of these days you're going to meet one who won't put up with you and you'll be head over heels and she'll walk all over you- and you'll deserve it!

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Oh gawd, I hope so--walkin' all over me in heels--yeah--kinda like that picture! (Giggling)



*Wanda:* Good-bye Mr. Presley! Have fun while she's wearing those blinders!

*Elvis:* (Laughing) Wait, don't hang up--um gonna call her- (He whistles like calling the dog again-only louder and longer-- (He's laughing)

*Wanda:* Are you quite finished?

*Elvis:* She's comin'--jus' minute--hear her answerin' me? (Giggles)

*Wanda:* I hear--good grief! Southern women must be so-so indentured!

*Elvis:* No, she don't wear dentures-- (Laughing) (Ginger comes in and asks something in such a sweet sounding voice. Elvis is laughing, and says something I can't understand and she says, "I brought some of these for you honey." He tells her to sit down, he has something to tell her and he's trying to stop giggling. She says, "What is it?" and laughs at him laughing. He says something I can't make out, she asks, "Who?" He says, "A lady on the phone told me I was a-a chauvinist pig 'cause I whistled at you--" He's laughing, she asks, "Who? Who?" He busts up laughing and says--. "I'm a pig 'n you're a-a---an owl--who-who-who!" He's laughing and so is she. (I hang up. It's hopeless. It was nice knowing they could laugh together; he sounded happy, for a while.)

### ***Memories---***

In the early 60's we lived near the beach and not that far from Bel Air, (Los Angeles area) with its section of upscale housing on lots with trees and bushes in the landscaping; the rolling hills provided fabulous views of L.A. When working on films Elvis lived there with his handpicked group of men, employed for various duties that went with protecting a celebrity of his stature and provided him with entertainment, football, motorcycling and conversation. He had a housekeeper/cook who "looked after him like he was family" and was there when he was present though most of his housekeepers had their own place and went home when their "shift" was finished. However, at Graceland there were continuous cycles of "help" 24/7 "in case "Mr. Elvis" needed something or wanted to eat.

Tucked in among the old growth trees, there were celebrities' homes though most of the Hollywood stars lived in Beverly Hills. Elvis liked Bel Air as it was not very far from the studios where he worked. A few times he called me if he knew I would be working as an assistant for a lawyer-but that wasn't often. On occasion he would call to speak with his lawyer/friend who would shut his door and spend time listening and laughing, loudly at times! A few times the calls were serious, especially during the years Elvis was separated from his wife, and then going through a divorce at Priscilla's request. When she took him back to court for more money, there were several calls to the lawyer- and no laughter.

Sometimes it seemed like there was an endless round of legal issues from the moment he became a huge success in Vegas, from the woman who filed a paternity suit against him, to people accusing him and his men of attacking and etc them, “crazies” who filed claims because they could, and others that were filed against his estate after his death. He needed good lawyers! The one I knew thought Elvis was “the salt of the earth!” And he said “They don't come any better than Elvis; he's not an imitation--he's for real!” (He sincerely meant it.)

**'74 – Called me at the office, very busy morning and he's “riled up”. I have to answer calls and take messages; he wants to say something right now!**

**Elvis:** You put me on hold- [curses]

W: I'm at work, clients come first.

**Elvis:** I'm a client--

W: This is a personal call--

**Elvis:** Maybe not, damn it.

W: Really--

**Elvis:** (Silence)

W: That's what I thought--so, what's up?

**Elvis:** (Silence)

W: Cat got your tongue--?

**Elvis:** (Curses)

W: Hold on--a client is calling.

**Elvis:** Sh--- (More cursing)

W: (Talking with client--maybe 45 seconds)

W: Okay, Elvis? Still waiting--

**Elvis:** Made me forget what I wanted now--damn it.

W: You're spoiled--he's in court today--but you know that.

**Elvis:** Called to talk to you--excuse me, you're busy--

W: It's busy on Mondays, but I have a minute or two--how are you?

**Elvis:** F-- up--what do you care? (Snarls his words.)

W: Okay, get it off your chest--

**Elvis:** No-no--you're right, you're workin' an' I'm not--

W: Is that pouting I hear?

**Elvis:** (Muttered curses)

W: I don't think he will call in until lunch-then it's right back in court-do you want me to have him call you if he has a minute? I'll tell him you called.

**Elvis:** You think I'm a spoiled--brat?

W: Yep, pretty spoiled.

**Elvis:** That hurts--'um not that bad.

W: You can be very bad Elvis--it's not your fault though, everyone caters to you; you know that. It's just the way your life has been for so long you--don't realize, I think.

**Elvis:** Gawd--'um always thinkin' of others so--so how's that being--spoiled? Jus' 'cause don't pick up after ma self or nothin'--that's their damn job--if I did it they wouldn't have a job 'n --'n no place to live--not like this!

W: Oh I get it--someone got their feelings ruffled and that's it-huh?

**Elvis:** Yeah--he let me have it good--'un I didn't do nothin' but ask 'em why wasn't doin' his job--left stuff ever where 'n didn't take care of things like before--can't find nothin' ma' stuff's screwed- musta left stuff some place-- It wasn't--good. He quit--'n so had daddy fire him--jus' so he can get a taste of -- of not havin' Elvis in his life--be a big letdown, let me tell you! Damn it--what's the matter with these "x-rated, fxxing" guys? They want to be here but they don't want to earn the right--it's a job for gawd sake--I pay 'em an' ever thing--nobody gets a free ride in life--nobody! I sure the hell don't!

W: I know Elvis; what else is going on...

**Elvis:** I-I-eh, would you do somethin' for me, it's important...eh...could you turn off the recorder, please. (The lawyer I worked for "automatically" recorded every incoming and outgoing conversation unless it was "client privileged conversation"; only then was it off.)

W: Sure...just a second... {He asked a favor, could I use my "court connections, to get information concerning a personal court matter; he said he'd be "grateful if you'd do this darlin', need to know what's gonna come up, an all to get ready for it." I told him I would; I did and it helped ease his mind and he didn't have to do something he dreaded doing. When he received the information, he was relieved and asked what he could do for me. I said, I'd like to have a tape of you playing the organ, anything you want-I know it will be great! He kind of chuckled and then said give me some time an' I will. He did; it *was* great!} (The information he needed did not involve the paternity suit he had been fighting legally; and had nothing to do with any of it. That "fight" went on for years, he spent quite a lot of money because he said he did not father that baby and he was not going to pay her lawyers a dime. He never did; and he was proven not to be the father; but she kept finding other lawyers who would "do anything for money" said Elvis, "even if they had to make somethin' up an lie.")

Elvis was used to everyone around him rushing to "make him happy" etc and he was impatient at times, didn't like having to wait long for anything; but he did try.)

I censored his colorful, descriptive angry words down in the phone transcription; he was fit to be tied; it was someone he "trusted" and some of his personal items were missing. Someone was doing a lot of gossiping; he had made it very clear *from the stage*- what he thought and how he felt about it, and what he would do if it didn't stop. He was not joking, dead serious and flat angry; he was told it was some "hotel employee" doing the talking--- It wasn't.]

*End of “Snippets”*

*I hope you enjoyed this “look” at Elvis.*

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I do not know who took the photograph, but - thanks! I think it was taken out from one of him posing with his karate do jo.

He delighted in Karate, said it gave him “stability of body, mind, heart and soul. He recommended it to everyone, at times keeping people who appeared interested (or not) “captive” explaining and demonstrating the “love of my life” in referring to the sport. I do not know who took this photo, but I thank them for doing so and for sharing with the world of fans. I asked him how he could wear those glasses and do Karate at the same time...he snickered, saying that he was “blind as a bat without ‘em” but that he didn’t wear them in combat or during training. He was thrilled that he had progressed to a point he called it, where he was “allowed” to instruct others. I thought this photo was a good choice to show him suited up and flashing that smile. I think it was taken from a photo of him with his “dojo” group. He spoke of learning how to mentally stop pain, from feeling pain and said that the human mind had the ability to “turn it off” and to stop bruising of the flesh. He wanted to improve his abilities mentally, that he could hypnotize himself but wanted to be better at “holding it” than he was. He could stick a pin into his arm and it would not bleed...I saw him do that; it was a pretty long sharp hat pin thing that he used. I wish I had taken the time, or made time to spend in his presence when he was “demonstrating” the techniques he spoke of...especially those regarding “mind over matter”.

When in his last months of life, he lamented that he couldn’t hypnotize himself as he used to be able to do, he couldn’t “hold it” because he said “too many things going wrong” with his health and the medications he had to take to “stay alive were getting in the way.” And he was in pain daily, couldn’t sleep without pain medications and he was on several medications for his many health problems. That he didn’t complain and was just taking “all those pills” according to his friends/employees it became a sort of “mantra” coming from them that he was “using to much” and “didn’t know what was going on” etc when in fact, Elvis was from 1974 on, slowly dying because his inner organs were not functioning normally and often not at all. He had debilitating headaches, felt ill and at times irrational because of lack of real sleep, and he didn’t know why or what was wrong. He was treated for symptoms, and not for the internal problems going on because the doctors at that time didn’t know themselves. And Elvis would not agree to letting anyone “cut me up just to see what’s there!” Like many people, surgery scared him more than the pain was hurting him. Elvis wasn’t perfect, as he would admit, but he tried to look good inspite of how he felt. He said, “My job is “lookin’ good”. And he’d laugh.

### **Thoughts and conclusions from Elvis---**

**“If you never walked in that man’s shoes, you can’t know his pain, joy or sorrows”; jus’ remember that when makin’ judgements.” Elvis, 1975**

**“Life’s full of trials and joys; we jus’ need to be a little slower sometimes to be able to figure out the trials, but the joys, they are all ‘round us. We get too self absorbed ‘n busy livin’ we miss out on a lot of the joys because they don’t always get noticed in our efforts to get the trials settled an’ out of the way. My little girl, Lisa Marie takes me by surprise ever time I see her smilin’ at me. Man, that smile is a real joy!”**

**“I always wanted children, havin’ a little baby, a daughter is a blessing I hope I can live up to. Man I duno...it was love at first sight!”**

He mentioned how humbled he felt when his tiny, hours old little girl took hold of his finger with her own tiny ones. He said it “broke my heart an’ shook me to my toes” and that he would never forget the moment, the intensity of emotions her little fingers gripping his “on purpose” he said in a hushed voice, “she looked me in the eyes, she held on tight”. I said, “She knows who you are, she’s heard your voice, laugh and everything before she was born-of course she knows you are her father.” He kind of mumbled, “I know, Lord God, I know!” He was crying, kind of laughing and happy at the same time....Elvis was full of love for his daughter and he gave his heart to her the day she was born.

She was he said, **“the light of my life, I could never tell you how much she means to me. Lord, with all I’ve been blessed and everything that has happened in my life, this little girl is the most precious and priceless that ever came to me. I am overwhelmed with wonder ever time she smiles at me!”** Lisa was just 7 months old when he said the above, and he never changed where she was concerned.

In later years, when he was feeling bad and didn’t know what to do, where to go and who to see to help with all the physical problems going on, he was

afraid she would not understand, that he in some way would frighten her. He said, “I don’t understand myself, how can I explain why I am sometimes not the daddy she wants me to be.”

Little Lisa was sitting outside his door waiting for him to come out, to get up and spend time with her. **He said, “I pray that she won’t be hurt when she is older and realizes that her daddy wasn’t perfect or even near it. You know, kids think they have perfect parents; it’s a shock when those perfect parents can’t get along or have problems that interfere in their ability to live up to the child’s view of them. I just hope she will know that I tried my best, I wanted to be a good father; God! I love her so!”**

**He said he was glad his child was a girl, adding “it would be too difficult for a boy child, with his father being Elvis Presley. Maybe bein’ a girl it won’t be so trying on her as she grows up. I got to keep my act together...so she won’t have to deal with my life runnin’ over her own hopes and dreams.”**

Excerpt from Lisa Marie: “They tried to make you look broken, but not while I am here!”

**1976 from “The Interview” and not published in: “We Remember, Elvis”**  
*Revised 2006, (Amazon books)*

**Elvis:** Never did drink much; don’t like most stuff like that an’ too, seen enough of that in clubs an’ among musicians...singers also. Fallin’ down drunk ain’ funny.

**Wanda:** No- I’m glad you don’t, it also ages people way too fast, as smoking does they say.

**Elvis:** Naw...seen some pretty young lookin’ people drinkin’ an’ smokin’ – they just didn’t smell very good, ya know.

**Wanda:** Well, I’ve never seen a good looking drunk!

**E:** (Snickers) Me neither, really.

**W.** So your family isn’t a drinkin’, carousin’ kind of people?

**E:** Where’d you hear they were?



*W:* I didn't...it's a joke...I'm not very funny...

*E:* Not funny...really? Eh...my family- some of 'em drink an' made moonshine...grandma an' her family made good wine an' other kinds of stuff also. When I was little some of my cousins had some moonshine goin' ya know, big barrel of sour mash an' we got into it an' drank some of the stuff...man, I was sleepy! (Laughs) We couldn't hardly stand up an' was floppin' 'round tryin' when we got caught. Momma waited 'til I slept it off, then she whupped my ass good! Never went near the stuff 'gin, tell ya that!

*W:* You'd get whippings, huh?

*E:* (Laughs) If I needed it, you bet! Momma'd usually be the one...few times it was ma daddy an' he wasn't nice 'bout it-took a belt to me a time or two... (Laughs) but it was 'cause I needed it-knew better'n did it anyway.

*W:* What was the thing you did that caused a whipping that you remember the most?

*E:* Wasn't really a whippin'; one time supposed to be in church 'n I was most of it-but then told 'em I had a real bad headache and momma said go sit outside in the shade. (Laughs) 'cept when I went out... See, me an' my girl friend figured out we'd do that an' not have to stay so long in church-see. (Laughs) We were outside, behind the buildin' 'n daddy come lookin' for me an' he caught us back there.

*W:* For that you got whipped?

*E:* No, for what I said to 'em 'bout catchin' us an' what he said-we wasn't doin' nothin' much. He got a little bit eh...angry an' popped me in the mouth. (Laughs) Momma was real mad at him then; man, he liked to had to leave home on account of her.

*W:* Really...did she see it-or just the results?

*E:* She didn't like havin' to pay the doctor to stitch up my lip an' too, broke off my front tooth –a little chip; it showed some'n she was worryin' it would turn black or fall out or something. An' we didn't have money for teeth an' all. Never even been in a dentist's office 'til started havin' hit records an' then when they was wantin' me to make a-a..eh... appearances an' all, my chipped off tooth didn't look...pretty ya know. So Sam-eh Mr. Phillip's an' another fella had my teeth capped in front-glad too man, 'cause I hated to smile with 'em lookin' like that. (He later told me that a dentist's nurse came to school to see the kids teeth; his were in good shape because his mom had

taught him to brush them so they “would not rot out of ma head and I wouldn’t be able to eat”.)

*W:* So you had to have your lip sewn up-that must have been some slap!

*E:* Back of his hand really, caught me jus’ right an’ my teeth split it -not his fist or nothin’. Never hit me like that ‘gin; not one for doin’ that...really-- neither of ‘em.

*W:* Well it’s a good thing; you have nice lips and teeth too. The caps don’t show.

*E:* Thank you...do have a scar, on the bottom lip, inside an’ not so it shows any, an’ had these teeth capped several times...they don’t last forever, ya know. (While making a movie he choked on one of those caps and had to go to the hospital to have it removed. He said it “liked to scared me silly!” He was referring to having them poking around his larynx and vocal cords.)

*August, 1967 the daddy to be; not published other than ELC website*

**Wanda:** So what are you doing to get ready for that new baby? Building a wing onto Graceland?

**Elvis:** Oh-fixing rooms-nursery an’ all; be with us at first. We got a little bed-basket kind of thing-bassinet is that it -that will sit beside the bed and a little chest with a fold over top for changin’ the baby and so forth. Priscilla does all that-shows me pictures and stuff an’ asks me-but she picks better’n me. You know me, bigger is better (Laughs) an’ I’m not much into baby things. She wants me to know stuff- I’m learn’n - slow but it will be okay.

*Wanda:* Sounds like you’ll do okay- you *are* learning, Daddy.

**Elvis:** Gawd-can you believe it-so soon! Man, I just got used to bein’ called Mister...and now Daddy! Lord-my heart!

*Wanda:* Yeah-next thing is gray hair – or baldness.

**Elvis:** NO! Don’t even say baldness! Not me! Gawd-not me! Tell you a secret man, jus’ ‘tween us, I’d have lots of gray hair if didn’t color it! No kiddin’, daddy did in his early thirties an’ now I’m the same!

*Wanda:* Really! Well, guess it’s soon all over-huh?

**Elvis:** Hell no! Goin’ gray won’t change anything-but have to dye all the roots more often now-even my chest hair’s turnin’. That is terrible; have to dye it too-

*Wanda:* Oh no- You don’t!

**Elvis:** (Laughs) gonna blow my image here -but I do -have for a while. Vain-I’m too vain! Cillia used water proof mascarea and showed me how it’d work, so that was

okay. But then she thought I shouldn't do it-she didn't like the girls' think'n I had so much hair on my chest, ya know. Silly -huh?

*Wanda:* No, I see her point being you are HIM.

**Elvis:** Oh gawd! I am-huh? (Laughs) No way 'round it; damn it! Ah well-the perks are somethin'-yeah!

*Wanda:* See THAT response is why she'd worry, Elvis.

**Elvis:** She knows I'm faithful as the sunrise. (Snickers) No one comes close to her man-not even close!

*Wanda:* You still look...

**Elvis:** Naw, not like before-lookin' is okay, it's touchin' that starts things. (Laughs) An' I'm forbidden to touch!

*Wanda:* Uh-huh-

**Elvis:** Really. I am straight down the line married now, about to be a daddy an' nothin' else. Not anymore. An' hell, I like it- I'm off that fxxxin' hook!

*Wanda:* Yeah-the truth at last, off the hook is much less hassal-huh?

**Elvis:** You got it sugar! Wheww, what a relief!

*Wanda:* So when is the big day?

**Elvis:** Sometime in February they say-let's hope-or else I'm cooked!

*Wanda:* Oh-yes-you may be-they come early sometimes.

**Elvis:** Shhh----don't want it to hear that! Has to be 'bout then-musta been the first couple days---happened so quick. I mean, you know-she knew so fast an' all.

*Wanda:* Did you do what you planned?

**Elvis:** What...did I plan?

*Wanda:* With roses and the music and lights....

**Elvis:** (Giggles) Oh that-thought it was somethin' else-yeah. See she was talkin' to her mother an' while she was, got the rose petals out-had 'em under the bed, plus some bouquets in the room. An' put them all over the sheet an' some on the floor so she could walk on 'em an' covered the bed up so she'd find 'em when she folded it down. An' then left my clothes layin' on it like usual an' went in to change to, you know. Gawd, I was nervous then...It hit me then an' I'm shakin' like a kid or somethin'! I mean, Gawd, what if-if-well, you know...could happen! An' that'd be a damn shame!

*Wanda:* Sounds normal to me...she would understand-women do, you know.

**Elvis:** She might of but I didn't know for sure-I mean we been close an' I-I had ma hands full many a time...sayin' no...to...sex ya know, Damn I'm glad I waited 'til now...jus' tween you an me honey, it-it was so-so special, kinda like prayin' or somethin'...so-so right and so much love between us. Gawd, she was beautiful---had her hair down an' that little gown. Oh Lordy, it's no wonder we got pregnant -I waited so long for her, I mean 4 months is hell of a long time doin' what I do! (Laughs)

*Wanda:* Four months...oh, you mean since the official engagement?

**Elvis:** Yeah, promised her, nothin'...ya know, I'd wait for her-'n she tried hard to change my mind; damn it-lots of cold showers 'n lots of runnin' an' karate and gawd knows, I kept my word. We sure didn't think we'd have a baby right away though-didn't want her on the pill. Damn things, I think they cause problems for young women an' their babies when they have 'em- one of these days it'll come out an' people will see that. Too strong or somethin'...they jus' are testin' them now -on women! She's too young for those, an' I-I'm allergic to most stuff they have for that-even some -rubbers have stuff in 'em, did you know that? Not good for nobody 'n guys like me, damn things are awful...had to see a doctor a time or two 'for I wised up!

*Wanda:* Yes...

**Elvis:** I never -but found out first time used one of the damn things, liked to itched to death!

That was the last time too!"

(Years later, after their divorce he confided that "she...we, me 'n her decided not to use nothin' the first night because she said it was a "safe time" -if there were such a time. Because that decision gave them their beloved little girl, he believed it was God's will that she be born at that time in his life. He had then the time to be "jus' a daddy until he started doin' live shows again...an' then time changed a lot of things..."

*Wanda:* Good grief-you'd tell me anything!

**Elvis:** Oh sorry, I mean, guess that was kinda personal...

*Wanda:* Yes-but not unusual...

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Oh -anyway, we were kinda surprised. She knew... (A few weeks or so) 'fore she told me-wanted to be sure first, ya know. Gawd, I was stunned-man-and so-so-I mean, gawd she was pregnant! An' I did it!

*Wanda:* (Laughing) Oh good grief!

**Elvis:** No- I meant in a good way; I was scared an' so happy. Always wanted a family, kids and now here it is-man. My whole life changed jus' like that! (Snaps his fingers)

*Wanda:* Who did you tell first?

**Elvis:** Daddy 'n we both cried. Then went to grandma an' she an' I went to momma's grave at 2 am an' I told her there. I was so happy gawd, it felt so right. (He sounded sad suddenly, almost whispering)

*Wanda:* Well, things are good now-you're on your way to that family, Daddy.

**Elvis:** Yah (Sighs) jus' hope nothing goes wrong is all. Honey, please pray for us, will you?

*Wanda:* I will Elvis, for the three of you.

**Elvis:** Thank you sugar; this has been the best year of my life so far---damn time too!

*Wanda:* It will only get better Elvis; you deserve some happiness and personal joy in life.

**Elvis:** Sure hope things keep goin' good -just wish I could do somethin' different working; but with the baby an' all, man, gonna need some down time to get used to that!

**Wanda:** You're going to just love having a baby-they grow up really fast and you can relive your childhood again!

**Elvis:** (Laughs) lookin' forward to that! You know me an' toys-got to have my toys. You know can remember the first real toy ever had-it was a little carved wooden car with spool wheels that turned if I pushed down hard 'nuff. Grandpa made it for me an' painted it too. Sure liked that little trunk-had a flat bed kinda an' I'd haul dirt on it. Momma got on me good for makin' tracks in the floor---it was a dirt floor...we never had a floor in that place, kind of a shed like room for a little while we lived in. Then we lived with my Aunt Delta an' her family but it was real crowded an' us kids slept on two beds-kinda wall to wall in that little space. Then nobody wanted to sleep with me 'cause I wasn't sleepin' much so momma an' me slept on the floor some so the rest of 'em could sleep. Guess then was when I was havin' nightmares- 'bout somebody takin' momma from me an' all that. Daddy was...was gone an' it was just me 'n her. We didn't have anythin' much an' daddy was gone... 'N sometimes it seemed like a dream an' I was afraid to sleep maybe-don't know. Just know my baby is gonna have roots, a home an' never be without momma an' daddy. Don't want my kids' havin' nightmares about-'bout losin' ever' thing an' ever' body--- Gawd, I pray nothin' bad ever happens to my baby... An' Lord, nothin' happens to 'Cilla -or our child. Wheww, let's get off 'n this subject quick!

**Wanda:** So your next movie is with Bill Bixby-is that right?

**Elvis:** Yeah-goin' to do the songs this week-if they get them ready, that is -kinda hard to write stuff for a load of sh...eh, well, that's what it's been, stinkin' an' all! Gawd!

**Wanda:** Who's your co-star?

**Elvis:** **Nancy Sinatra!** Man, can you believe that? (He sings "*These Boots Are Made for Walkin'*") Remember that?

**Wanda:** Yep-I like that song...she did it well and she looked cute doing it.

**Elvis:** She's a nice lady-not like you'd expect of his daughter, ya know.

(Nancy Sinatra gave a baby shower for Priscilla and Elvis-she asked him if she could; he was pleased and very surprised.)

**In speaking about his past "affairs"** "...Man, I spent a lot of time not makin' a woman pregnant...an' now I won't haff ta worry 'bout it...Gawd! I hope ever' thing works!" They had not married yet-but were talking about where and when. Elvis wanted kids; several of them, a family he'd say; he also happily said that Priscilla wanted children.

Elvis and his new bride, his friends with their family and one of the younger guys who had also recently been married, all had a kind of “honeymoon” vacation at the Circle G Ranch just across the Mississippi border from Tennessee. Elvis said after they had to get back to work, that it was “a great vacation, riding horses, playing at bein’ cowboys and then sittin’ around the fire talking about things” he said he felt like it was a “little piece of heaven sent down for us to enjoy” and that it couldn’t have been any better. He truly was being honest when he said he was “grateful ‘n gonna have to spend some time on my knees lettin’ my Lord Jesus know how I feel. Man, it – it-I- we- we were so blessed to have that time an’ be a family, you know. Belonging somewhere, with somebody...that’s a great feelin’ and I want that, I want that always. Cilla an’ me, realize this is what it’s all about...closeness, trust and lovin’ one another in spite of all the things that go on in our lives...we got each other...an’ that’s what family is about. I jus’ got to keep this in our life, not let it get crowded out by-by whatever comes along. It’s something I got to do an’ up to me to do it. I’m gonna do my best to keep havin’ good times together.”

And he did try, there were trips skiing, snowboarding, mountain trails and cabins they could share. Cooking outdoors, sitting around fires and just “talking” and then those movie days came to an end...and he had to decide what to do...how to keep the money coming in and his family together. He said he was not signing for any more movie deals period; so it was up to him to figure out how he was going to keep being able to pay the salaries and keep his homes and life style. And he was scared. He said he was going to “spend some time down on ma knees, ‘cause God’s stood by me before, he ain’t gonna let me fail after all the work he’s put into makin’ me what I am...so I got to let him know I’m willing to listen, an’ do whatever he’s got in mind. I sure as hell can’t do it alone”

***This was underlined in red ink in the 1951 Bible; the last entry was in his printing-his hand written prayer for help is the last line, dated 1967***

**Psalms 40, Vs. 9 – 17** “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is written within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and the truth from the great congregation. Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. For innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that say unto me,

Aha- aha! Let those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee; let such as love thy salvation say continually, the Lord be magnified. But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me; thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. *“I ask in Jesus’ name; thank you O Lord, my God. Amen EP ‘67”*

**1968—**

*Elvis: “I’ve been kinda busy, the films are a little different...I mean more adult content guess is the word; but it’s comin’ to an end soon, thank God! I had enough of the...the runaround sh...t goin’ on. Got so can’t count on anybody but myself an’ a few...people who’ve been a help in tryin’ to get some ideas for something’ else. Man, it’s gonna get rough, I’ve got to get something’ goin’ that’s gonna work for me an’ – an be exciting again. Guess I’m jus’ flat assed bored silly with it all. Ya know, I been doin’ this for so long it’s like a- a one long drawn out nightmare that’s got worse as it went along. Man I never thought it’d be like this. Whew.... Thank the good Lord it’s comin’ to an end finally”.*

After he had done the “Singer Special,” he spoke of having prayed for guidance and for someone to come and help him find a way to keep “things together for all of us.” (His family and those who counted on him) I didn’t record those few conversations, he wasn’t calling and I was not calling him, he had just been married a while, they had a new baby and he was busy, with the family he’d always wanted, and winding down his movie contracts. I do remember that he read a verse from the Bible to me, and that he had been having conversations with “some people” (he did not say who at this time) about maybe doing a live show or television appearances again, and he said he was nervous thinking about singing before a “real audience, people who pay to come see me perform...I- I- I- gawd...can’t hardly talk about it!” He said he was looking for answers in “my Bible; God has been so good to me, this can’t be all there is for me; I want to do something’ that makes me happy...and other people also.” And he asked me to pray for guidance for him, that he would find a way; he recited the following verse, first saying: “This is my vow—”

***1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, Vs 15, King James Bible:*** “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

He always tried to do his very best for his fans; sometimes he said the place or the audience had a “different vibration” and sometimes it would not “jive with” his efforts and he would “feel the differences from crowd to crowd”. He said he tried to use that feeling coming from the audiences; it helped him perform and sing for them better. When he couldn’t get things going, it bothered him and he would try harder to

“connect” and usually by half way or so, it would change so that he knew he was doing “my job” for them. Often he changed songs in mid show, sometimes completely doing different songs; therefore his band had to be at the ready for those quick changes of mind moments. He said he “hired the best in the business” and he meant it. He tried to keep the same members but he said, “People got lives, things happen” and he would replace whoever with the best he could find that was available. Piano players changed most often, but Elvis’ tour schedules were not always available when players would be, some were working for other performers and could not “up and leave them for me” even though he was ELVIS and he seldom was turned down unless the party felt an obligation to keep a previous engagement.

A few times Elvis couldn’t get someone he wanted to work for him; often because they were afraid they wouldn’t be able to please him, to learn his materials on such short notice. He liked to keep the same people working for him, and didn’t want to change “horses in mid stream” or “mess with the vibe we got goin’ now. If it ain’t broke, we ain’t gonna go tryin’ to fix it!” And yet he could change things right in the middle of a show if he “felt the need” to do it. Everyone else up there had to be ready to switch quickly; they learned to keep their eyes on him, and be ready for “anything” according to his musicians and backup singers. Those singers were often singled out for solo performances to show off their talents- and usually they had no idea he was going to “put them on the spot...and let the spotlight highlight their talents” said Elvis who said they could “let their little light shine” but he’d have to “make ‘em have the confidence to do it by asking.” Of course, they couldn’t say no- to him? He was well aware of that- and used it to give them “nerve to stand up and stand out as the superb performers they are.” said Elvis.

He liked to have the same musicians playing behind him all the time, but it was hard to arrange schedules except when he was booked into Las Vegas, or had a regular, set touring schedule. That didn’t happen after the first couple of years-so he had his lead guitarist James Burton and a few other back ground singers on a kind of tentative retainer to help ensure they would be available. To have his own group was a dream come true, Elvis said, and having the same ones on stage with him, helped him have confidence and that made him “do better”.



Elvis was professional, but sometimes he would “mess up something” he said, and that was a true confession; his band of musicians and singers and the orchestra was well rehearsed and when he “messed up” they could quickly “cover” or “follow” his rapid change of plans after rehearsing, rehearsing and rehearsing with him; after a couple of months working on the stage with him, they were very good, sometimes quickly “second guessing” his intentions. He would get a kick out of that! And he always said, “I got the best in the business on stage-so workin’ with me, even when I ain’t sure what I’m gonna do next---(Snickers) they’re on it so fast it looks like we planned it! Gawd, it’s a wild ride bein’ “him” lordy, lordy!” (He laughs)

He didn’t make it easy for them sometimes, clowning around, making aside comments trying to break them up, asking them to sing unexpectedly and changing his routine list, moving songs up or taking some out. But nearly every person on those stages say today, they would gladly make changes in their life just to be able to work with him again...and they mean that! They also say they have never experienced the same type of excitement and suspense working with any other performers; nothing compared to being on stage with ELVIS-one man said, “even when he was “not feeling good, he still made it fun and we had as good a time as the audience; he was born to be ELVIS and he made us all love it too.”

Yes, he did love being Elvis; he just could never get it “wraped around ma brain” he commented, and yet since he WAS Elvis he used it to do as much good as he could via his music, example and generosity to young and old alike...regardless of race, religion or station in life. Toward the last months of his life I tried to tell him that I personally, had never met anyone whose heart and mind was so open to other human beings, and that I admired him for what he had done with his life. He was quiet, but I could hear him trying to keep me from knowing that he was struggling not to cry. I quickly changed the subject by asking about his coming tour.

**Sketches used in this book and on the cover are done by Zey, a young lady from Turkey.**

**Some photos & sketches have blank back pages so anyone who would like them to frame, can remove them from this manuscript when printed out and not lose any part of the main text.**



## ***Celebrities, Guests and friends, galore...***

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

I wanted to put a listing of “celebrities and friends” names, but there were so many that I might have overlooked and left out as ***THERE WERE*** so many friendships Elvis formed during all of his time as an Entertainer and Movie Star—Rather than accidentally leave anyone off that list, those I have mentioned in this book have their names “highlighted” in order to help anyone looking, to find them.

### ***Elvis said: “I meet friends---everywhere”-***

People want to be friends, treat them nice, and let them help you do some thin’ an’ they’ll be your friend for life-- It’s not what I am as an entertainer that counts; it’s what I am as a person, what I do with my life while here. Did I help those in need, was I a good friend, did I give back respect and love to those I come across regardless of their position in life, or their importance. Life *is* love ---in all its multiple aspects and we are the continuing symbol of that love because we are alive. So do good to your fellow man and woman, because what you do is what you are –in so many ways; try to remember *who* you are- not what you *have become* because of what you do to earn a living. You never know, the next person you meet might be an “angel” sent to give you a blessing. So listen to the common, the poor and the humble because *God is watching*, an’ might have sent that person you’re about to walk away from, for an important reason- don’t miss out just because somebody isn’t dressed as nicely as you’d like, or maybe is down on their luck. Ya never know man, God can be sneaky, keep that in mind in dealin’ with folks; they all are human, jus’ like you an’ me but maybe they got just the thing you been lookin’ for ‘n you’d never know by ignoring them. Best to figure out their needs first for makin’ a judgment, they might be just what you been lookin’ for-a friendship that lasts.”

*Those words are as true today as when spoken by him some 40 years ago.*

***St. John 16, Vs. 12 & 13 & 17.*** “*This is my commandments, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friend. These things I command you, that ye love one another.*”

***Vs. 16:*** *in part as he read it: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you-”*

## ***ELVIS – FACE TO FACE-the book***

***Written by Wanda June Hill – and a few friends who will always  
Love  
Elvis Presley.***

***Because we want to share our memories with the world of people, young and old, to allow them to know the guy we knew and loved so much. His music lives on through technology and here within- the memory lives on between the pages of this book for all time. It is a part of his legacy, left for his future fans – and there will always be many of those, because he was one of a kind and cannot be replaced or forgotten.***

***Elvis Presley was a great American Entertainer and he was a gracious and loving friend, father and husband.***

***This book is written for him – and for you.***

Front and back cover sketches are by Zey, from Turkey

# **ELVIS– FACE TO FACE**

*BY*

*Wanda June Hill and a Few Friends*

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**Printed in the  
United States of America**

# ELVIS - FACE TO FACE

## Foreword

When we compiled the book ***We Remember, Elvis*** in 1978 it was during a time of great stress, having just lost him and with all the “stories” coming out, told by his male “friends and employees”. At that time we wanted to defend our opinion of the man we knew, the man we felt had been betrayed. Ours was the first book to come out after his death, with the exception of one “light hearted story” done by a woman who worked as a secretary at Graceland for a short while and Ed Parker, Elvis' friend and karate instructor had one out the same time as ours. We two were the only “voices” countering the salacious things streaming the air waves around the world in print and “live” interviews; we *had to do it*, for Elvis.

So many things are still being said about Elvis Presley, as a man, as an entertainer and as a husband and father. And the majority of people across the land and around the world still believe his death was drug related, that he “killed himself due to his addiction”. In writing this book, I have tried to bring his words to tell his story via what he had to say; in doing so it will allow those who are his fans today, and also for those who will be his fans tomorrow and beyond, share the guy we knew and loved. He was one of a kind, a gracious and kind gentleman, an exciting and talented singer, and a super charged and electrifying entertainer on every stage he ever put foot upon. He was also greatly misunderstood much of the time because he was unique, as most outstanding people are. I hope that in these pages you will find the man behind all of those descriptive words, because he was very human, and very humane in his everyday life. “Normal” he would say, “I'm just a regular guy, trying' to do the best I can. Normal really, I'm just a-a normal human being--doing a different kind of job than most people.” In reading this book you find that he was indeed, more “normal” than anyone would guess, and he had physical frailties that he kept secret, so that *he could be* ELVIS for his fans that he loved and appreciated with an open heart. He said many times, “With out them, man I'd be nothin'! Bless their hearts, they never let me down!”

I have had many requests to re-publish “***We Remember, Elvis***” and it happened in 2006 via *Amazon Books*. So many people wanted me to tell more about him, to let them share in those memories. I'm “getting up there” now and while I can, I am going to do that. Luckily, I was good at keeping notes, jotting things down as soon after as I could and too, I had the advantage of transcripts from the interview he found time for in 1976 –77 and a few taped conversations over a period of nearly 14 years. Elvis knew he was being taped-most of the time - I do admit that there were a few times I didn't remind him, but he wouldn't have been any different had I done so, he was just that honest and trusting;

he *knew* I wouldn't "hurt him" by exposing him via releasing anything he might tell me. I have been *selective* in revealing his thoughts and feelings and held back some, especially what I feel are those very private comments that he would not want revealed as they would serve no real purpose or intent today.

Some people who knew him say he was egotistical, self-serving without regard for the feelings of others. I differ with that statement because here was a man who constantly gave away things, ranging from money to jewelry and cars, to his time and attention and did this with anyone, male or female, regardless of race, religion, station in life---some of them he might have met only once, some he only heard or read about. He kept the same people with him that he knew in his youth, his trusted friends and employees who were treated through his career, to the high life, going places they'd never be without him, having things they'd never have, doing things for fun, trips, traveling the country expense free and being Elvis Presley's men etc.. He paid them perhaps not what *they felt* they were worth, but they received so much in favors, gifts, vacations and just being a part of the "Elvis Presley Train". He didn't have to do that; he could have hired professional bodyguards, could have cut them all off at the beginning, but instead he tried to keep them, even his early musicians until he had no other recourse but to follow instructions himself. He carried insurance policies for his employees, and was "medical insurance" for his "friends" and some of their relatives; he would have cut off his arm to help them if that was what it took at the time. And he didn't expect anything but loyalty and for them to do their job. He said very few negative things to me about his many employee friends, mostly lamenting, "Why God, can't they just be happy? Just want everyone to be happy, to enjoy all of this while it's here. Lord, what is it that keeps things so---so screwed up all the time?" Usually he found "excuses" for their behavior and he often felt guilty for being "the reason" for so many being divorced -that his career and the demands on everyone involved was "destroying ever' thing". He said, "If I don't work, they don't eat!" *That was a true statement.* So Elvis took that "train" on the road, making it all happen for everyone-- He had hundreds, perhaps thousands of people working in the background of his career days, many of them never met him personally, but were paid to keep his name and image before the public. There were hundreds of people who worked on and in his films, and during the "slow down" in the film business it was Elvis' movies that kept studios and actors working when all else had just about "dried up". His recordings kept companies busy pressing records and shipping, record stores looked forward to his new "hits" for the same reason...sales. And then he did the *Singer Special* (Comeback Show) and his "little light" became a raging flame in Las Vegas...and helped to "save" that town...Las Vegas officials have publicly given him this credit in past years. Yet Elvis was scared half silly thinking he had "to fill that show room twice a night ...gawd!" He filled it-and thousands of arenas around the United States, going to places no one had ever played before-he was the first entertainer ever to do huge stadiums, beginning with the Livestock Show in Texas...he filled it 8 times-top to bottom! And



said he was the “biggest “bull-sh-t” there”...he was scared, said he prayed for help, asked God to “help me Lord”. He didn’t believe he could draw that many people...and he hated to play to empty seats...

**“Elvis- Face to Face”** is about the Elvis I knew, my friend in spite of who he was; it is about the times I was “face to face”. A *very few times* considering they were spread over nearly 15 years: at his homes in Bel Air, Palm Springs and in Las Vegas and a couple of times when he was filming a movie. Things that I didn’t detail as much in *We Remember, Elvis* in 1978-80 mainly because I was having a very difficult time talking to strangers about him; after all, for years I seldom spoke his name except among family, and friends most of whom we met because of and through knowing him. It was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do---it felt kind of like betrayal to me, but I had to do it, all the trash coming out, I had to do it for him in those days. And with this last effort, finish the job I began -standing up for him against the many untruthful, exaggerated, and in some cases, downright vindictive statements made about him, especially concerning the last few years of his life.

Persons, who have read my first book and/or the revision of it done in 2006, might find some sections a sort of “duplication” as in writing the second book, it is necessary to mention some parts similar to the first editions in order to further detail events *and bring* the reader into those moments. I hope these apparent “duplications” won’t be a deterrent to anyone’s reading experience.

In writing “*Elvis- Face to Face*” I’ve tried to recall as much as I can about those times, the way he looked, what he said and did in response to people around him. I have forgotten some things; I “picked the brain” of friends who were a part of those times to try to get it right, to remember as much as we possibly could; it’s been nearly 33 years but we’ve tried to do our best. I’m sure there are other people who spent time with him who remember him differently. Elvis tried to be what each person wanted him to be, what they *needed* him to be, and he tried to relate on their level when he could. As a result of that concern multi-views of Elvis have unfolded. Time has passed, but as I told him—he is “burned onto my brain forever”. He is forever a part of the cosmic memory of the Universe and he will never be forgotten as long as we who lived on Earth with him remember those days---and get those memories written for others to read and know about Elvis Presley, the young man who became known as the “king of rock ‘n roll”.

**Note:**

It is my firm belief that *everyone who had the chance to meet Elvis, see him perform live, work with him on stage or in movies, and those who were lucky enough to be his friends for a short time or for years*, all have a duty to remember, to put in writing their memories so that those younger persons, and those not yet born can know why Elvis

Presley was and will be important in the history of music for all time. Through reading our memories, they can know who Elvis Presley was and what he represented to our culture and our World. I hope they will enjoy reading about “our Elvis”.

There are within these pages things that Elvis said about his belief in God and also some passages from a **1951 King James Bible** he had used for years. There is a date “’69” written in red ink on the cover page and many sections throughout he had underlined, and most of that done in red ink; he gave us that Bible in 1976 along with a more modern version Bible with a “study guide” for Jimmie’s birthday. In relating some of his comments, that show how he thinks and what he believes, I have gone through his 1951 Bible and put those passages underlined by him that relate to how *he believes and what he says* about things in this manuscript. I found these verses to be very enlightening, and endearing because they meant so much to him, and they are things that he lived and practiced every day he was with us. I thought he would like to share these because he delighted in discussing and sharing the **Word of God** with anyone who would listen.

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***“I wasn't anything special--just a kid growin' up--***

**Elvis:** “You know, I wasn't anything special, just a kid growin' up in Memphis--comin' from Tupelo where I was born- we weren't even “poor folks”, man we mostly didn't have much at all an' everyone we knew was in the same place as we were. I never thought much about what I was to do “when I grew” up ya know, (Laughs) but I liked music--we all did- my family- had relatives that played instruments, guitars an' a banjo or two. We went to church an' I liked singing gospels; way back then it was something I heard quite often and it felt good, ya know. Liked the gospels with some beat to them, 'cause made me feel something; I think music moves the-the soul-good music and even some bad music can stir up some feelings with a lot of power behind them. Music is the language of the Universe – it touches us all in ways- different and yet the same, all over this world.

I never thought 'bout bein' a singer much, it was way beyond my reasoning at that time- sure liked singing but didn't do much of it really. A few times at school an' it got me attention so I did it some more (Laughs). I didn't really think that first record I did was any good, just did it for momma and that's the truth, really. Then I went and did a couple more on account of what Mr. (Sam) Phillips said to me- it wasn't that he thought I could do any good- he just happened to be lookin' for the right kind of voice and he thought I might have it--turns out with some help and a little practice, guess he was right.

Scared me man, when my record was goin' to be played on the radio; way past my reasonin' ability at the time – get 'in air play--well that, Mr. Phillips said was – was like grabbin' a snow flake long enough to look at it before it melted! And the first thing off the wall---my record was on the air! Too nervous to be anywhere to hear it--didn't want to hear nobody puttin' it down, ya know. An' then here come momma and daddy in there lookin' for me! Talk 'bout bein' confused – I surely was, wanting to know why he would want me over there, and what happened? Momma said, they want you to come over to the radio station, they're getting calls wantin' your record played-he's playing it over 'n over! That – that was the beginning - It's been a trip! Lord – lord, if I live to be a 100 – still gonna be like--some kind of--dream! Don't want to wake up! (Laughs)

Yah ma girlfriend was sittin' with me somewhere- think she went to get somethin' an' come back an I'd moved or somethin'--ya know, can't really remember that much- the other sorta of run it over 'n I don't remember much other'n goin' to the station an' being scared 'cause he was gonna interview me on the air! So nervous couldn't hardly swallow an' he's gonna ask me questions-- but it went okay-'cause I didn't know when it was goin' on! (Laughs) Seein' I was so nervous, he sorta did it sneaky-'un it worked.”

“Man, gawd, never in all my days can I figure--figure out why--why me--like--like gawd--can't think of nothin' it – it's even sorta --like-this--Lord, lord--oh God--lord!”

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*Wanda:* Dreams can come true--even if you don't recall them.

*Elvis:* *Who said that?*

*Wanda:* I heard it somewhere--a movie I think--an' old one.

*Elvis:* *A dream--it was in a dream--*

*Wanda:* No--

*Elvis:* *No--I mean, it was in my dream-- somebody was sayin' it--*

*That's weird! Gawd--isn't it?*

### **[Phone conversation from 1970 – after Vegas engagement]**

In this excerpt Elvis has received a phone call on another phone line, he doesn't want to take the call, one of his men tells him who it is; he doesn't quite recognize the caller but thinks he should and ever polite, he speaks to her. I can hear his conversation but not hers.]

*“Hello? (Elvis answers)*

*Yeah, it's me--.*

*Eh--where did we meet?*

*Oh, well--.how's the weather back there?*

*You did--.*

*I did--eh--you're living here now--.the whole family?*

*Eh --lots been happenin' lately - been kinda busy.*

*Oh, well, eh---I'm goin' to let you talk to Joe, he can tell you what's comin' up; hope to see you in Vegas - later on maybe-- Thank you very much--.Bye-bye.*

*{Speaks quietly to "Joe": "Get her number an' address - see she knows when we'll be doin' Vegas 'gin, okay. --met her at the fxxxx gate -- Wants to know when we gonna be over there 'gain-- Dun' know who she is-- See if you can find where she got this number."}*

Elvis met lots of people who came to his gate in Memphis, sometimes walking down to talk with them, sometimes just sitting in the house watching them and listening as there were cameras set up to keep an eye on the crowd, and he could listen-also should he want to, he could speak to them via intercom. As soon as the fans that came regularly learned of those cameras, they often wrote him messages and held them up hoping he would see them. Sometimes he did, a few times he responded by coming down to the gate, chatting with them, laughing and telling them little things about his life. Those fans grew in number until there was a "network across the country" as he put it, and he marveled at how well they kept in touch, knowing his schedules, when he'd be coming and going and sometimes following him around town--in Los Angeles as well as Memphis. Elvis took it all in stride, never refusing to allow their presence, though he cautioned them to be careful when driving after him and his group. He warned them of accidents, to be ladies and gentlemen, and said, "Don't get me in trouble please." That worked for him, the fans wouldn't want to "get him in trouble" because of what they might do, so it was an unwritten law among them, Elvis comes first - don't make him look bad!

He was known to sometimes bring a group up and show them his home, invite those he saw there often to come to the late hour movies when he rented the theater and a few lucky "old timers" were invited to the New Years Eve parties held at a nightclub in town when he was in Memphis. Elvis loved his fans, he called them his friends and he never

ran them away, asked them to leave him alone nor did he refuse to sign autographs, pose for photos or ask them not to hang around his gates-in Memphis, Los Angeles or Palm Springs. His fans just knew he didn't mind and they were for the most part, well behaved and considerate of his personal time at home. He said, *“Kinda nice havin’ someone to welcome me home-I’d worry if they didn’t show up!”*

Only a couple of times do I recall him being a bit miffed at his fans, one being when he had just married and they were hanging around his Palm Springs home, yelling and calling to him while he and his new bride were trying to have some time together during the few days of honeymoon they had due to his work schedule. He ended up going home to Graceland, where he had a measure of privacy and quiet. Even with that infringement by those fans, Elvis wasn't angry, just a little upset as the noise was distracting and his wife wasn't pleased – So as usual, he changed plans.

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**Elvis:** *{Speaking to some people who had been waiting at his Graceland gate, in the rain, to speak with him; questions edited leaving his words intact.}* I been called a “king” but I ain’ no kind of king! I sing for a livin’ and happen to appeal to lots of folks because I either remind them of someone, something or they just like the songs. That don’t make me worthy of bein’ called a “king”. There’s only one King and that is Jesus, The Christ. He is worthy of the title, but chooses to remain one with the people all over the world. People have made crowns for me, some of them are beautiful and some are expensive. I realize that they are all made or purchased out of love for what I do, not for what I am because they don’t really know that part of me; yet they still care enough to offer these tokens, gifts out of their love and respect for me as an entertainer. I appreciate it, but don’t want them to think of me as a “king” or anything more special than each one of them, because I’m just a man, a human being living and breathing just like they do, working for a living and trying to keep things goin’ like they are supposed to-- the same things they do ever day. If I can bring happiness by what I do, then I’ve done my job. That’s all I want to do, my job to the best of my ability and that’s what I’ll keep doin’ as long as they keep wantin’ to come see our show. As long as they want me, want the show to come around to their towns, then we’re all doin’ what we’re supposed to do. Man, that’s all I know to say, hope that answers your questions.” **[Used by permission of Shirley Moss, Houston, Texas]**

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***From The Interview transcripts-- not published in book format until now.***

**Elvis:** “Sometimes after a show, if I don't get out real fast I can hear them calling my name, yellin' for me, you know, and there have been times when it's real loud because the microphones are still runnin' and the sound coming through the PA system. And I can still hear the music--in my head ya know, so I got all that goin' on and sometimes I can't hear much else for it. So, it takes me a little while to – to get that shut down so I can think and interact, especially if I have been doing the show for a while – like on the road.

Maybe I'm crazy, people have said that to me – (Laughs) people who know me well and know what I am like really. If my fans knew what I'm like at home, away from them – they'd be surprised! Maybe even disappointed quite a bit too--I'm not what they think – they see the image up there and the image is one thing, the man another. I try to not let them down if – if I'm in public, by being eh too silly or – or whatever but I am just me – on stage I'm doing my job and trying to give them the best I can of what I do – and have fun doing it and have them enjoy being there. They go to a lot of trouble and expense to come see the show, so I want to do the best I can and have everything tight and as good as we can get it ahead of time. I have the best musicians available, we all work hard getting the songs right, putting them in order, and for the most part we do it up pretty well. Sometimes there is a – a slip-up here and there – usually it's me doin' it! I make mistakes and when I do, they have to keep going and cover for me! So we have fun and enjoy working together – for the audience. We need them to bring it off right and most of the time – the job gets done, the people enjoy the shows--that's what counts--I eh – I know that without the fans, their loyalty and concern for – for me and the family, an' they keep wanting to come see the shows-- always get letters an' cards, you know, birthdays, Christmas--un' they remember other dates--like things throughout my life--better 'n me--(Laughs) I'd be nothin' much without 'em, bless their hearts, really.”

(During most of his career, Elvis was searching for answers to questions only he seemed to have: “Why me? Why am I Elvis Presley? Why was I chosen to be Elvis? Why me- I was nobody, just the son of a couple of working people; why me? What did I ever do to deserve all this? Why was I allowed to live- to be HIM?” He realized he had a “purpose for being” and he tried to do the best he could to fulfill that purpose.)

**Elvis:** “Don't really know why--eh--why I'm here, mean in this-this place eh-why I was chosen or whatever it was, to be doin' this--to be eh--him--Elvis, ya know. Wish somebody could tell me--but just seems like it's all the same answers--'cause you were supposed to be- well, that's all right, but why is the question. Why me? Maybe someday it will be clear an' don't keep me thinkin' so much on it so often. I know it's because I happened to come along when there was no real trend--when things were kind of in a rut

what with music changing but young people not goin' that direction with their folks. It was time for somethin' new--radical they said, it was radical. What does that mean? Radical-sounds like somethin' bad or deranged maybe. (Laughs) Un they thought I was!

I've been doin' this since I was nineteen you know, 'n it's been a trip. Man, it's been--something! I was eleven the first time--it was in church 'n I sang "*The Old Rugged Cross*" with momma and daddy, had a solo part an' then I sang at a fair--won the opportunity in school--got third place or somethin' not like it's been told--Then couldn't reach the mike 'n the stand wouldn't drop so stood me on a chair 'n I was so scared couldn't look at nothing--did it with my eyes shut the whole time--"*Old Shep*" song --popular then ya know. Scared me half to death- an people was clappin' and praisin' me for it. Then I sang with some of the gospel groups 'round town 'n nearby once in a while--when they'd let me at rehearsals or somethin'! At revival meetin's through the early years--that's what I thought I'd be, ya know, jus' a group member singing in church. One of the guys, you know, an' when I was 'bout nineteen did the record--thin little scratchy thing, for Momma. Don' know what happened to it--musta got lost or left somewhere, don't know. Maybe broken--they split real easy. (Later he said the little record was for his own use, that his mother suggested it would help him and she would like to have it.)

I was pretty excited when they called me in. Man, it was a dream comin' true! I didn't know what it meant, but it--there was a feelin'--inside me. Something was goin' to happen--I just knew it. Somethin' kept tellin' me, get ready--it's coming! I'd lie awake thinkin' of all kinds of things, dreamin' you know, had some wild ones--fantasy and--an' man most of 'em have come true! No one I know man, equals my life. I love it! Ups--downs--whatever, it's been great. Just great! I'd do it all again, there are a few little things I'd do differently, but mostly, I'd do it all just the same. (Pause, takes deep breath) Damn, I'm a fool--huh! (Laughs, then becomes serious and softly says, "It was worth it all, every tear, every heartache, it was worth it all.")

**Elvis:** "If I live to be a hundred, man, I ain't ever gonna understand--what did I ever do to---to get to be Elvis Presley an' have all--all this--- It's like a- a- dream, a – a – Gawd! Jus' a – a unrealness about it-- {Laughs softly and says "Whewww!"} I hope I don't ever wake up 'n be back in Tupelo; sittin' in the truck...late again!"

(Elvis would snicker about "drivin' a turck" and how people thought he was a "long distance hauler or somethin' " when in fact it was a pickup truck all along. But that was better he said than "havin' to say, "a no count poor boy runnin' 'round deliverin' parts and electrical stuff for customers...nothin' but a delivery boy!" So the press releases "jus' made it a truck driver for show... An' that's what I been all a long...jus' fer show...not much else!" He'd laugh. He made that comment to me early on in our friendship--I said, Well, after getting to know you- I'd be first in line for a ticket to that show! He was very

quiet a moment, then said very politely, “Thank you, very much, it means a lot to me, that you’d do that, really.)

***“Regrets”...”Bobbi” Lane (Barbara Sharon Lane Morrison)***

I met Elvis through a friend who knew one of Elvis’ men friends. (1972) I got to stand in the hallway and talk to Elvis a few moments. We were not alone, but I felt as if I was the only one in the room while talking with him. I had his full attention; he leaned forward to speak with me as I am 5’3. He appeared to be about 8 feet tall! He was soft spoken, but I heard every word; he asked my name, told me it was lovely and reminded him of a poem and then he asked, may I give you a hug and kiss you? Of course I said yes! He then asked me if I was married, I wasn’t. He asked, would you like to come upstairs and see where I live? Seeing that I was shocked he added, there are a few other people coming up too.

I went up; there were more than a “few” people up there and I didn’t get to spend much time speaking with him. But he played the piano and sang; he smiled at me and came over to ask if I wanted something to drink; he brought me a glass of Cola himself and asked if I had other plans for later on. I said no, and he asked if I would like to stay and visit with him after everyone was gone and said that there was an extra bedroom if I could stay over. I said I had to return to the hotel because my mother and aunt were expecting me; they had gone to see another show while I was at his performance. He said, oh, you could call and tell them you were here, couldn’t you? I said my mother would probably come to get me- and buy a machine gun on the way over. He laughed, hugged me again and said, let me call her- I’ll tell her it’s okay, I’m not plannin’ on havin’ you for supper or nothing like that. But I was “chicken” and said I really can’t stay, we are leaving soon and I have to be at work in the morning. He nodded, gave me a quick little kiss on the lips and said, I understand; thank you for being so honest, honey. I said goodbye and left. I cried all the way home though and to this day, I wish I had stayed and “visited” with him. He was so handsome and kind, and I---a total goof!

*“Bobbie”*

***Note:*** *She sent a little card to me when Elvis passed away; it came after our first book was out and she heard me talking on a radio show. She wrote that she had married before Elvis died, she and her new hubby and her mother went to see him in concert on tour in 1976 and they were unhappy to see how weak and ill he appeared to be though he did the best he could, singing several songs with strong vocals, but others not in his normal style. She said he appeared apologetic and said he wasn’t feeling well, that he*



*was recovering from the flu, and he got a rousing applause for his efforts. She said he shook his head, looked out and smiled; then he turned to the girls who were his backup singers who were standing near and said, "Give them some of that love, aren't they fantastic!" Again he got applause and whistles; the girls stood up, then sat down and Elvis went on with the show. She said he got a good standing ovation when he did "How Great Thou Art" so he did the ending again, then said goodbye and did a chorus of his closing song. Her new husband who had been with her to see his shows in Vegas 74, said after the 76 show; "Bobbie" he's so ill; we'll never see him live again..." and she said, "we didn't...he was gone so quickly..."*

**Elvis,**

**"Sometimes the brightest light burns long after its time ya know; I kinda think that's how it is that we remember those who have gone on ahead of us. They leave their light behind so... we remember."**

If this is true, then he must have one of the brightest lights anyone ever had, since Jesus Christ! Elvis' light still shines around the world, a beacon for all who would appreciate his talent and his memory.

I asked in talking with him, who he might want to be like, if he could choose anyone? He was quiet for a moment and then his answer surprised me.

**"I don't know anyone whose life is better'n mine, but if I had to choose, it would be Jesus, because he got it all together, an' it works."**

**He said, "Ya know, Jesus tried livin' according to God's wishes, un he depended upon his Father's understanding, bein' an example an' trusting in his word; he was killed for believin' in treatin' folks right, defending the helpless an' respectin' the differences in people. I hope somehow I can be even 1/4<sup>th</sup> the example he set for us to follow. God help me; it's a tough row out there!"**

**Excerpt from letter that came after Elvis' death.**

"We were testing when the news came that someone found Elvis dead in his home and a heart attack was suspect. All of us sat beyond speech, including our instructor who was before coming here, living in Tennessee country where Elvis was from. He took up all the test tablets; we sat waiting for what to do. When he could speak he began to tell a story of his early time in the United States and of his meeting by chance with this man Elvis. He was working after school hours as a taxi driver and going to classes on student exchange program and he was one called to take Elvis home. Elvis invited him to come inside and have "supper with me" and he told the story with running eyes down his face. No shame he said to cry for such a loss, and then he excused us from class. I went home and found a recording given to me long time before of him and it played for several hours and no one in my house complained."

Elisha, West Africa

**From Honduras...**

America had Elvis all of his life time; we had him just a few short years but he make a very large place in our hearts who heard his voice and saw his face. We wished for movie screen to watch him and just before he was gone to his God's home, we saw him on screen singing and dancing. So manly, so handsome, so gentle and so powerfilled with the voice. We are honored by his presence upon our country. Long he will sing for us. Artessia Galanne,

## **"The brightest Star in the Sky"**

By Susan Adams

*Born on a cold January mornin', poverty of the South cut deep-  
In the heart of the Mississippi, apple of your mother's eye.*

*Poor boy from Tupelo, sweet thoughts of you we keep.  
Your memory, preserved by worldwide love, no word of a lie!  
Young man heads downtown, dreams of fame and fortune that day-*

*Did your best to help your parents, knew they suffered hardship  
strife-  
Cut a disk with Scotty, Bill and Sam, just tryin' to earn some pay.  
Started singin' with your childhood church, gospel music formed  
your life.*

*Branded the devil incarnate in the Fifties, so very unfair did this  
seem-*

*Carried out your army duty, just as every soldier boy should-  
As time passed, you became our 'idol' on the Silver Screen.  
'68 Comeback, proved yourself once more; we never doubted you  
could!*

*Stunning in that white suit; awesome; amazing; great!  
Master Showman, held us spellbound, each and every fan-  
Superstar image became too big for you, seemed like Fate?  
Too late we understood: No King, No God- but so special a man!  
Your mansion on a hill-top, visited by thousands each year-  
A faithful following – 'Steadfast, loyal and true'.*

*You left us a musical legacy, but we still shed a tear-  
Yes, Baby, we still have the blues for you.  
A Light shining in our hearts, generous in Spirit to the end-  
You brought joy to so many, witnessed happiness in their eyes.  
Humble and caring, showed yourself a great friend.  
Fulfilled your purpose in life, and still the Bright Star in our sky!*

(First published on ELC website, by Sue Adams, England)



Las Vegas

## COMMENTS FROM THE AUTHOR---

**Wanda:** There were lots of questions regarding my revision of *We Remember, Elvis* and I wish to address a few:

No personal photo's with Elvis? I took my little Brownie camera and made the mistake of “asking” him if he would mind me taking a few pictures--he said “No.” But the look on his face and in his eyes told me that he meant “I would rather you didn't”. I put it up because I felt he resented a friend taking pictures, so many of them seemed to do that. It became my heartfelt effort NOT to be like some of those “friends” who often appeared to be taking advantage of his generosity in every way possible. I took one picture of him- it's in black and white and I took it from high above him - he's standing in the shallow ocean water, leaning against a rock where he could be “alone” but behind him, on the sand are several of his “men” keeping watch. I will *never* “use” the picture--- it was his “private time”.

I had a photo of me in a group and Elvis is standing among us. A photographer took the picture, it appeared in a movie magazine and was poor quality-unless one knew me, they'd never recognize it as being me. My copy of that picture was in with a box of photographs and negatives that were going to be sorted through by the publisher of our first edition of that book. We, my daughter and I, and Suzy our good friend who knew Elvis before we did, drove to Los Angeles to meet with the publisher who selected some photo's to use (late 1977). On the way back home we stopped as it was during evening traffic and the freeway was backing up. We decided to stop for some fast food and parked in front of an armed guard who was stationed in front of the entrance to one of the main stores in the shopping mall center, in Carson, CA. (it was peak shopping season). We left all our Elvis photo's and etc. locked in a new 1977 Dodge' picture window' van and we were inside the store less than 20 minutes. We came out to find the van gone -and so was the guard. About eleven hours later the police called to say they had found the van in an alley in East Los Angeles where it was being stripped; they caught the two guys who were stripping the van and the person buying the interior for his van. Everything we had brought with us in the van was missing, including our friend's little black miniature female poodle named “Elvira”. She was Suzy's “pride and joy” just as Juliann's poodle was to us.

We were lucky, the thieves didn't realize what they had- a copy of portions of the interview with Elvis that I brought for the publisher to hear was in the van's 8 track player; they had removed the player, but the cassette was lying broken on the van floor where seats had been removed- probably the thief had tossed it out, then stepped on it. The police found the van before the thieves could take out the built in small refrigerator; one rolled up Elvis poster was found stuck behind it and the van wall- it was a publicity shot of him standing on the top of a "fake mountain" wearing the army suit he wore in "*G.I. Blues*". We still have that. All of the best autographed photos of him were gone, including the photo of me and the "group" and our treasured black and white photo negative of our daughter Juliann at 3 ½ sitting on his knee with his guitar in front of them that was taken by one of the people at his house who was focusing the camera on him, and got a "fair to middlin" shot of our daughter – if one knew it was her. I had only the one 2 by 3 inch print of it and a negative; Juliann's poodle got on the table and into things being packed up on one of our early moves, and chewed up the print, along with a few other items while she was home alone. I had never had another print made for fear it would be "lost" or "stolen" as pictures of Elvis were "hot" items. The publisher asked us to bring any negatives we had of Elvis photos, and like the trusting fools we were back then, we did. I've looked for my photos to show up over the years, so far not a single one has- many were autographed and dated; the police said they were "Probably dumped in a trash bin and all of it in a land fill somewhere; since thieves get rid of any personal "evidence right away." If so, they didn't have a clue as to what they had stolen! So I say folks, make copies and never take the "only" one you have far from a fireproof safe! (In 1977 and still today, one cannot be *sure* that any Elvis non-publicity photo/negative will not be copied and end up being sold all over the world -it was an even greater likelihood in 1977 – we found that out the hard way. But we learned from our mistakes.)

As for the "tapes" - the *original* tapes recorded during the interview period I sent to him, after all, they were his and he had asked for them. (I believe he listened to them because he was talking with friends about writing his own book and had chosen a title – "*Through My Eyes*".) I do have a few excerpts of some conversations that are copies; they will remain private as far as being "heard" by anyone outside our circle- other than his daughter--who will receive everything, including transcripts of the interview, via our request through our Will; some transcripts have never been read by "outsiders". We will meet Elvis when we take that "angel flight" out of here; I *will keep* my promise to him, regardless of what anyone thinks, or might say- or offer to do otherwise.

We used to get gifts from Elvis for special occasions, ours and sometimes his! Often they came as a special delivery via a service or someone he knew brought whatever by our house. Shortly after meeting him, he sent out the first delivery via a *Sears's* truck. I had to sign that it was accepted, and then other things came via individuals who came in white station wagons bearing Tennessee plates; some came via special delivery workers. I didn't think it necessary to question who brought the deliveries. We moved a few times and caused him frustration when he couldn't "find us"; Elvis definitely didn't like being "in the dark" about anything!

His gifts were unique, and most things he wanted us to share with him or have for whatever reason. One had to take care in talking with him because if anything was mentioned that one might want or think about, he'd get it and surprise them. He did that with me several times and then I learned to be careful what I said; we didn't feel comfortable taking gifts as we became aware of the many times, or so it appeared to us, people took advantage of his generous nature. I had trouble accepting gifts--I was not used to receiving presents; Elvis wasn't used to anyone saying "no" so he had a bit of a time getting used to that. When I returned a few things he'd given our daughter that I thought was "out of line expensive etc." he didn't like it, but he came to realize that maybe I was right--a *big* concession for him! Further along in this book I have further detailed some of the "gifts" from his generous heart.

Our daughter was never "deprived" of "toys", I mean her daddy put gasoline motors on her pedal car and then on the mini go-cart Elvis gave her! And bought her a motorbike when she was only 6 years old -I couldn't watch those rides: Jimmie built a small dirt bike trail with a little jump in the gully below the Garden Grove Freeway that was about 3/4s of a block from our house. He and Juliann would spend hours riding over that trail -and she'd fly off that jump like a pro--scaring me silly! So I let them have their fun -without me! Elvis thought that was great! He wanted to come and play too.

As for "fabricating" and "glossing over" his "faults"- enough people are aware he was a human being and as such he was a man living in a different "world" and so had a different life style. And that only because he became the most well known entertainer in the world at a very young age - and was the "first" of his generation to do so. He has also been one of the most dissected and analyzed of men in this generation and part of the next -mostly by people who didn't know him and base their conclusions on the questionable memories of others who did; some of those sources appear to have been blind and deaf to the man, and speak more of the "image"- that even Elvis knew to be less than "real".

It would serve no purpose for me to do more than tell what I recall. Trying to “make up” something better than actual memories would be ridiculous. It is true I did not keep track of dates, times or anything but jotted down moments I wanted to remember; and I am not an “expert on many events in and of his life” and actually glad I didn’t know then some things I know now. Elvis was a nice guy, doing the best he could with some trying circumstances happening all of the time. I chose not to go too deeply into that other than to offer information as to why he was taking medication; he was human, and he trusted the doctors with “the faith of a child”– let those who don't appear to have much loyalty handle that aspect if they wish. Personally, I prefer to be able to sleep nights. As Elvis once said, several times, “Truth's truth, can't argue with that--” I see no point in talking about the men who worked for him; they do enough of that for themselves. It is odd that the fellows, who remain loyal and actually seemed to have Elvis' best interest at heart then and now, don't get much respect from some of the more vocal guys who have no problem tooting their own horns--

It doesn't bother me one iota that there are people who won't like my books, who prefer to find their own “truth” in those they feel “should know” because “they were there” and so they can “spill their guts any way they wish, enjoying the public eye and etc.”. It does appear that those who claim to be his “best friends” seem to have a huge need to make themselves “look better” than he; *that will never happen*. As for those who enjoy reading about Elvis' “faults”-- there are those other books to satisfy them; they sure don't need to get my book- *it will leave them with* that “empty feeling” “fer sure”! And for the rest of the folks, thanks for checking out “*We Remember, Elvis*” and “*Elvis – Face to Face*” to read about the many sided guy we knew; if there truly was a “bad” side or two to him, he didn't show “them” to us! We seem to be in good company, so many other people who were able to work with or talk with him, feel exactly as we do, and they are having their memories published. Many of them are telling things that I said in 1978; *I was the only one saying them at the time* and was called a “liar” by several of his “friends”, and a few people who chose to believe those “friends”. Elvis was right when he said, “Time changes things--it always does. Man, you can't hide the truth--it's like the sun--sooner or later, it's gonna shine!”

**I want to say a very special thanks to the following:**

So many people have helped me do this book, by encouragement, suggestions, offers of help (which I need-I'm not a professional writer, “fer sure”) and by being there when I needed support and a good swift “kick” at times. I will try to list them all, but if I leave anyone out, blame it on my age---

First I have to thank my husband Jimmie who is long suffering and patiently waiting for me to “make food” etc., from the time I first spoke to Elvis on *my* phone in 1963, right up



until today actually. And my daughter Starla who will always be “Elvis’ little Julie” and who has been “chief critic” when I asked and if she noticed something not right and she is my “other memory cells” to call on for help in remembering things. Then there are those few who are left of the “original group” who lay on the pavement a time or two and who has been patiently waiting for me to come back to “life” for quite a few years. **Maia** who has been most patient I think, because she knows how urgent and important the message that Elvis brought to this generation is and that we who lived here with him and are growing older, *have* to get it on paper for those who’ll come later on--who will also want to know Elvis for themselves. They will be able to do that through all the books, good and not so good, that will be available if everyone makes the time to get their memories on paper. I have, finally. There could be more, but nothing else need be said. Like the wonderful lady we met because of Elvis, **Suzy Lloyd** would say, “Always leave ‘em wanting more--” This book is dedicated to her memory, she helped us from the moment Elvis sent her and her husband to our house because he thought we would all “get along”--it might well be the *most important* “gift” he gave to us--certainly an unforgettable “blessing”!

**Maia Nartoomid** and her husband **Simeon** who gave me and others the means for communication by designing and maintaining the Website: [www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org) (ELC). For a free download of Elvis Face to Face: <http://elvisfacetoface.wordpress.com> .(Use Google to access it.) So many have joined ELC and continue to come and read all the things Maia has put on the site for getting to know Elvis through his spirituality and the man behind the image. There are so many of them, it’s difficult to list them so I won’t; they know who they are. [Maia’s new book, **BlueStarLove is OUT! Order it from: Balboa Press/Division of Hay House, 1-877 407-4847 Or order by website: [www.balboapress.com](http://www.balboapress.com)**

The beautiful sketches of Elvis are by **Zey Aydabol**, a talented young woman who lives with her family in Turkey. I have never seen anyone who could capture Elvis’ image so fully and in so many different moods, than Zey. She has many drawings of him and is happy to hear from people who want to discuss them or get them for themselves. She also does them on cloth! So anyone who would like a beautiful T-shirt as a tribute to Elvis... Zey can do it! ([www.lighthouseghost67@yahoo.com](mailto:www.lighthouseghost67@yahoo.com)) (The member posting section of the site for [www.elvislightedcandle.org/forum](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org/forum) - sometimes is down for service; try again later on.)

Other people who have encouraged me and whom I greatly admire and appreciate; **Joe Krein**, who has his own radio show and Website: [www.Elvis2001.net](http://www.Elvis2001.net) where you can read *and listen to dozens of great interviews he’s done* with Elvis’ friends and co-workers, and he is the co-author of a super book about *Elvis’ Tahoe Concerts!* It will be “chuck full” of beautiful photos--contact him for information. **Larry Geller**, Elvis’ dear friend and author of several books whose inspired writing encouraged me to finish what I began in 1978. His highly rated book “*Leaves of Elvis’ Garden*” is out. [www.larrygellerauthor.com](http://www.larrygellerauthor.com)

There are too many to list everyone personally and say thank you, but these are some of the “first” members of our Website: **Laurie** who helped me with the manuscript, reading things and giving advice, and who willingly spent a lot of time learning how to work the new high tech recording stuff so we could try to get the book on cd for those who can’t read for whatever reason. I’m still working on doing that. **Toni** from Ontario who has been very helpful; **Sue** from England who is now taking care of the ELC website most of the time, thanks for your feedback. **Julie** whose enthusiasm and happy spirit cheers me up time and again when I need it: **Sarena** who’s sunny disposition just comes through like sunshine; **Susan M.** who stood by me through some “heavy” times and who offered her professional assistance since it was obvious I need it; “really”! **Amanda** who gives insight that Elvis would say, “is right from a young heart that comes from an ‘old soul’ that’s been ‘round a while an’ KNOWS!” And our other **Sue** that shares her good, kind heart so well with so many. **Marjorie** who has a loving, sweetness that saturates everything she does. **Fran** who lives in sunny Ca. too, and is a patient, kind soul who loves our “boy”; **Nadine** who did some comparison study and has backed up the truth where it is needed: **Maral** whose youthful insight we enjoy. Our “Southern **Barb**” with her ever “young high spirited heart” who gives of herself so freely to us all; **Nikki** with the “healing” hands and heartfelt concern for everyone; **Cristine** from Germany; **Tony** from Ontario Canada, who has been a fan since teen years: **Barbara Lee Rowe**, a cousin of the Presley’s who is working so hard on bringing to light **Elvis’ Civil War** connections and family history. Elvis would be proud, I am sure because he too, was interested in that history.

**Ann** who is a true fan with a sweet and generous nature. **Ginette** from Canada with the tender heart and gentle spirit. **Carola** who has an artistic nature and fills her posts with beauty and love bubbles for everyone; **Mari** who brings warmth and concern for every one of us; our other **Laura** who is fairly new and came to share our love for Elvis; we have some pretty nifty “really **new ones**” too. One is **Liliane**, who brings new insight from distant countries around the globe to share with all of us. Also **Eva** and **Whitebud**, and **AngelEyes**! And many new ones who come to read and learn; with the Internet we can sure “go forth and spread the word” these days! Thank you all so much, and if I have missed anyone by name, you are in my thoughts and from the heart, I am grateful to everyone one of you, even those who do not join, or do and can’t post and those who just come to read, **you are all welcome, welcome, welcome!**

A special thank you goes out to the new Elvis fans who are coming here to read, wanting to learn more about this amazing guy who still “touches” their hearts; this book is for you because he would want you to know more about him, the guy who helped “make it all happen” beginning in 1954 and continuing today For ever and all ways.

### **Photo credits:**

Most of the on stage photo's used were taken by **Pat Kilpatrick**, a layman photographer who went to many concerts in Vegas and on the road, and took photos using a camera set up that Elvis said, “Looked like a machine gun pointin' at me” from his position on stage. Pat snapped a wonderful photo of Elvis in Tempe, Arizona just after his first song, standing on stage with hands to his face as if holding his own “camera taking Pat's picture” while Pat was shooting pictures of Elvis. It was priceless photography of Elvis' sense of humor--he knew Pat, had spoken with him via telephone, and loved it that Pat had driven from Southern California to photograph his show. Pat always gave Elvis a set of the best photos, and often Elvis asked for more so he could share them. Pat also gave me permission to use a few of his special photos for my books. Thank you Pat Kilpatrick, you were “one of the best”! See 'ya there, my friend.”

When we published “*We Remember, Elvis*” in 1978 several of the beautiful stage photos were taken by **Sean Shaver** who traveled by car, bus, train and plane etc. around the United States photographing Elvis on stage. Sean used his own money, took thousands of photographs, met quite a few of Elvis' stage and guardian crew, witnessed untold and remarkable events unknown to regular “fans”, and finally, got to meet Elvis personally; because Elvis noticed “that guy's always here”. Elvis was amazed to see him there so often and admired his tenacity and steady hand with a camera after seeing Sean's photographs. After Elvis' death Sean published several photo books that portrayed Elvis at his best, on stage and off. I was lucky enough to get to know Sean, he was sincere, dedicated and truly loved “his man, Elvis”; the books and photographs are proof of a true fan's devotion and appreciation for Elvis' talent and hard work. Thanks to **Sean Shaver**, Elvis can live on in that wonderful photography-forever; because once they are printed in published form--if they don't get ruined by water etc. they will not yellow or fade away! Dear Sean taught me that. If you get a chance to buy Sean's picture books...do it!

One black and white photo of Elvis with his cigar, sitting at a table was given to me by Elvis who said it was a “reject”; I have never seen another one quite like it. It was taken at the signing of a contract to work in Vegas, I am sorry that I have no idea who might have taken it, however it is now a part of this manuscript copyright and is not for resale to the public.

The sketches used here are the artistic work of **Zey**, a young woman from Turkey who is a gifted artist; she captures Elvis wonderfully and I am proud to present her work to his fans via this book; her sketches may be purchased. This is the website to view her beautiful sketches. ([www.elvislightedcandle.org/flash/memories.htm](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org/flash/memories.htm)) *Please take a look!*

And two other photographer buffs: **Robert Wines** and **Ken Payne**: 1976 concert photos. Photo's of "Suzy" taken by **Starla**, who also did the "personal items" photos.

We've known many people, before and after Elvis came into our lives, some were brief encounters, some who were with us longer, many of them also spoke with Elvis on the telephone and several went to Las Vegas more often than we did. A very few were friends of Elvis' "boys" and attended some of the after the show gatherings listening to Elvis and friends singing. I want to thank them for sharing their memories, helping me remember details of the so few times I was allowed upstairs. Some of them spent time sitting and lying on the cement to get front row seats from Long Beach to San Diego and in between; some are now gone from our earth, some **do not** wish to be publicly identified, and for whatever reason is theirs alone. Those days in the 70's made fond memories for all of us. There isn't a one of us who wouldn't jump at the chance to go back in time; how many people can say, "Elvis? Oh I was there when---" We were blessed! Thanks Elvis--*you* made it all happen.

**This is a "REJECT" – no way!** (Pages coming up- it's worth 'repeating' – frame one & two.)

Also there are a few photos taken by Jimmie's brother **Ken Payne** who wrote his story for our first book, 1978, *We Remember, Elvis* that came out as a hardback with several color photos taken by **Sean Shaver**, and **Pat Kilpatrick**. Also **Robert Wines**, took some good photos in So. California.

Those 1978 hardback books are difficult to find, but used ones do come up on **EBay** now and then...I can't believe the price!! *Be careful!* I've heard that the beautiful color photos have been "removed" from quite a few of those used hardback books put up for sale and even those that are "new" are missing the dust cover and photo pages. Most of that book's content can be found in the revised *We Remember, Elvis 2006* paperback plus a lot more that was not included before, including nearly 100 pages of interview with Elvis from 1976-early 77.

There are used copies of the paperback book on EBay and Amazon quite often should anyone want a copy. I do not get royalty from the sale of used 2006 revised books, nor any hardback 1978 books sold. I do get approximately \$1.27 cents from the sale of each new 2006 revised books and sales taxes are taken out of the total amount of royalty amounts of any money deposited to me, (usually 4 to 6 copies a month are sold). I have never wanted to "make money off of Elvis" and finally, thanks to the Internet I can put this book on line for free...the way *I have always wished* it would be available. It's Elvis' book – he *would want* to be able to *give* it to his fans...and *now he can*...thanks to Maia who graciously and without compensation put it on line for him...and for all of his fans.

(The following two views of this same photo is not a mistake...it's worth looking at twice; he is a happy fellow! One you can Frame- He has just signed for his second Las Vegas appearances with more options for others later on. He's really happy-it's working!

Notice that he did get those "vampire teeth" capped! He appreciated dentists he said, "Finally got a good one who pays attention when I want him to." His dentist said that many times Elvis refused injections to stop pain during dental work; Elvis would take a few moments to meditate and when he was ready, he would okay the work be done. The dentist was amazed because his patient didn't feel pain or whince or ask for a break...he sat still as a statue until it was all over, then he would come out of the "trance" state he had put himself into and he always thanked him for taking care of his teeth. He had he said, never known anyone like Elvis Presley. And yes, Elvis did give him a new car "a time er' two, but he deserved it...always lettin' me come in after hours, anytime I needed help."





Question: Do you have a special memory; one that is something you can recall so vividly it's like "yesterday"? (From the Interview)

Elvis: "Gawd-d-d! Why didn't you ask me somethin' really difficult? (Laughs, runs hand through hair, bites lower lip slightly, stares at the table top a few seconds, hand in hair again...). "I-I-eh...gawd! Well, besides you mean, when my baby was born? Eh...I was 'bout to get used to not bein' timid and kind of shy 'n we moved to Memphis...Meemmm-PHIS..." (He said again.) "An' momma's tellin' me how wonderful it would-- school an' all you know how mothers all try to make it sound good... 'n when that starts up you know it ain't gonna be..." Laughs. "Un it wasn't...not at first. Man, there were so many kids there...to me it seemed like a huge school, but now I go back 'n it's like, Gawd! It shrunk!" Snickers... "But after while, I found a couple fellas like me, shy...backward...an' it was better. I couldn't hardly look a girl in the eyes; there...they were...eh... I guess bein' in a bigger school an' all they had more ...eh ...experience with bein' in a crowd. But it was hard for me to get used to...I mean, they were like...a lot older in how they talked 'n dressed an'...eh...most of 'em didn't give me a second look. An' I started feelin' invisible again. Tol' you 'bout that..." (I nod yes and he grins and continues.) "So it wasn't easy makin' friends right away. I wanted to quit an' momma said no way, so there I was goin' to a big school, getting' practically mowed down in the hall and forgettin' how to open ma locker..." Laughs..."Mainly 'cause I kept losin' it...you know, they all looked alike an' I wasn't payin' attention enough to find it for a few days." Laughs again, and shakes his head. "But finally I did kinda mark it an' then the guy next to me was determined to whack me in the face ever time I came up on it...but that got old; I caught him not lookin' an' smacked him with my door an' then I ran for class." (Laughs) "He was mad, but more careful from then on... Eh...the memory that makes it better for me, is when I finally made some friends...an' they found out I could sing some an'- an' had a guitar...so it was like a new door opened for me, ya know. It-it started ever' thing...so that's what I have to say eh...for now...never know, something better maybe up next. (Snickers) Is this okay?" (He "found his talent" and used it!)



*Elvis may have been the “most photographed person in our time” so says many editorials and books. He said he “hated to have his picture taken” and especially having to pose for movie stills and album covers. He needed inspiration he would say, because it was so hard to “get the right feeling for the camera”. He hated it more and more as those ‘fims” kept becoming so tiring for him, nothing that he felt “proud of or that was worth going to see” in his mind. They were “baby sitters” he said a time or so. Still, aren’t we glad that he patiently and impatiently sat through all those long hours of posing and being Elvis! Had he followed his heart, he sure would not have done it, but he did it for his fans because they “never let me down”.*

He made me laugh a lot when telling of how it felt about spending hours having his picture taken for movie promos and etc and how he liked to have inspiration so he’d ask a girl friend or if “none were around” someone he might meet on the way over. A few ladies have spoken of being there, giving him encouragement and laughing over his silly comments etc during which photographer’s would get some funny, silly expressions and a few really good ones too.

One of those lucky ladies mentioned that they wanted serious shots, he was asked to get some fire into them, so he had her standing close, giving him come hither looks. She said, “He could sure do the bedroom eyes well!” And said it became very warm in the room thanks to Elvis’ “acting abilities”. Uh-huh...

Some photographers were in awe trying to take pictures of him; one who was on the scene when Elvis first came to Hollywood to try out for “fims” commented he had never taken pictures of anyone and had them come out quite like Elvis’; they “leaped off the paper”, it was difficult to keep him still but once he did settle down, nobody in Hollywood photographed as did he. It was the “presence he had surrounding him” the photographer said, his “naturalness was genuine and imprinted on paper”. Whatever, Elvis said he “hated havin’ to sit for those still sessions” saying “it’s all I can do to stay awake!” Really!!!

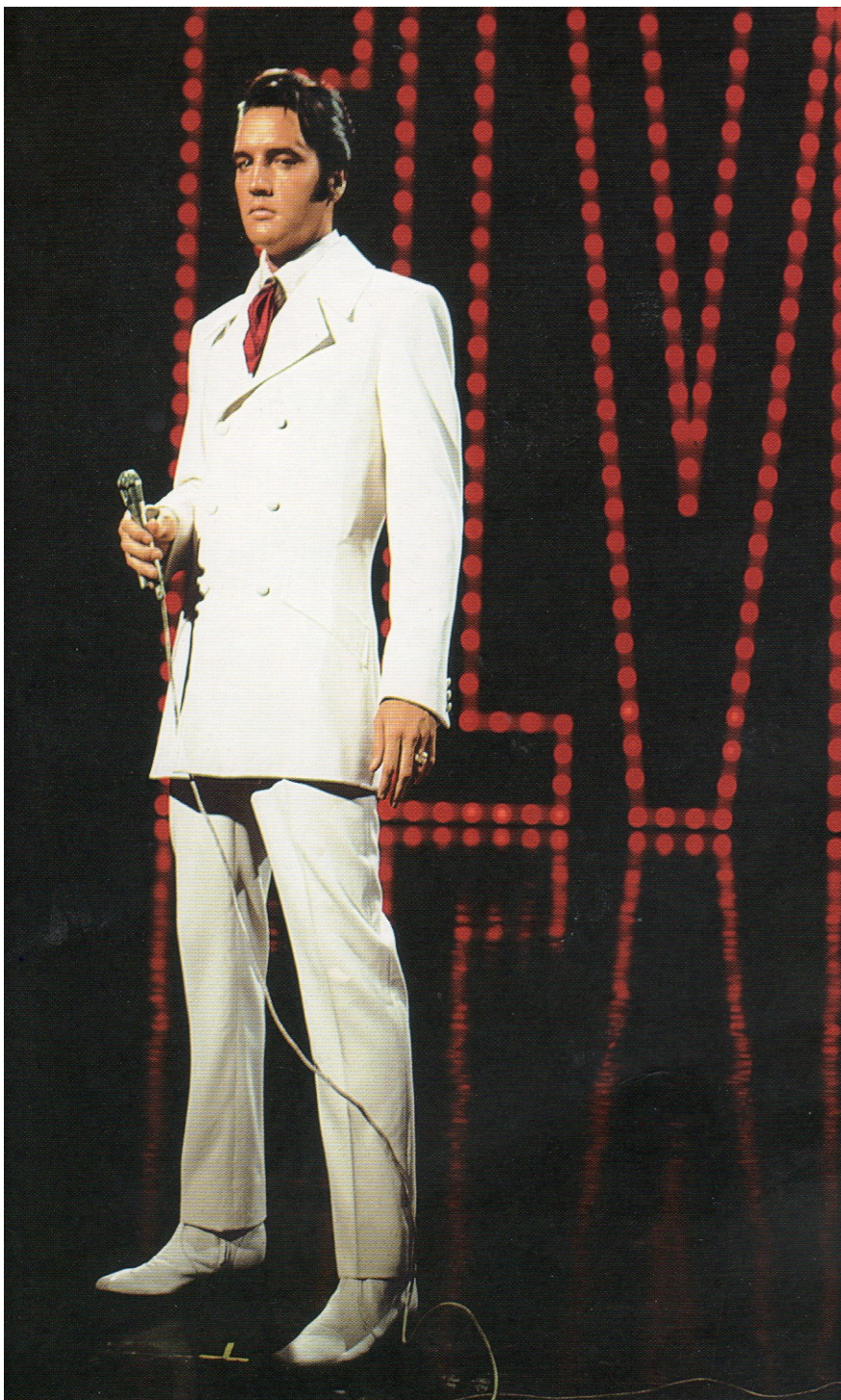
Photographers loved working with him; saying he was very photogenic and

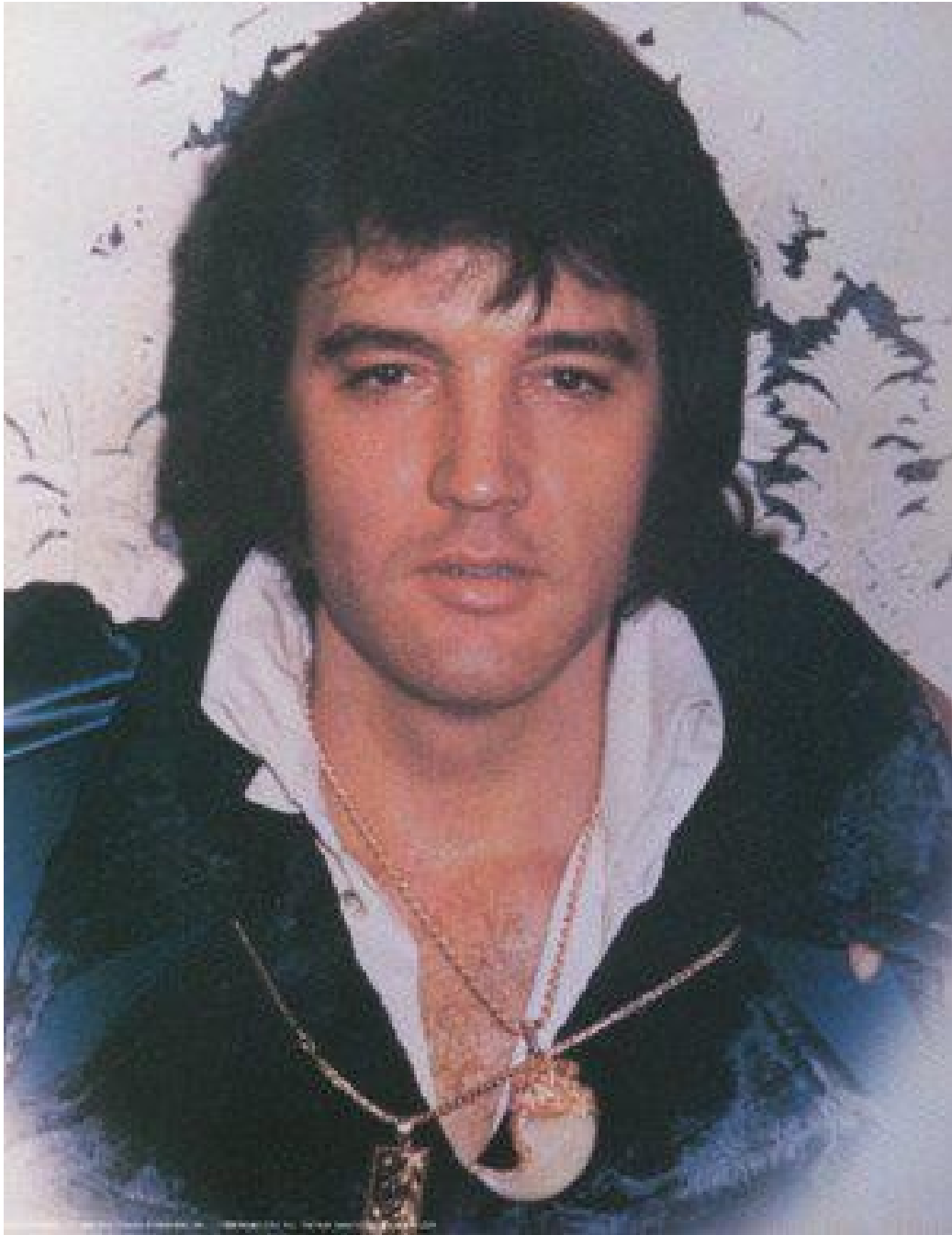
co-operative, and he would continue posing while telling crazy stories-some that he made up on the spot as was his a tale about a chicken and a pig who were crazy about each other, and couldn't figure out how to "consummate their love". Apparently they tried various ways and Elvis detailed them all with a straight face, while breaking up the photographer trying to get the photos! If anything, Elvis was a "born comic character" and he used it!

Elvis left for lunch but returned to finish the session; once in pose position, he "picked up right where he left off" said the photographer with the "pig and chicken" story! And for the next several hours, every time he left to change "costumes", he came back with some new information and details of the "frustrated couple's delima". It was a long shoot, said the photographer but he'd never had a "better time working with any star." He felt that Elvis was a great actor...capable of a lot more than he was given to work with.

Surprisingly a great many directors and other movie people felt the same-but the Col. and his big name producer buddy, Hal Wallis whose films Elvis was signed for, didn't think so. It was "all about the money"... even in those years so far back in time- It was typical...even when they had someone who was a talented in multiple ways, they couldn't get past him being a "singer" and never realized that anyone who really could sing well, and put a lot into their vocals, WAS drawing on the essence of their abilities to "put true feeling and emotion" into their vocals just as actors do.

"They read the words" **Elvis explained**, "and put their own experiences into interpreting what the songwriter intended; and that is what the listener feels...that makes a good song great! It's the intent of every singer...eh myself included...to cause the listener's to feel as the song writer does about the song...it's not easy sometimes, there are songs written that don't mean anything...have no heart behind them. You know, but every person sincerely trying to write lyrics...or poetry that is felt has it within...first. Man, you can't do it unless it's already there, that's what I mean...eh... Ah gawd! It's late...I gotta go...or catch hell for bein' late!"





One of my favorite photos-he looks so normal, alert and interested.

This photo was taken at a time when Elvis was just beginning to have *severe* problems with his “guts” as he said; he had already seen he said, “dozens of doctors, specialists and had not had any improvements “that lasted long” and he was wearing out physically and emotionally dealing with everything going on. He often asked me to look up a new prescription he’d been given; he had a physicians book that detailed all kinds of medications and what they were for and made of and side affects, but it was “lost” somewhere he said. (Later he said he thought it had been “tossed” by some “well meaning friend”.) He knew I had one, so he would call me; then I mentioned that I knew someone who worked for a heart specialist and she could tell him more; I was sure she’d be happy to talk with him. He declined at that time but later on, he did call her and they talked often about various things as well as his health issues. But he did not tell her everything about them, just as he had not told anyone “everything” until the last few months of his life and then he spoke of serious things with Grandma Suzy, who kept those secrets.

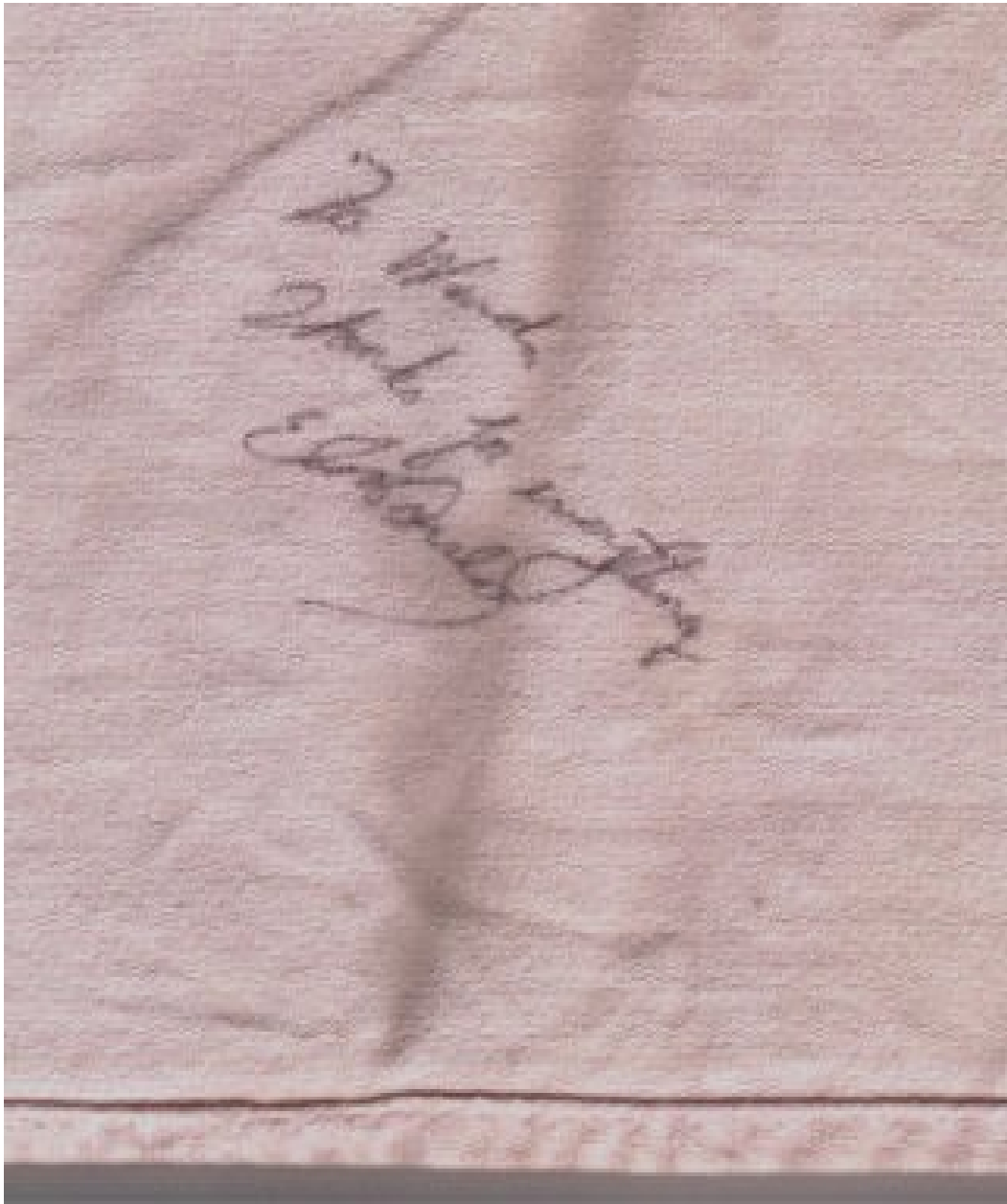
It is my personal belief that he kept most of the seriousness of his health issues to himself, choosing only a few people whom he knew would remain quiet “fer sure” and that he had not shared everything with his wife, his daddy or any of his family/friends except possibly a very few...such as Charlie Hodge and perhaps Ed Parker who seemed to be the most concerned for him emotionally and physically. Ed straight out said that Elvis did not take medication unless his doctor prescribed it for him. And like any one would, he said sometimes he might take 3 instead of 2 if he was in severe pain. Ed said Elvis was in *extreme* pain...that “severe” wasn’t an adequate word to describe it. He had seen Elvis go to his knees, groaning in misery and holding his midsection. This during the last tour he had done. Ed wasn’t on the entire trip, but he sure had worried about Elvis’ life, tried to get him to take more time off but said that Elvis declared “I’m goin’ out there for as long as I can, God willing.” Elvis said the same to Kathy.

And he did.

Next page is...

**The napkin from the dinner show at the International Hotel** that later became the Hilton Hotel. Elvis was playing with the audience, he took my napkin, wiped his face with it and handed it to the lady seated at the table beside ours; and then he took hers and wiped his face and chest with it and handed it to me.

A few days later I pulled it out of my purse and asked him to autograph it- with a little self satisfied smirk, he did. Sometime later he asked me by telephone what I had done with the napkin. I said what napkin? He growled the one I signed for you! I said, oh, I put it in a glass jar, sealed it up tight and it's in the closet on a shelf...why? He said, "Oh." And changed the subject; I guess he thought I would be displaying it, maybe charging admission or something???? He never mentioned it again. It's back in the jar and in the safe ...it is beginning to discolor from his sweat- I guess, but the autograph is still clear. And we won't part with it-not yet....it's only 2013!





*I liked the plain white suits he had when first he performed in Vegas; also the black karate styled suit-simple, elegant and so Elvis. However, he felt that he had to keep the interest of his fans, to create an excitement and curiosity or they'd "get bored 'n not bother" etc. So he began doing the fancy suits, many of the designs came from ideas he'd get from reading books, especially spiritual meanings of symbols, animals, birds and also colors. He wanted to "touch the folks" and to give them something heart felt and soul felt while they were in the audiences, he wanted them to "have an experience, a spiritual one via the music and lyrics, and visually." So those suits became very special, with each one having a "purpose" as well as being beautiful. Then he began to think that they came just to see what he'd wear...and he worried that maybe he had "gone too far with the "glory" as he called it. It's true we did wonder what he'd come up with next-but even had he been in a plain shirt and pants, we would still see that "glory"-it came from him! Some of those suits were heavy- and he wore wrist and ankle weights when rehearsing and a weighted belt so that he would not notice the weight of the suits when it came time to dress and go on stage.*

*With the more elaborate suits with capes at 35 pounds and some were heavier depending on the amount of jewels and trim. He exercised with weighted cuffs around his wrists and ankles and weighted belts, rehearsing his moves weighted down so that he would feel "lighter" on stage when they were removed. But some of those costumes were just as heavy or more so!*

*Of all the many outfits he wore on stage, my favorite and that of several dozen or so people I've asked, as a group we preferred the way he first came out onto the Las Vegas stage at the International Hotel (which became the Hilton when bought out by Baron Hilton,)*

The "Elvis experience." Live in Las Vegas!

The show room was full to the maximum number of sitting patrons and then there were those standing patrons all across the back, and a little on the sides! Sell out totally, every single show the man did in Las Vegas and nearly every venue across the United States, with only a few remaining seats any where for most of the places booked. People had to be



either in the hospital unable to leave, or had as one man said, “Died in their sleep from anticipation” for there to be any open seats at one of his concert. We were sitting fairly close to the front, in what he told me was “the best view in the room” and it was nearly level with the stage and nothing blocked the view—no hair do’s or hats etc or extra tall humans in our way. We had a great dinner, (they served it then—later just drinks) and Elvis picked up the tab for rooms for us and our guests, whom he had spoken with several times, Jimmie’s sister and family. It did seem like we sat there for hours—waiting— and then there was the announcement. The place became a room full of “thick air” as my daughter who was 9 said; it did seem hard to breathe. Finally, the music began, the opening act comic, the girls sang and then the boys, and then silence, curtain closed. All at once it seemed, the spot light ran across the curtains, the music began, they opened, we saw the band, the orchestra but no Elvis...With little fan fare, he walked out, head down, dressed in simple black karate style suit. The place suddenly roared, it’s a wonder he wasn’t knocked down by the blast! People were screaming, clapping and cheering and he had not reached the microphone yet! Finally, he did, Charlie helped him with the guitar, and Elvis turned to the mike, took hold of it and looked as if he was going to sing. Suddenly the place was dead quiet. Everyone died...not really; they just sucked in all the air in the place and held it! HE was going to speak!!! And then he did; quietly, soft spoken, southern, he welcomed us, thanked us and then was nearly smacked down by cheers and applause. Really, it was tangible he said later; he felt like he had been hit by a blast of air coming off that audience!

It was a wonderful and very, very eye opening event for us. It was also a very disturbing event emotionally; though we had all spoken with him, some personally, some just by telephone and we thought we knew him, however slightly. Yet to see him walk out, take that microphone and destroy ever calm person in the room that size in barely a minute and a half of time it took for him to do those things. It was crazy, even alarming how the entire place went bezurk all at once. I had been to games, football and baseball and even some other performances by other people/singers but nothing compared to what happened at those first concerts in Las Vegas...and it just mushroomed when he began doing live shows across the country. The crowds grew larger and larger every time he came into town across the country. To ensure a seat you had to purchase weeks ahead. He was awed by it all; couldn’t imagine or understand what was happening other than to say, “it’s all happenin’ again...like the early days!” He was speechless and stammering when trying to speak of how it felt to him...and he was slightly scared too. He worried that he would not please these folks, “who care for me so much, they do those things just to see me, hear me.” He should not have worried, his fans loved him not just because of who he was but they cared for and loved the guy who carried that big weight of ELVIS around on his shoulders for most of his lifetime. And load though it could be, he loved being ELVIS for his fans. When he said “goodbye” the place still reeled from the “experience he created”, some people cried—even a few men. He was gone...it was done.

And he said, “I loved it, man it was excitin’ - did you see? They really liked me! Gawd, get to do it again in a little while...man, I love this job!”

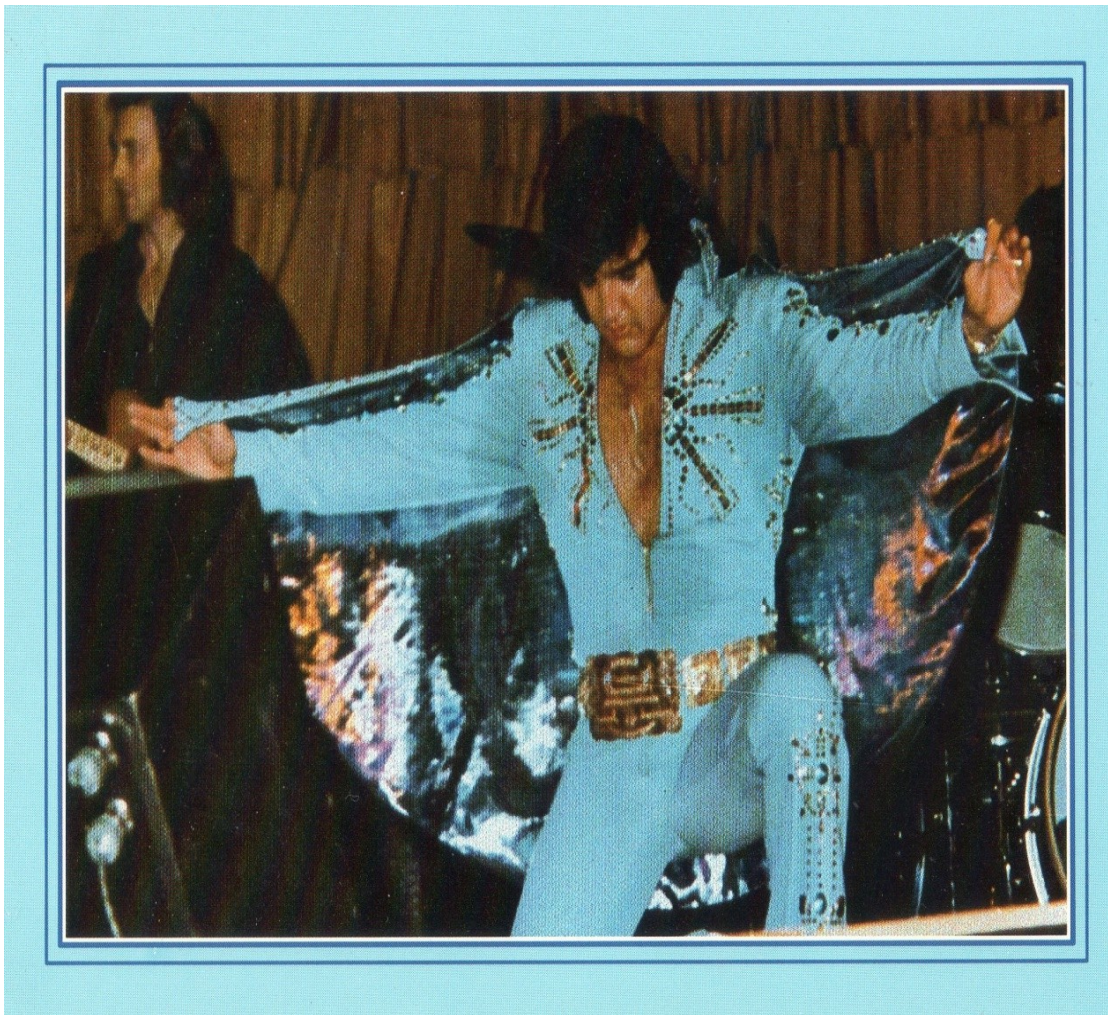
*He did; and yes, we ALL did too-5 nights in a row-both shows each night.*

We saw him changing things, a little different here or there, adding and rearranging songs. Small changes but each one made the show better, more exciting (if that was possible!) and more entertaining. He would change his dialogue, just a tad but enough so it was a little different, certainly not boring as his “guys” said to him. Implying that his audiences were getting “bored” and didn’t care what he thought...just that he could sing and put on a “show”. They were idiots! His fans cared about every detail of Elvis’ life, his thoughts, his actions and his beliefs! They hung on every word from his mouth, grown men and women, younger ones, old ones, it didn’t matter- IT was Elvis talking! Maybe his guys thought he was “old news” because they were around him so much, I really don’t know. But they sure told him stupid things, intentionlally or out of their own bored and jaded thinking- maybe they were so “close to the tree” they could not see its beauty or realize what they had- until, suddenly he was gone. And they were “on their own” for the first time in years-no Elvis to come to their assistance...No-not ever again. It had to have been a real eye opening experience! Some “leaped” to the occasion, spilling their “guts” so to speak, and certainly they must have had some pretty “spoiled food” because most of the so called memories, “smelled to high Heaven” said Elvis’ father. That was an understatement, fer sure! It seemed like forever, but finally after a while, real friends began to tell their stories, revealing the guy we knew, the guy who did the best he could for all of his life...and who did not give up, or let life “screw” him over. He loved being Elvis, on his last day he was getting ready to go out again. And he would have played to a full house! Though those “sick” guys were telling him there were “empty seats” in those show rooms...Funny, we couldn’t find even one! And we saw some 23 totally sold out performances in California, Arizona & Nevada, everytime he came, his fans (us too) waited for hours/days to get those prized and scarace tickets!

I had friends who took a second job to have the money to go “see Elvis”; I raised parakeets as a hobby, had very colorful, large sized healthy birds and a market to a couple of pet stores that took good care of their ‘stock’; I checked them out, would not sell to one who did not keep cages clean, fresh water and food and room to fly a little too. And so we had money to go see “ELVIS” in Las Vegas. He was awed when I told him I sold my parakeets to see his shows. He had in the past had parakeets “flyin’ loose inside the house...momma liked to had a fit! They pooped on things, ya know.” And he laughed. He picked up the tab for us to come see his performance the first time and always said, “Just let me know an’ you all can get in”. We were not comfortable with him paying for us, so we would get our reservations ahead of time before he opened, that way it was paid in advance; we did not stay at the Hilton...all the time.

Photographer unknown: Picture was on a post card but there is no information.

*Not seen often, there are few photos of this lovely suit! He said that it didn't give enough to move once he was sweating. He had his favorites- that is for sure!*



*He said the lighter blue suits show more “sweat than the white does; the material just looks wet at the end.” He said a guy told him it looked like he’d peed his pants and it ran down his leg! That pretty much did it for him! He laughed telling this; because the guy was “trying to be nice telling him he was sweatin’ so much it looked like he’d wet his pants on stage!” Of course, Elvis would think that was funny!*

*The suits were constantly being cleaned; often at the last minute before he had to dress his suits arrived! He said he had spares, in case and on that last year of touring (1976) he wore the same design at nearly every show. He said he had two of each and rotated them through the cleaners. He would perspire so much those suits would be wet and they were made of heavy cloth that some say was more like “canvas” than cloth but he said they were a type of linen and would hold up under the stress and strain, and hold the design on better. They were hot, especially the darker ones, and he preferred the lighter colors as they were “cooler under the strobes” And the white ones did not “look soppin’ wet hangin’ on me” when he was sweating and working hard.*

*He was called all kinds of names because he dressed fancy and wore the costumes on stage. Elvis was a showman, he came ready to entertain and he thought his fans enjoyed seeing the specially designed suits- it was a part of the show. He knew what was being said, that he was like a “drag queen” etc and other even more “nasty” comments; he was not fazed by it and excused those who did not understand the “business of entertainment” by saying, “They should try standing on stage in front of hundreds of people before they conclude that it’s easy to keep their attention and make ‘em happy they came! I do whatever it takes’an my audiences prove it works!”*





**Rings belonging to Elvis who gave them to Jimmie and Starla-**

**The ring Elvis had made for himself** from piece of coral found at a beach and turquoise from Kingman Mine. There is a Silver Star set between them and the tip of an “Eagle” Feather that represents a spiritual quest he said; the white area is mother of pearl. **Elvis gave Jimmie the ring** since he had not ever had a turquoise ring; Elvis said all Indian’s should wear that stone (turquoise)...”Especially a Capricorn one”.

The three stone was included because our daughter liked it.

The mountings are tarnished because I have not cleaned the rings-ever.

**The sea green scarf Elvis gave me;** he went over to Charlie who was in charge of the scarf gifts Elvis handed out to fans from the stage. *Time has darkened the color, but the autograph has remained!!!*



Elvis shook his head when when Charlie held out a white scarf, he reached for a blue one, again got the head shake but Elvis said something, and Charlie dug out a green one. Later, when Elvis signed it on his knee it was hard to do-that material was slippery; the pinched up corner is from his grip on it. And the ballpoint pens of that time often left “ink blobs” as this one shows.

When Elvis got the green scarf from Charlie he walked back to stand just above where we were seated at one of the long tables below the stage. He looked at me with a little smile, began singing and then kind of flipped the scarf my way. I missed the first flip but caught the end the second time; he tugged on it, and then let me have it with a smile and a wink. A few days later he was pretty pleased when I pulled it out of my purse and asked him to sign it. He did, with it spread over his knee; it was kind of difficult to write on silk but he managed and he looked quite satisfied when he handed it over.

That was the last time I was “allowed” to go up to the penthouse; my musician friend took me or I would never have had a way to get upstairs; he generously took me up with him twice, and I was “allowed” one time to get off on the floor where Elvis was staying when he opened before the penthouse was finished. In later years security was tight, very few people got up there unless they were relatives of security, friends of theirs or a few celebrity people etc. Often Elvis would ask people to come, and to come up to see him; sometimes he would never know they had been turned away with “Elvis doesn’t feel well, he went to bed” or “He’s busy right now” and any other “excuse” they could come up with regardless of it being true or not. A few of his “invited guests” stopped coming to his shows, or just accepted whatever “story” they were given by his “guards” as one couple said as they were turned away. Most of Elvis’ personally invited friends accepted the fact that he wasn’t feeling well, but there were others who took it as a personal slight coming directly from Elvis. Little did they know that he was wondering if “they jus’ had somethin’ better to do” or “I guess they don’t have the time right now?” (Comments that I was told he made after being informed his “guests didn’t show up”.) After all, if Elvis did “just go to bed” then the “guards” could party with their own guests. (Yeah baby!)

I did receive two white scarves from him at different concerts in our area and had promised a couple of people who didn't have seats where they could get out and down to the front stage edge to get any, that I would get them one...and that's what I did. And Elvis noticed that I did it...which really did surprise me. But we had front row seats after sleeping on the sidewalk for a day and a night to get those seats. Anyway, he mentioned seeing me "reaching over seats to give it to another person reaching over seats to get it." He said, "I gave it to you didn't I?" I said, yes but I told her I'd get one if I could because she was too far back to get down there herself. He was quiet a minute and then blurted out, "You know how many people out there would be fighting you for one of those?" I said sure, I've seen them! He laughed and said, "an' you get one and turn around an risk bein' mobbed to give it to somebody else!" I said, Elvis I have a beautiful green one; I didn't need another, that green one is so special, I saw you sign it...remember?" He said, "I won't forget...ever." And that ended that; I know he was kind of puzzled over what I did, he'd seen me do it twice at two different concerts in our area.

Starla would sit in the front seats center with her friends but she would not go get a scarf for herself, instead she let them all go up first. She planned to get one, but time ran out she said. And besides that she already had one that he had signed for her personally, so she was satisfied that everyone else got to have one too. We would wait in line on that cement for hours to get those front row seatings, and often some people didn't get one because there was not enough to go around, so a few of us arranged with those whose seat was not as close to switch seats with us about half way through the show. I am sure Elvis saw that too, because he mentioned seeing people get up and walk away a time or two, and the next thing someone else was in their seat. So I told him no one was leaving the concert, we just switched seating so someone else could sit close and-- stare at him. He was quiet a minute, and then he said, "Gawd damn! That was real nice of you folks, I never heard anyone say they'd done that before!" He was kind of awed sounding-it made me feel pretty good we could do that- and he was pleased also.



***The emerald and diamond ring Elvis designed and had made for my May birthday--with a very heavy, sturdy band so I could wear it “and not bend it”. He teased saying he “wanted to light my fire” as it was nearly the 4<sup>th</sup> of July before it was done. There are 7 matched emeralds (my number) and 10 small diamonds- one set on each of the white gold petals of the “flower” mounting that doesn’t “stick up an’ catch on things”. The band is yellow 14 kt. gold and has a series of “X” markings on it. Both “gold ‘n si’ver” as he said it. It has diamonds set on each petal and 7 emeralds above. It is not a big “gaudy” ring; he knew I did not like that type of jewelry and so he carefully designed one he thought would please me. So typical of Elvis who would do his best, to please his friends, or anyone else he met and wanted to do something special for.***

*He loved to surprise, delight and brighten the lives of everyone he met. He was into the meaning of numbers at the time, and my number he said was 7...there are 10 diamonds which he said represented him-spiritually. The 7 emeralds were my number and added to his 10 made the 17 that he was in this lifetime. So I could never forget him as he had “encircled the ring with love and crowned it with praise and that I was his friend, “forever and all ways.” I have looked for a ring designed like mine and in the past year (2012) found one, set with rubies instead of the emeralds. It was priced way more than I expected; the band was not as thick as mine that was made so I could not bend it by wearing it. Now, it fits my little finger well though I seldom wear it for fear of losing it, and because it makes me want to cry. I cried when I received it, again after he was gone- and everytime I tried to wear it anywhere. It remains a treasured family heirloom.*



I was to have it engraved he said; he had not wanted to wait to have it done as it had “taken so long to figure it all out” and he was not sure of the size. He wanted me to get it done and it was to say, “You know better’n that” and then if I wanted, I “could have EP or go to hell” whatever, the date” etc and he sent two hundred dollar bills in the ring box to cover the costs of engraving. I never had it done, it fit and it was as he had sent it. I told him I used the money to get tickets to see him- he laughed.

Most of the time if he asked about someone, he was told they didn't come, or hadn't been seen, and Elvis wouldn't know the difference because most people who tried to see him would not let him know they had been turned away...everyone tried to "protect" him it seemed to me; I include us as well.

He chose a green scarf because I was wearing a green dress; later on I received the gold and green stone necklace and earrings from him. I had been wearing silver with the green dress that night. I have to agree with his choice of gold, it did look better. *Charlie said in his book that when Elvis learned that the Dali Lama and other Buddist Priests would pray over the white scarves given to their students, he began to pray over those he handed out. Charlie said they arrived in boxes of several dozen, mixed colors though Elvis preferred white, blue and green and a few were yellow. Elvis would kneel and pray over them before they were handed out. No one but Charlie was to touch them after they were blessed; and Charlie always handed them to Elvis when on the stages all round the country. Elvis would not detail what type of prayer he used for the scarves; knowing Elvis' sincerity and heartfelt belief in God's power-it was heard!*

Many fans have noted that the last concert that Elvis performed in 1977 which was included in the documentary of his concerts that Elvis was performing, Elvis very ceremoniously handed out the very last white scarf and they believe he knew it was THE last one he would give away. It was obvious that he was very ill some who were there said he looked "deathly ill". This documentary was shown after his death; in October of 1977. It was his last gift to his beloved fans.

I have said before, and still believe, that he did know his days were numbered and perhaps he even knew approximately the day. He was always anxious if he didn't have anything to do, work, play or something new to read. And he seemed to be "always in hurry" as some people say that were around him any lengths of time, as on a movie set. He was always moving they say, never seeming to totally relax even when talking with other people. That was my impression also, jiggling his foot, drumming his fingers, or just fidgeting with clothing or whatever was in reach, and those eyes of his were always alert and watching everything going on around him. He said that he studied what interested him, books, many different subjects and that doing what he did (career) gave him the opportunity to do an "in-depth study" of human nature-sometimes "whether I wanted it to or not!" He joked; he actually loved talking with the people he had time to talk with.

**Barbara Stanwick** said he was one of the most "intelligent people I have ever met", "he's the sweetest, most thoughtful young man" and she marveled at his ability to remember things he had read, some years earlier. She liked him, said he was a

gentleman, kind and had a great sense of responsibility for what he and his reputation and celebrity might do to his many young fans. She found him to be a deeply dedicated and that felt he was here for a purpose, but he wasn't quite sure at the time what that purpose might be or where it would take him. He was "driven" she said, to make his mark on life.

I also want to say that he that he was probably the "most put down" human being by so many male and female journalists; people who think they know all there is to know just because "someone related to Elvis or worked for him or met him a time or two "said so", and no one actually related closely to Elvis seems able or willing to tell them to shut the xyz#%#### up! If positions were reversed and it was they who had this stuff said and written about them, it might be different. I say "might be" as his daughter has faced many a "comment" not so flattering but she chooses to follow her father's lead. He didn't, until his last couple of years step forward and tell them what he thought. And he was lamblasted for doing it, called more names, said to be "drugged out of his mind" and on and on when in fact, he was reacting to what he'd been told and read that was not true, and totally off the wall as to what really was happening to him. The proof of how lucid and clear headed that he was, is in the fact he finally did have enough of it, and said so, in public and in front of hundreds of people, his fans who cheered for him. Elvis was hurt by the things being said about him, coming from people he'd never met as well as those he thought were his friends. He didn't understand; he became angry and let it show, and then he put it aside and went on with his life. He told me they didn't know what they were doing, that they didn't know "everything" and he was not going to tell them. He meant his serious health issues, that he had kept quiet and personal throughout his entire career. He basically forgave them for their lack of understanding or respect for his family etc, turned his face away and did the best he could to the end of his days. He followed his heart; he practiced his faith and doing so proved them all wrong. That his "close friends/employees did not see nor understand did hurt his feelings, but being the man he was, he went on and ignored their ignorance and self centered attitudes. (If I had been in his "shoes" I would have sent them packing and probably physically kicked them out the door! But not Elvis, he forgave them, saying they didn't understand because they had their own problems and that comes first in most people's lives. I was astounded by this guy's open, loving heart and willingness to turn his face away from their ignorance and callous comments regarding him. How could they live and travel with him and not see the misery, the pain and sickness within his body, the effort he mustered up to go out and "make the money" that paid their salaries and upkeep? It seems to be utterly a lack of any kind of respect for or understanding of their "friend" who was "taking care of them". Even now they keep saying the same tired things; perhaps they can't understand truth.

He depended on certain of his men, Charlie Hodge being one to help him when he was worn down and sick; it was a few of his girl friends that he knew well and trusted who

were more privy to his personal health issues, but even they didn't know everything about those issues-because Elvis didn't tell them. Instead he expected them to help him, to take care of him and he thought that was a "woman's job, to look after her man". His mother had always looked after him and his father, she kept Elvis alive when he was born unable to breathe well or process foods well. He was what he was taught, just as we all are in a great many ways. He had a couple of women after his marriage failed who did try to care for him, as much as he would allow; one being Sheila Ryan and another being Linda Thompson whom he was very fond of and had he been healthy, might have married and had kids with, but that was not in the plan because he KNEW his time was short and based that on his health issues and the fact most of his relatives had died young...including his mother. I asked him if Linda knew he had those internal issues, he said she knew somethings," but she didn't need to know it all-she'd just worry more."

In the last few months of his life, he intentionally "pushed her away" to spare her from seeing him "goin' down" as he confided to Grandma Suzy. I believe he tried to spare everyone around him, including his fans from the grim and dire circumstances of his health as his many ailments were as he put it, "makin' me fall apart...God help me, I don't know what else to do...where to go. No one knows how to-to fix anythin' I got...an' give me any assurance I'll still be able to work 'n keep doin' what I do. Gawd! Why is this happenin' now?" No one could give him an answer that was going to help very much. Grandma Suzy came to the conclusion that he was well aware of the circumstances and knew he was not going to live much longer. Apparently, it was his wish to keep those around him, who saw him daily, worked with him, "in the dark" as much as possible. I think doing so let him keep trying to be ELVIS. He just did not want sympathy...he couldn't handle it when "folks break down over me..."

So he went on doing the best he could with what he had left to do with; his big heart, strong will and desire to sing for as long as he could step on the stage. That is all he wanted to do, just be ELVIS and go out and do the job to the best of his ability. I think it was the most emotionally and physically difficult "job" that any one could have "wanted to do for as long as I can."

### **The re- views ...of Elvis,**

A few people who got to meet and talk with him, have noticed that he was the nervous type, and some say he was "sweet and sickly" that coming from the female of the species. Some were amazed at his style of telling stories, how easily he revealed memories of his early career days, and many have been impressed with his honesty and the sincerity of his nature. And, just about everyone have commented on how "different he was from what they expected". Some thought he was "wide open" with his thoughts and memories while others felt that he kept his "private thoughts to himself". I noticed that he was one

of the most sincere and dedicated people I ever had the pleasure of knowing. And he had to be one of the most generous and kind persons I had ever known or heard about. If you needed something and he had it or could get it, he would. And it did not matter to him what the race, nationality, sex or age of that person might be, if you needed help and he could find a way...consider it done!

He had one request...don't tell the press, don't talk to anyone who's going to talk to the press, please don't "turn me in". That is what he told a lady friend of mine when he stepped up to help her in her time of need. He probably didn't want her to tell me either but she did because she said, "You won't tell on him, and I just have to tell YOU!"

Her young daughter who was handicapped mentally said when looking through a concert photo book and stopped to stare at Elvis, arms outstretched, hands holding out his cape, just ready to drop to one knee, "Mommy, is this an angel?" Her mother said, "Yes, he's our angel!" Her little girl hugged the book to her breast and happily said, "What a pretty angel for us!" And it came true; shortly after he helped her and her mom, Elvis died and became "everyone's angel". Her little girl didn't understand death, what it meant and so she always thought he was alive when she saw a photo or watched videos of him in performance and movies. She talked to him and always mentioned him when she had something special going on in her life, saying, "Elvis will like me doing this!" I'm sure that he did.

No, he was not "a saint" as he so often would say; but he came pretty close to being able to "wear that title though he would frown and shake his head "no way man". He always was quick to say that "Jesus Christ was the only livin' and breathin' saint." I would say that if he had anyone he adolized in any way, it was Jesus. He said, "I speak to him every day."

He taught his daughter to pray- and some of the children of his friends also. I made the "mistake" of saying that some people might not like him doing that type thing-if they were not religious, or they might prefer to do it themselves. He spent at least 45 minutes telling me and reading Bible comments relating to being responsible for passing on God's wishes for His children. If any thing other than a singer, Elvis was a born messenger of the Bible...I told him that and he kind of scolded me because he said he was "jus' nothin' in comparaisn of him to those who make it their life work to teach the public God's ways. I asked him if he would have liked to have been a preacher and done that for his job. He thought about a half second, and said no way man, that he did what he was put here to do...sing for the

masses and give them some relief from their daily cares. I agree-that was his mission but he also gave his fans and the world, an opportunity to hear Gospel via his beautiful gospel songs recorded and from the stage. He can't ever deny that! He didn't respond for a few seconds, then he softly said, "I-I-could have done more...but I don't have time to start over now..." And he changed the subject to what he was "studying in depth" at the time.; Kathy Westmoreland had mentioned his "studying in depth" comment and I had to smile...She definitely knew him very well- I am so glad she came into his group because he was going to need her friendship and loving concern; it had to have been fate in action. No doubt about it. After his death and the guys were out spewing their "stuff", Kathy was on a few of the same talk shows. When they began putting her comments down, denying this and that, making Elvis look "bad" and her look "foolish" to believe and say something different from their "tales", I wanted to smash in their smug faces. Kathy was a lady; she defended herself as one and made them look totally stupid, as well as uncaring and self appreciating. In the end, she was a bright shining light of truth. "Truth shines, so look for the light!" Elvis said.



Do you suppose he could have found larger frames? He was protecting his eyes from the UV rays and bright lighting from cameras and stage lights. He had been diagnosed as having “glaucoma” and needed to avoid bright lights as much as possible.



He tried protecting his sensitive eyes; his eye doctor warned him about the bright lights and how it would damage his vision as he grew older so he began to wear all types of sun glasses and they were made to keep light from those steel blue eyes. (UV) rays from the sun are dangerous to all eyes, especially human ones; they cause destruction of the vision by damaging the light sensors of our eyes-when those sensors are gone, we are blinded, often to the point of having only a little outer edge vision if any at all. My dad ended up in total darkness because being a farmer, he was in the sun a lot and he didn't wear protection....too much trouble keeping sun glasses clean, and they fell off easily.

In that picture you can almost see the white gold curb necklace he put into my hand because he thought I needed a necklace with the dress I was wearing. What a guy.

Elvis worked under very bright lights-in making films and most assuredly on stages and of course, on stage he didn't wear any protection over those eyes, And he could not wear contacts very well...and never had any that made his eyes look "brown"; that was the "fault of the film developer". A lot of blue eyed people would have brown eyes in photos taken back in those days

People, mostly journalistic types, were always yakking about his glasses and the frames he had, some were gold, some were not but most had the TCB insignia on the sides... The lens of these glasses were prescription and were made to shield his eyes from light and also UV rays...he proudly told me that the last time he had glasses made, they had something new...and used it for him. That was the "new" UV protection for lens in glasses. He said, "They developed it because of the astronauts...goin' out in space ya know, walkin' in space" and went on to tell of how bright it was out there, closer to the sun etc and how their eyes were in danger so the helmets they wore had this special glass etc... He thought he might be one of the first "ordinary people" to get them. Yes, he called himself "ordinary".

In the next photo he is wearing a jeweled necklace made Indian style. His eyes were bothering him but he looks pretty good for somebody who was supposed to be “bombed on drugs”....mentally he was “sharp as a tack” said a hotel security guard who spent quite a bit of time around Elvis before and after his performances at the Hilton.

Do not know who took this next photo-so glad you did!

He looks tired, but he's chatting away I'm sure. He's got that “I'm interested in talking to you” look. And he is not wearing glasses-his eyes look clear though they are “watery” as usual. He was using drops for glaucoma all the time in those later years. He was told that he “was going blind” if he didn't keep the lights from hitting his eyes. He had the closed end type of glaucoma and it is the “worst” one to have. He at least twice, had to go to the doctor to have pressure relief from his eye balls and he said, “They used a hollow nail for a needle!” As usual his sense of humor had to come out, even with serious things. He said it didn't hurt much and that it felt so much better afterward it was worth it.

In his last year he complained about having difficulty reading and he was so thrilled to have found a large magnifying glass that was not round but rectangle he explained, so he could read a page at a time using it. He read a lot, he said and it is true that he had a vast collection of books, some who saw “his library” was astounded and many thought and say today, they did not think he actually read them! But, he did. And he could quote various sections by memory when he wanted to explain something he'd read to somebody else. I learned a great deal from listening to him; he had a unique and wonderful way of making even difficult or mundane things seem special and important to how we deal with our daily lives. When I read comments made by certain of his “friends” I would like to punch them in the mouth; they are the ignorant and down right stupid people...who apparently didn't learn a thing from Elvis other than how to make a buck off his name and memory. Sorry, there are times I can't control my keyboard....it just takes over my fingers....kinda, ya know...



Keep in mind, this was taken during a time when certain of his group said he was “high” taking drugs etc and even on stage when “drugged”. Note the intensity of his eyes here, the interest and life therein. He always had eye issues, he used prescribed drops, he had glaucoma and suffered headaches caused by the lights he worked under for years, many times bright strobes. And he had serious internal issues. You, reader would have been able to take time off, rest, recoup, but he had schedules he couldn’t cancel, and lack of sleep. Elvis was a human being...like anyone of us; he was here to entertain his fellow humans. And he did so honorably right to the last appearance on a stage, even though he was seriously ill and unable to “fix it”.

It wasn't easy for anyone to have a chance to spend any time speaking with Elvis, especially when in "public places" such as the Penthouse suite and hotels across the country etc and it was even more difficult to find a way to get upstairs, unless of course, one was willing to pardon the expression, "suck up" to the guys protecting him; sorry to say there were many girls and women who were quite excited at the thought they might actually get to be in the same room with Elvis, and maybe meet him. At least that is what most of them were told; a few were kept on the "line" but most were never going to make the "cut". Sure some of the guys were married and a few admit their "guilts", some ended up divorced, others were "forgiven". I was amazed to hear Elvis 'take the blame' for his men's actions, saying that it was being on the road, the strain and stress and all the things they had to do and put up with that caused things to go wrong and he said, "guess it's my fault, I should have seen it comin' and done somethin' about it all."

Elvis was upstairs, usually worn out, wanting to get some rest or spend time "winding down" singing with the guys. He was not a saint either, and he did admit that in a straightforward manner. However, the problems he and his wife had began early in their marriage, when she told him she didn't want to have any more children just a few days after their little girl was born. Elvis got married to have a family that included children, he thought that she felt as he did but he did not realize that she was just a "girl" and that she had not had the kind of life experiences most girls have before they get married. She was protected, sheltered and he being a Capricorn male and a highly visible celebrity, tended to expect her to do what he said and be who he wanted her to be because he said so. She had been willing to go along with the plan but after she "got her man" and the baby came along, Elvis wanted her to step into the "little wife at home, caring for the kids and waiting on her man who was on the road to come home" as many women of his generation had done. So it was a "normal assumption" on his part.

Elvis quickly realized he had made a mistake thinking she would be happy, but by the time their little girl was born, it was too late for either of them to change. He said that he regretted his "temper tantrums" over her leaving but both parties were at fault, both admitted their mistakes and they moved on.

Yet they “stayed friends, still loved one another” and made a home life for their child so well, she says she never realized they were divorced until she was quite a bit older. Until the day of his death, Elvis still telephoned Priscilla, sometimes late at night, to see how she was doing and discuss some of the things he was dealing with. She revealed this information in “Ladies Home Journal” some years ago, and said she wished that she had been more aware of things, had known more about what Hollywood and being a star of his magnitude had to deal with all of the time. And said, had she known then what she knew “now” she might have been more help to him.

Some around him say he was furious with Priscilla, said some stern and mean things about her actions etc when she left him, “for another man” as he believed.... But in 1976 he spoke of her with pride and love, he had nothing but kind words of great understanding and he always wished her well. He “lit up” when he thought she would be coming to see his shows, to bring their child and spend some time together. If anything, Elvis never stopped loving her and caring for “my little girl” Priscilla. He was a most forgiving and kind hearted man, and his “little girl Lisa Marie” has his loving nature, he was so proud of her, and is I’m sure, very pleased.

Some folks have complained and stressed to me their indignation and frustration that it seems like Elvis’ family has not “defended him” or made it a point of explaining his health problems, how he tried so hard to always “look good” for his fans, to please them. To be someone they would be proud of and continue to appreciate his music. I too, have been angry at things said of him, by persons who had not spent any time talking with him, getting to know him off stage or even bothered to go see a concert, but they still wrote unflattering copy as if they had personal knowledge of the man. Elvis admitted that sometimes “it hurts my feelings, but then they got to make a livin’ also, n’ dirt sells ‘n it’s often easy to get.”. He tried to set a good example he said, “but they don’t know what really goes on behind my gates or inside my heart -that’s between me ‘n my Lord. They’d be bored silly if they knew the truth anyway...”

## **10/25/2006 “Elvis may have left the building but--**

Just a few days ago in “this day in history” in 1957, “*Jail House Rock*”, the movie, was released, and the record entered *Billboard* at number one.

You worked so hard, so quickly and with the courage needed to be able to go against the mores of American society of the late 1950’s.

A mother or father or a minister---and others, in the beginning, saw you as a threat to the safety of the young people in America.

The fear they experienced was unfounded and some of them also grew to be your fans along with their teenagers, in some areas of America.

During the scant 23 years you sang here; the songs that you entertained the world with, appeared to be as though the songs were coming straight from your generous heart. At other times because you liked a particular song, you recorded it and made it “your song” by arranging it to suit your mood, your style and your voice.

You left us a rich, rich musical legacy, Elvis, and unlike what you feared, your fans did not leave you. Not the fans that “got you” and loved you so very much in the process. We still love you so many years later and we admire what you did while you were still here in a physical sense.

I like to believe that God saw how exhausted you were and on that very hot day in 1977, HE came to Graceland to take you to be reunited with your momma, and, at last, to meet the brother you spent so much time thinking about during the years you were on earth.

God must have a sense of humor because I can hear him, as the two of you entered the gates together saying, “Elvis has NOW entered Heaven!” You left the building but never will you leave my heart, at least, until it is time for me to go, too.”

Cooper 1, ELC member-2008

### **Comments from Elvis**

**Elvis:** “I’d like to be remembered for bringing happiness, a time away from daily cares; if what I do or perhaps say to someone, can help them cope

An' give them a sense of peace and hope, then my life's been worth something. I can feel the time I've spent here has been beneficial to another human being. We're all here to accomplish a purpose; I believe there is a definite plan for each of us. It's no coincidence that we come into this world; think about it--each one is vastly different one from another in a multitude of ways; how can that be just coincidence? Like the stars in the heavens, no two alike, all travelin' together as planned by something more powerful, more magnificent and more dependable than anything any human being who ever lived could conceive. Man, there has to be a God--an all knowing, all powerful and all encompassing God who plans each and every life in the past, present and the future. To think otherwise is a choice--- but even great minds have been changed by the awakening of their spirituality, usually brought on by the supernatural touch of a living God on their life. Sometimes it comes slow, other times quick as a bolt of lightning, but when it does, they can't deny it though fearful of ridicule by their peers, and they might try to keep it quiet for a while. Thing is, once God touches you, things change an' sooner or later you will also, no doubt about it--you'll change!"

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**Elvis:** "I'm just a man, cut and bleed like every other human being; it's just a different type of job – it's not 9 to 5 like most people; I just sing, love music-- and I guess, that kind of shows or somethin'-- I dun know--.whatever it is--hope it don't ever go away!"

**Elvis:** "Man, I dun no, just one day I was drivin' a truck dreamin' of a future 'n then one day I was standin' in front of a microphone--. I dun no, kinda all come at once seems like. Maybe one of these days I'll wake up an' it's all gonna be a dream--. Lord, I hope not!"

**Elvis:** "Well, it's not what I do that's important-- it's how I act in public—see, 'n all that. No body'd care who the hell Elvis Presley was if – if I was some kind of weird – o; or somethin'! So I just do the best I can, whatever it is."

**Elvis:** "The image is one thing, an the man is another--.it's a a fine line I guess, but if you're livin' it--.it's not easy to live up to--to an image; damn Impossible at times. Nobody is perfect, I'm certainly not – I can only do what everybody does, try to be the best I can at what I do and treat everyone eh-- wait a minute, I'll get to you honey...give me some time here okay? Eh..treat 'em all equally to the best of my ability. Sometimes that's not easy to do, but we all need to give it our best effort. We all have to learn to get along together—I eh, I have to go now; thank you very much for bein' here for me. Bye-bye now.

Honey, I can't – I'm gonna be late for work--I can't do that, ya know--."

**Long Beach, Ca. 1976,**

**Elvis on stage:** He sees a young girl trying to get a scarf, people are in her way. “Let her come up here man, it's okay--help her up here.” He is speaking to security.  
“Darlin' -don't cry. Here, you want a scarf? Take mine, here wipe your little face..  
There, there--okay now? That's a good girl--” (Off mike to the guards holding her): “See she gets back to her seat- with that scarf, please. Thank you, Sir.”

**Elvis:** You know, I lived in so many places, we did, from bein' little to bein' a young man- seemed like we were moving about ever six months for a while there, 'n then was at Lauderdale for a while an' that wasn't too bad, really. Jus' kinda noisy at times but we had our own bathroom! (Laughs) Hated sharin' that man, jus' never know who's been usin' it last, ya know- “floaters”, sticky seat-Lord! (Giggles – Laughs loudly) Well, it happens-- Anyway, we were livin' there an' I was workin' two jobs usually if could find two that'd fit together kinda, an' finishin' school best I could. Man, wanted to quit school but momma, she didn't want that, she thought I could be somebody or somethin' if I just graduated an' stuck with somethin' long enough. Hell, she thought I could be-be *president*--of some company or somethin'. But you know, she's my momma-- (Chuckles)

(There are some questions as to if he, his mom and dad were staying with relatives who lived at Lauderdale Courts before getting their own apartment. Elvis didn't say anything to me about that nor did he mention addresses of other places they lived other than in Tupelo and I didn't ask.)

**Elvis:** Anyway, we moved 'round, learned how to get along with folks, all types of 'em so it wasn't a bad thing. We all got to get along and it's good to know some body's way of thinkin' and what made 'em think that way. Man, I'm a- a squirrel too--right out of the trees- I know it man! Weird Elvis--look out, man he's crazy! They may be right on it! (Laughs) I'm just like all you people, no different- I got dreams an' plans an' wants just the same as you-- Oh, I want to have time to do a few things I'd like to do- eh- maybe go skiing this winter an' have some friends come along. Or maybe go to Hawaii a while-or hell, might just stay at home an' enjoy being there with a few friends--don't need to leave home sometimes to have the best time of your life. It's what is inside a person that counts-if it's fun, happy and gratifying, then that's jus' 'bout all anyone could ask, really.”

**Elvis:** “I thought I was in love a couple of times--it just sort of passed over--. I know what heartbreak feels like--” (Laughs) “But that was a long while ago and over--time ya know, it takes care of things for you if you can wait it out.”



**Elvis:** “Women - I love 'em all! Is there some outside now? Well, bring 'em in!”  
(Laughs) “Naw - better not now  
--just kidding, that's all - got to work soon anyway.”

**Elvis:** “My mother was a wonderful woman, she took care of things an' was always there when I needed something –she'd talk to me if I was worried 'bout something and it would be better. A mother is something you never forget - time doesn't change that.”

**Elvis:** “Come here dear -no you - no you! What's your name honey? Milly - oh Lilly! That's a beautiful name honey; you're a very pretty girl, thank you very much.” (He was speaking to a child about of about 9 years old of age whose father was holding her above stage level, so she could give Elvis a flower.)

**Elvis:** “She's here tonight-watching her daddy make a fool of himself--” (Speaking of Lisa Marie, his little girl who loved watching her daddy on stage; always protective, he was careful not to give away her location at this concert.)

**Elvis:** “She's growin' so fast...can't keep her in shoes....” (He pauses, stares out at the blackness of the audience a moment and then continues) “She likes to go barefoot, ya know.”

(He grins and shakes his head at the audience's laughter.)

**Elvis:** “Ladies and gentlemen, I-I'd like to introduce my beautiful wife an' our daughter -they're sittin' out there tonight...stand up 'Cilla! Lisa... Man, they are beautiful...” (Shaking his head as if he can't believe his good fortune) Grins really big, then say's “Okay, that's enough...sit down!” (His little girl is standing on the seat and facing the stage, looking at her daddy with rapture upon her face.) “Sit down honey, I'm gonna do another song....” (His wife helps her, Elvis turns to the band and they begin playing; Lisa is clapping her hands delightedly as he does “*Sweet Caroline*”, one of Lisa's favorites at that time.)

**Elvis speaking of his little darling who is just a few weeks old** –he is holding her as she sleeps.

**Elvis:** It was kinda funny, I put her back in her little basket-she was okay long enough for me to get back in bed, and then she let out a squall again. But 'Cilla said she had to learn she couldn't get her way ever time, so we lay there listenin' to her cryin' and frettin' an' finally 'Cilla told me to get her-and shut my mouth...un' her's too! (Giggles)

*Wanda: (Laughing) that's what I figured...it was your mouth!*

**Elvis:** I couldn't hardly stand hearin' her doin' that ya know, I mean she's so tiny an' young an' gawd, I love her so... 'Cilla was 'bout to hit me with a lamp or somethin'...but it was getting to her also. She's so good with her, gawd, just a perfect sweet little

momma...couldn't be any better. She's...I...I just love watchin' her with my baby. Sometimes I think it's ...it might be I love it too much...or somethin'. Makes me want to cry an' then I have to go outside or do somethin' else so-so 'Cilla won't...won't get upset with me starin' at her so much. Lordy...if – if anybody ever told me... this would....I'd never believed it. Never. Oh gawd...she's wakin' up...oh gawd...go back to sleep baby, come on, let's go sleepy time. (Hums softly: sounds like maybe "*Jesus Loves Me*" lullaby. And the phone isn't close, he lay it down or it fell as he's further away. He doesn't want her to wake up because Priscilla chewed him out for not letting her sleep while she was ready to do so.) He called me – it was the first time I had spoken with him since they had the baby at home –he said she (Lisa) wanted to hear his voice but since he couldn't talk to her, he would talk to me and she could listen to his heart and hear him speaking but not to her. And it worked; she went right to sleep. Now he's trying to get her to go back to sleep and he tells her she's a faker, she's not sleeping, and she's pretending and peeking at him. He laughs and giggles, cooing to her, calling her his precious little doll and saying "Daddy 'oves her so, yes he does, much 'n more, 'oves his little cutie one, does, oh her precious one her is, her little Daddy 'oves her, does much. Close your eyes- close your eyes; he laughs softly and giggles again then I hear him picking up the phone to say---

**Elvis:** Uh-huh, she's waking up. Man, she can stretch an' ever' thing! Can you hear her?

*Wanda: No...she isn't making any sounds.*

**Elvis:** Yeah she is, not loud though. Big sigh...Lordy, her little tongue is tiny...she's got this white comin' on it...is that normal?

*Wanda: She nurses from a bottle right? It's normal as long as it's not a thick white crusty looking thing...it's just from nursing.*

**Elvis:** Yeah-she's bottle fed...'Cilla didn't want...well, you know, women want to keep their figures now days...they don't nurse much. But...I wasn't a bottle baby.

*Wanda: Uh-huh, you told me...six years old and still nursing! Elvis...you knew better!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs softly) No...no didn't. Lots of kids were nursed a while back then, wasn't the only one...an' I was her only one, an' too, wasn't doin' real well eatin' stuff much. Couldn't afford baby food...don't know if there was anything like that then...where we were. Momma nursed me so I'd stay healthy an' it worked better than feedin' me- had a kinda weak stomach...or somethin'...premature an' all, ya know; they didn't expect two babies...

*Wanda: You were-how much?* (He said maybe 8 wks; late February, she thought. He was very tiny and not expected to live – had trouble eating and breathing, they went to a "poor man's hospital" a day or so, didn't have the money to stay; his mother spent every moment keeping him alive. He said he was a "kinda sickly child; 'un it made me tough."And he laughs)

Elvis never forgot that he had a twin brother who didn't live; his mother kept that son alive also, in conversations with her surviving son. He said they would talk about what it would have been like had that boy lived, would they resemble each other so much as to be hard to tell them apart? What they might have wanted to do when grown, sometimes he said when he was young, she would "pretend to be Jesse an' we'd talk like – like brother's might..." He mentioned that might sound "silly" but it was important and he treasured those memories now that she was gone. He said when he got to heaven he was going to get to know his brother for "real, and it's gonna be somethin' special". He felt as if it was meant to be, that his brother "might have come down here to be with me, because if he hadn't come first-I wouldn't have made it out alive because he was bigger an' kinda made a path for me."

People comment about him always having to "check himself out in any mirror he saw" but I think he was thinking of his twin brother-would he have looked like him as in a mirror image? He was always eager to talk to other twins, male or female to see how connected to one another they might be; it was a constant reminder every time he looked into a mirror. He said that he "felt him" sometimes, that he thought his brother's spirit had stayed with him or was there at "critical moments" and it was true that he at times "spoke" to him "as if he's with me". It was something he and his mother would do, and not unusual for him because he had those memories; to those who "heard him do this" it was "crazy" and they said he was "talking to ghosts". Elvis knew what they thought, and excused them saying, "It's just something they don't understand yet...but one day, it'll happen--"

Was he an "identical twin", he thought so because his grandfather said there was just one "sack that came out, with two separate umbilical cords, one for Jesse and one for Elvis". If that is true, they were identical twins, because they shared one "sack"; Elvis lived because he was not connected to the same umbilical cord as was Jesse, the larger of the two. Jesse was born "all blue and dried up" said Vernon Presley's father and mother who were present at the births.

Sadly the young family moved about often; poverty abounded in the 1930's and early 1940's, but in our Southern states, times were very rough, and it was said that the little grave dug for Elvis' brother Jesse Garon was lost and never found. After Elvis' death, his father Vernon decided to move his wife and Elvis' mother Gladys Love's, body to lie at Graceland near her beloved son. It was said that he tried to find the graveside of his other little boy Jesse but no one could locate it as it had been unmarked all of those years and as was common in those times, the graves were just in a wooded area, not a "kept up" assigned place as is required today. There is a bronze marker for Jesse in the Mediation Garden as Elvis would have wanted.

**1974---**

**Elvis:** “Used to go out after dark...midnight usually, ‘un go...eh...’un kinda visit at her grave... went there first night I was home from...the army, ya know. Been gone so long an’ – an’ it was...was really hard...eh...difficult comin’ back....home ya know. It...it felt...strange, like new sort of...but ...but... (Deep sigh, I can hear him swallow hard, and then he changes the subject) Gawd... looks like gonna rain out there today- how’s it at the beach? Man, we had a storm las’ night! God was roarin’ an’ throwin’ those fiery daggers at somebody! Lord-Lord...hair on ma’ head was standin’ straight up!” (Snickers, then laughs).

(He seldom spoke of his mother, often it seemed that the hurt he’d felt when she died hadn’t left him, making it nearly impossible to speak of her. When he did though, it was right from his heart, full of love and memories, especially when speaking of how good it was when he began making enough money to provide a home for his family, Vernon, Gladys and himself. Later, when he had Graceland, he brought other relatives to live at Graceland, including his father’s mother whom he fondly called “Dodger” and a couple of Uncles and Aunts, a cousin or two and other family members as well. Elvis loved family, wanted a family of his own, and included children; he mentioned wanting 6 kids and always mentioned having a boy, but later, when he was married he said they hoped to have 4 children. Those who were around when his child was born say he “couldn’t quit grinning” and “he cried from relief and happiness” and his long time cook said, “He was happier than he’d been in long while” and “he couldn’t wait to bring the baby home.” It was said that he began speaking of having more children the first day, saying he “would like to have a boy next” and that he mentioned his mother talking about wanting to “see a little blond haired boy” playing on the driveway.)

Instead, it was a little blond haired girl.

## Reflections...

Lisa Marie has grown into a lovely, thoughtful and considerate young lady, she is a good mother and her children have turned out well as a result of her guiding hand. She has some of her daddy's talent, is an intriguing song writer, and expresses deep thought and heart in the lyrics that seem to come from deep down inside her heart and mind. I believe her daddy is proud of her achievements and her interest in music and singing. She bares her soul vocally, as did her father many, many times. Lisa Marie writes her heart and sings her soul; her father lives on through his "darlin' little one".

Elvis often said he'd like to have 4 children, but he was happy with the one, his beloved Lisa Marie whom he said was the "light of my life". He once said that she gave him reason to hang on, to keep trying and she was his "whole life"; he added that he never thought anything would be more to him than going on stage, but if he had to choose he would pick his daughter without any doubt. That comment was made in 1976, he wasn't feeling good, didn't know what was wrong "really" and he was looking forward to having "my baby here for a while" because she was "good for me, we have fun 'n talk 'bout things".

I have never known any daddy who was more proud of their child than Elvis was of his "Yessa".

He kind of got his wish via his baby, she has given him 4 grandchildren, and one a grandson who has a strong resemblance to his grandfather....Elvis would love that very much!



*Elvis and his Little Darlin's (Press released photos)*



*“I’ll always love Priscilla; she is the mother of my baby.” And he said this in 1977. (Press released photos)*



**Elvis:** *Do you think a wife ought to obey her husband? I mean, if that's in the vows taken before God...what's your ideas 'bout that bein' in there?*

**Wanda:** *I don't think it means quite what some people believe...like a wife can't have an opinion or say they don't agree...do you think it does?*

**Elvis:** Well now, eh...goin' to the Bible it says...eh...le'me think a minute here...eh...1st Corinthians, eh...3<sup>rd</sup> verse...the first two are talkin' 'bout marriage but then it says: "Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence an' the wife unto the husband... then the next one is: The wife has not the power over her own body; but the husband and the wife has the power over the husband." That kind of says it right there don't ya think?

**Wanda:** *Well, those statements are talking about physical things...like being faithful...I know that because we heard about that verse often enough at church... it's not about the man having say over everything in the marriage Elvis.*

**Elvis:** You're right! The one above those mentions fornication...gawd...what a word! Jus' was thinkin' that was the one I was lookin' for...don't recall where what I wanted to say is...but there is another place where it gives the man finale say, but he's supposed to also consider his wife and be good to her. I'll find it...jus' can't think straight right now...ma' head's been like a- a- over filled balloon today..eh ...can't get to sleep so been doin' too much thinkin' it's a buzz saw in there. Gawd...hope it eases up some 'fore tonight! Always somethin'...

**Wanda:** *Wow, you said you messed up! I should applaud or something...huh? (Teasing him)*

**Elvis:** Aww...knock that sh...t off woman! I make mistakes...now 'n then... But not often enough - guess huh? (Snickers)

**Wanda:** *You do; just teasing you...hope your headache will go away...we'll be seeing you tomorrow...both shows dude. You better take a bath, wash that hair and get your suit cleaned!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs loudly) Okay baby, for you- I'll do it! See...I know how to please a lady...jus' let her have her way... 'n gawd, it's worth it!





*Photo by Ken Payne, Anaheim, California 1976*

*That next night, we had front row seating; he was looking right at us and that expression says it all! He knew he looked pretty good, he came out did the opening songs and then standing right at stage edge to look down he commented something about “havin’ to get up early to get a bath” and the rest I can’t remember exactly but something about having his suits at the cleaners and almost not getting them back in time... And then he got that look on his face...before laughing. He got applause and when it eased up some he turned to the band and said, “Gotta take a bath more often...” And he was giggling right to starting the next song.*

*Later, we who had those front seats met at a nearby restaurant; to a man (or woman) we all were expressing how wonderful it felt to be there, and for him to be laughing over something one of us had said to him. It felt good, right to the heart to hear and see him having fun. The cement “beds” some of us had while waiting in line for those tickets were worth it- believe me, we’d do it again if he was going to be there!*

*He was totally amazed when he learned the people were standing in line, some waiting for hours, overnight, to get tickets to see his show; I don’t think he ever became “used” to that-though some people who worked closely with him, said he “didn’t give a damn as*

*long as the seats were filled and he got paid”. If that were true, why was he so hurt because he felt he couldn’t do the job and was disappointing his fans? He said, “It’s sad, people are becoming more apt to criticize and bitch, and are losin’ the ability to see past the cause and understand the reason.” He was ill, seriously ill and there was no medical remedy that would work for him and so, he just kept trying to do his job.*



*Photo by Ken Payne: Going into the Convention Center in Anaheim Ca. –“Taking a “bath and washing that hair” sure “helped” – he looked so fine!*

### **Referring back to conversation regarding wives and husbands...**

He later said that he believed, and it was based on Bible study and the “times we live in” that men and women were equal in all things, except for one aspect, that was “if a man can, he ought to be the provider, protector and make sure that his family is taken care of in all ways, be it material, emotional or spiritual.” He said if a family can’t get by for some reason, on a man’s wages or income from whatever he might do, then it was

okay for the wife to work to help provide for the family, especially children's needs. But, a woman ought to devote herself to pleasing her man, keeping the home needs well cared for and be his help mate in all things. She ought to be happy staying in the home he provided for the family and he in turn should appreciate and adore his wife for her devotion. And he ought to always remember that she is his life mate, his children's mother and the heart of their home. A woman should always remember that he is the protector of the family, the provider and the father of their children. As such he sets the example and he better be sure it is a good one, the right one for the family; and as the husband he should take his wife's "counsel" when she offers it or he asks for it. The man had the last word, but it was "okay if the little lady of the house makes him think it's his idea when she's the one that actually had it...jus' don't be obvious about how she makes him think it."

He thought a man should be faithful as long as the wife remains faithful to him, but if for some reason she doesn't care enough to be just his woman, then he had to decide what would be the right thing for the marriage. He did not believe in divorce just because some one, either the man or the woman decided another person would be a better mate...or to have a fling with...but should that happen, and sometimes it does, he said; the children had to be considered first. And if the, man or wife could not stay in the marriage, then they ought to separate rather than be angry and cause discord in the home. Children were more important than either parent...they come first; that was his thought. He felt that if the man had carefully selected the woman he felt should be his wife, if she consumed his thoughts and plans for the future, then there would be no problem for the man to be faithful, if that was what his wife wanted for both of them. But if something happened and she or he had a change of mind and heart, then the other one ought to let them go on to whatever would make them happy. "Life is short an' happiness is where you grab it" he said "it's not a good thing to make it tougher on anyone, especially not on a woman who don't want to be tied down with a man she don't really want anymore. Nothin' worse than livin' with a female who ain't happy moppin' floors 'n changin' diapers!" Of course he snickered saying that; but it was similar to his own marriage.

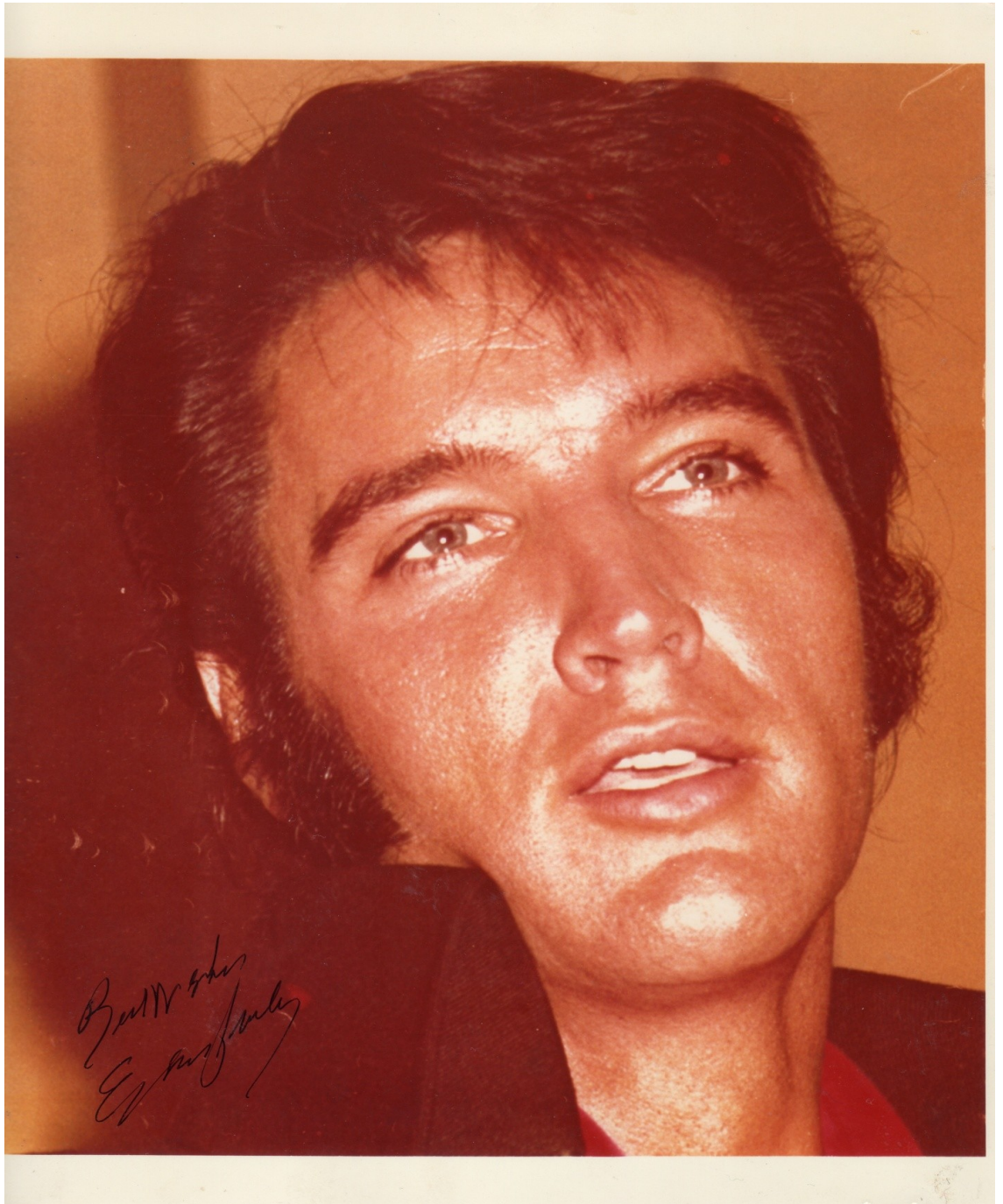
He was heartbroken when his own marriage ended; he wanted a family, children especially and he didn't want to be divorced, but later on, his wife asked him to file and after several weeks of thinking about it, he finally did. He said they did not separate because of any other man or woman... they just led such different lives it wouldn't work out any other way. He wasn't going to quit performing and she didn't like being alone, waiting on a man who wasn't around much and he said "she's young, hasn't been out tastin' life out there like I have; an' in the last few years she's grown up. It's natural for her to want to experience life outside of waiting at home alone". Being single would give both of them the chance to perhaps find somebody better suited for their lifestyles. And he stated, "I'll always love Priscilla, she's my baby's mother."



*Anaheim Ca, 11/76      Photo by Pat Kilpatrick. Elvis was getting tired, he had been on the road already for several days, doing two shows a day here and there also. His hands were puffy, his face slightly so, but his voice was strong, beautiful and he was doing his best to please.*



Opening night, 69 Vegas -not sure he signed this- though he was very nervous.



*Charitable Activities-Benefit Performances-Plaques & Awards*

*1956-Benefit Performance – Shreveport, LA. YMCA*  
*1957 Tupelo, MS-Elvis Presley Park & Youth Center*  
*1961 Ellis Auditorium-Memphis. TN to benefit the needy*  
*1961 Bloch Arena-Honolulu, HI U.S.S. Arizona Memorial Fund*  
*1965 Motion Picture Relief Fund*  
*1966 Distinguished Service Award*  
*Arthritis Foundation*  
*1966 Australia Benevolent Society, \$149,174 to 17 Charities*  
*1971 Memphis Assoc. For Retarded Citizens*  
*1973 Cardiac and intensive Care Unit, Barton Memorial Hospital, Lake Tahoe*  
*1973 Honolulu, HI-Kui Lee Cancer Fund*  
*1974 Contributions To Handicapped and Underprivileged Children*  
*Variety Club of California*  
*194 United Cerebral Palsy*  
*1974 Nevada Society for Aurally Handicapped*  
*1975 Dallas Mother's Group*  
*Visually Impaired Children*  
*1977 Epilepsy Foundation of Florida*  
*1964 Purchased President Roosevelt's Yacht "Potomac"& gave to St. Jude's Hospital for children*  
*1976 & 1977 Association for Birth Defect Children Center for Education*  
*Redlands, California*

*One can only guess at how many thousands Elvis gave that few people know about during his lifetime because he gave secretly and often but to get an idea of how much money that was known, multiply 45 times \$10,000... Elvis contributed \$10,000 annually to the following charities.*

*Mile-O-Dimes*

*Elvis Presley Youth Center-Tupelo*  
*Commercial Appeal Fresh Air Fund*  
*Cynthia Milk Fund*  
*Jesse McHan Center*

*Mary Galloway Home  
St. Gerald Hall  
Memphis-Shelby County council for Retarded Children  
St. Peter's Orphanage  
Abe Scharff YMCA  
Memphis Speech & Hearing Center  
Girls Club of Memphis  
Baptist Children's Home  
Alpine Guild  
Beale Street Elks Club  
Family Services of Memphis  
Press Scimitar Good Fellows  
Little City of the Mid-South  
Mother's YMCA Canteen  
Crippled Children's Hospital  
Good Will Industries  
Junior League  
Phoenix Boys Club  
Porter-Leigh Children's Home  
Neighborhood House  
Shelby United Neighbors  
Hospital for Crippled Adults  
Sheltered Workshop  
Memphis Boy's Town  
Convent of the Good Shepherd  
Duration Club, Inc.  
Home for Incurable  
Salvation Army  
Goodwill Home for Children  
Variety Club of Memphis  
LeBonheur Club  
Lions Club-Visually Handicapped  
Camp Courage  
Orange Mound Day Nursery  
St. Jude's Hospital*

*Jewish Community Center*  
*Happy Acres: Blind Benefit Football Game*  
*Bethany Home: Youth Service*  
*West Tennessee Cancer Clinic:*  
*Ave Maria Guild: Sarah Brown*  
*YMCA*

When devastating storms destroyed towns, killed people and Elvis was doing concerts around the country, he went to those states and performed then donated the money raised for extra shows to the victims of the storms. He donated again when floods ravished an area along the Mississippi River that ran just a few miles from his Graceland located where so far, it has never flooded though winds have broken a few branches from the trees in his yard, lifted a few shingles from the roofs and damaged the white wooden fence at the barn in the more recent past unsettled weather patterns. He and his family had experienced a tornado when he was quite young, living in Mississippi.

There are so many stories of Elvis' generosity to anyone, regardless of whom they might be, or not be and race did not matter to Elvis. He would say "they are my brothers and sisters, how can I not care about 'em? It's only money" he'd say, "not worth much unless it's used. Just a bunch of old paper that becomes valuable when it's put to use. I don't need anything, so why not share all this?" He'd lift up his arm and palm up wave it through the air as he said those words; all this was whatever was around him at the time. When he died they scrambled to come up with money, Elvis had "given it" and "spent it" so generously and had so many people working for him there wasn't enough money to make payroll and pay bills until they could get things figured out. Without Elvis money wouldn't be coming in so easily. Too many "fingers in the pot" said one attorney working on the "mess" as it was called.

It has been estimated by people who do those type things that Elvis gave away over 5 million dollars during his 42 years, and he did so without any thought of being repaid. Nor did he have tax shelters, overseas bank accounts or investments other than in his career, his homes and cars, and his family and friends. This man used his God given "talents" wisely and shared them with others as he believed was the right thing to do. He followed his heart and the words written in his favorite book, The King James Bible.

Grandma Suzy told of Elvis helping her granddaughter who was born with internal organs reversed within her body. She was a lovely baby and so special to her family members. She had special needs of course, and she was not developing as most babies do; her family tried to find help for her at many places, and one day Suzy told Elvis about her little granddaughter who was not yet able to walk, talk or do much playing but she



was aware, she communicated and laughed with her family. She said Elvis asked a few questions, and then they spoke of other things.

Elvis called Suzy's son's wife and spoke to her of ideas and things they might do to help their little girl, one idea was to set her in front of a mirror that perhaps she sees in reverse as well. He also suggested other things that might help; during the conversation she told him that their child was on a list with a special school that was very crowded and they hoped that soon she would be called to attend and she told Elvis the name of the school. After a few minutes he said he had to go and ended the conversation. She thought he was a very nice for calling and the doctor later suggested the same things Elvis had mentioned.

A few days passed, she received a phone call telling her to have her daughter ready, a bus was coming to pick her up-she had been accepted at the special school where she attended and improved until her health began to fail and she passed away, shortly after Elvis died.

Did Elvis intercede? When asked by Suzy, he said, "Didn't we pray for her to go to school? Well now, it was an answer to our prayers."

There were many times and stories told from our Elvis friends of whom there were quite a few in those days. Many of them involved children and their needs. He kept our little girl "supplied" and if she spoke of something, he'd get it for her. I had to scold him about that, saying I didn't want her to grow up thinking everything she wanted was always going to be available to her. I remember him being a little miffed but I said then, what if you aren't around to get stuff like that-think about that. He finally came around to my suggestions but when she got her first car...all that went out the window like the wind! Sadly he passed away before he could get the parts that he and she planned to have installed on that car. She still has it, one day she says she plans to have it restored and she will drive it on special occasions.

Another friend's son was into soccer and when Elvis found out, he immediately began telling the boy what he needed to have to be safe and to be more able to do the job. Well, their son insisted he had to have what Elvis told him to get and from that day forward he always wore the protective head, elbow and leg gear! And also a bike helmet when he rode his dirt bike.

One of Jimmie's nephew's wanted to be important in the world, he spoke with Elvis once, they discussed American influence in other countries; he decided he wanted to get "educated", joined the military, went to college and travels all over the world for his job. Elvis certainly had an influence on kids-of all ages!

*Picture framed- 2012 -Barbara Rogers, computer artist*



*Next picture from-  
Madison Square Garden's press photo, he wowed them all! He wore  
The Christian cross, A Jewish star cross and Egyptian cross-he said,  
"Goin' to New York, I need all the help I can get!"*

*But he didn't shave of that "shadow of whiskers" and that was a surprise  
for me-he always liked to look good, clean cut etc. Perhaps someone forgot  
to bring the electric razor? Or he wanted to look "calm and carefree" about  
being in New York City.*

*When asked about the fact it was said he was a "shy, humble boy" he stood  
up, opened his jacket, put both hands on the big white gold award belt and  
said, "Well, I don't know, I got this belt an' all" and he flashed the grin in  
this photo. Shy or not, the guy knew how to set fashion on its preverbal heel!  
Today, young men are wearing styles similar and they are wearing sideburns  
and the "in" look is no time to shave close. And young exec's wear pink  
dress shirts to work!*

*And Elvis did it all in 1950's! He rocked then...and now.*



Next is a beautiful picture of Elvis; taken when he posed with his wife and lovely little daughter, Lisa Marie. These were family photos and a few were selected for release. I do not know the photographer's name.

Elvis liked those high collars; it's been told by those who made his costumes and some of his day clothing that he thought his neck was too long and thin but the designer of his costumes said that he felt the high collars were a perfect frame for Elvis features and hair style. Elvis liked that look...and he had worn it all most all his life. It became popular in the 1950's among the "cool guys" who dressed differently than "regular folks" and they got attention. Elvis wanted to be "noticed" so he followed their lead and became a "cool guy" too. It fit him to a "T".

I thought it so "Elvis" like when he began to wear clothing similar to the early Southern gentleman style that many statues of Southern Officers and gentlemen that are found throughout the South, usually around government buildings, colleges and often, entrances into the main sections of the city. People who met him and those who spent any time talking with him all say the same thing, "he was a true southern gentleman, considerate and polite to everyone he met, young or old." And he certainly never strayed from his "roots" or his beliefs; fame changed his lifestyle but it didn't change his Southern upbringing.

(It's a tad strange in some ways, how many younger folk have longer necks than people of yesteryear (including us); it's almost like a morphing of our race of young folks who are developing a little differently than us oldies. Elvis said over time our many human styles of body and mind expand and change to accommodate the surroundings upon Earth. That it was natural and ensured the species had the necessary qualities of body and mind to do well in new times)





*Elvis Aaron Presley*

*There are a vast number of poets out there; I've tried to include some from our gifted ELC website members. Poetry was one of Elvis' favorite things to read, especially if they "say somethin' to the heart".*

[www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org)

## ***Man of a Million Dreams--***

***I heard the sound of laughter-of happy carefree glee-- I thought I must be  
dreaming, but discovered it was me.***

***Of where I found this merriment 'twas in the pages of a book--  
Written with love for Elvis from Wanda's memories, it was took.***

***I watched Elvis just last night, he was sent by God above--  
Was a truly good video of a man so filled with love.  
As I watched and took it all in-my eyes glistened with tears.  
Why so special others say- he's been gone so many years?  
They weren't just of sadness but a mixture of the two--  
Out of respect and gladness here I impart to you.  
If you don't know him and you don't really care--  
Then you won't understand these words I now share.***

***A man of a million dreams, a sweet and tender refrain--  
If he was a medicine he'd take away all pain.  
To tell you it all would take too long--  
Why we love him – I could go on and on.  
So if you're curious and want to see--  
About this man called Elvis Presley – take a look at the Internet  
And see all you can see--  
And if by chance you've not had enough –  
Then drop by the ELC-***

***By Julie Sharon Rose Joyce  
England  
(First published on ELC website)  
[www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org)***



## **Elvis loved to read; it let him “escape” now and then...**

*Wanda: What are you reading now?*

**Elvis:** It's a compilation...is that the right word-never can get it right-a selection put together eh-the writings of different author's and poets...lot of prose stuff. This one's got chapters an' sections divided into titles of things-like this one, it's called "Sleep, sweet Sleep". Lot's of others like me... (Snickers) can't get no sleep hardly 'n so they wrote about it! Like singing-kind of.

*Okay, read one...*

**Elvis:** "Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay.  
And could not win thee, Sleep, by any stealth; so do not let me wear to-night away.  
Without thee, what is all the morning's wealth?  
Come, blessed barrier between day and day.  
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health! Where are thou?"

*Who did that one?*

**Elvis:** Right on-huh? **Wordsworth, William** it says...it's –it is supposed to be Wardsworth with an "a" or somethin' like that...his name, I mean.

*Sounds right to me but then I don't know much about that type thing-I like Elizabeth Browning...*

**Elvis:** Really. Here's one...read her stuff before some.  
"Of all the thoughts of God that are born inward unto souls afar,  
Along the Psalmist's music deep". See, she also liked Psalms!  
"Now tell me if that any is; for gift of grace, surpassing this.  
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

Her name is Barrett...**Elizabeth Barrett Browning** 'un she was married to a guy who was...eh...different in many ways. He did poetry also, **Robert Browning**. I think this is one of his, from memory here so might get it wrong some...been a while.

"And if tonight my soul may find peace in sleep, and sink in good oblivion.  
And in the morning wake like a newly open flower. Then I have been dipped again in  
God and re-created." Whewww...he hit that one, man!

*You just did that from memory –wow! You have read their works...*

**Elvis:** Said I did, didn't I.

*Funny how so many people can't seem to sleep well-I just practically fall into oblivion at times-I like to sleep though.*

**Elvis:** Wish I could...never did get much sleep, not even as a baby, momma said. Don't know why. Man, now it's just one thing after 'nother seems like; just think too much, guess.

*It's pretty late there, maybe if you drank some of that warm tea, you know, the one for sleeping that relaxes the body, and listened to soft music, you could sleep now.*

**Elvis:** Naw...music jus' makes me go nuts, tryin' to-to arrange it, fit it somewhere ya know, makes me get wired up doin' that--- Not much makes me sleepy...except sex...an' that's questionable... (Giggles)

*Quit having that cigar afterward... (He slightly snickers and moves on)*

**Elvis:** Just about quit those...accept a couple a day- get enough smoke from the air around here anyway.

*Isn't that bad for your throat?*

**Elvis:** Naw...don't seem to bother me much 'cept at concerts then its ma eyes that water from it. Here's the best one of all...it's by the **Dalia Lama**, "Sleep is the best meditation." Short and correct as always. Ya know even Shakespeare got in on it! "Sleep, that knits the raveled sleeve of care. The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath, balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, Chief Nourisher in life's feast!" Isn't that somethin'...way back there then sleep was hard to get 'n was written about by great thinkers...lord, lord, guess 'um in good company-huh?

*Seems that way buddy. You know, you are an amazing guy, I mean that by the way you can recall what you read...and the fact that you even like to read! Amazing really-*

**Elvis:** Thank you...eh...I think... (Snickers) I learned to read whenever one else did but momma took me to the library and got me a card so I could take out books. Man, it was a big thing, seein' all those books on shelves higher 'n my head! She was looking at kids kinda books but I said I wanted to look at other kinds too, so we ended up bringin' 3 home, two of 'em were for my age group an' the other one was about Egypt, it had a lot of pictures in it...that's what caught my eye...stuff like that.

*Even back then you...*

**Elvis:** (He says a soft "oh sh--t"! Then exclaims) I got to go...it's time to get down there-got to get some practice in so's my voice won't break on me. Thanks for keepin' me company baby, we'll continue another day.

*Okay, I'll look forward to it. Have a great day, bye.*

I liked the way he ended conversations, sometimes kind of reluctantly, other times very sweetly and then when he had something to do- fast, abruptly, cut and dried.

When I learned that he loved reading poetry and “feel good” writings, I happened to find a little book of such things, by several poets, including some *Browning* pieces; I bought it to “give to him some time”. It so happened that next door to the book store was a small gift shop and while browsing through it I found ribbon “book markers” and in a glass bowl, as if I was supposed to find it, was a little oval shaped disk that had “**Elvis**” inscribed upon it. There were a few other names of “stars” including “**Ringo**”, “**Mick**” and others...but only one “Elvis” in the bunch! I bought it, attached it to the little blue ribbon book marker, glued the ribbon end to the inside hard cover so that the ribbon marker would always be useful to mark a place. I had read through the book so I didn’t read the pages where I placed it- about half way.

Later, when I gave it to him, he was like a kid, holding his hands out, palms up, to accept it as if it were “priceless gold” or something; shyly glancing at me, so pleased, surprised and also, tickled to get a gift... He opened it carefully at the book marker. Seeing his name on the disk, he softly exclaimed, “My name! You went out an’ got this just for me!” It was touching and precious to see how this guy, one of the most famous entertainers of our time, who was so open and gracious, and giving himself would be surprised that someone would go “out and get some-thing” -- just for him...and that he would be so pleased about it. He quoted a few lines from a poem; it wasn’t from the book...but his own memory as part of his “thank you” for thinking of him. I do not know the source of his quotations below- I’m sure he knew!

**“Forever shall I remember, though time becomes no more, and should my heart softly cease to be; though as now, and even then, will I linger over memories of thee...”**

*Yes, Elvis, we surely do ... forever, and always...*

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### ***Biblical wondering ---***

#### **Late 1960’s---**

**Elvis:** “You know, readin’ the Bible straight on, like it’s written down in the original **King James** is more prone to wanting questions answered, like tryin’ to figure out somethin’ with missing parts that leave more guessin’ than understandin’. For instance, was readin’ about **King David**, you know he was the who was most well known for a lot of years... well, he was supposed to be a good ruller, fair and all, and he had armies that would go out an do his bidding, to the death if need be. Anyway, he had this younger

fella who was kind of like his protégé, and was teaching him things he knew, some of ‘em were exclusive things only taught to those who are gonna rise up in rank. Well, the younger guy was headstrong like most are, and he had a wife but he was messing around and not going home like he was supposed to do. So the King had a talk with him, but he still did what he wanted an’ he wasn’t going home. His wife was very beautiful, her name was **Bathsheba** and the King was lookin’ at her and feelin’ sorry for her among other thoughts. Well, he got tired of her husband disobeying so he told his head officer of the army to put his protégé out on the front line and then pull back some so he’d have more action in battle. Like maybe he thought he was spoiled to getting his way an’ that’d wake him up. Well, the protégé got killed and when the King heard he was upset and felt badly; he went to tell Bathsheba and she was heartbroken and he comforted her-which in his case was a mistake because he had feelings for her that came to the foreground. He brought her to his place and gave her rooms there so she wouldn’t be alone; course that grew into more than just friends, so she became one of his wives pretty quickly. Then along came this guy called **Nathan** I think was his name, the younger one was **Urlich**, hope that’s right...been a while. I was dreamin’ about this...like being back in time or somethin’ an’ it was ‘cause I’d read it recently. I’m gonna read that Bible again, then compare it with the newer versions on account of different minds give it some different meanings. You know, really that’s the truth...every perception is different so everybody can see what they understand. An’ stories are told in ways that teach from our own perception of life, like this one. The King didn’t intentionally (knowingly) send his guy out to die, but that’s what happened because he failed to realize it could, so he has to live with it when it’s pointed out to him, but was this truly what happened or did his protégé get off on bein’ the best and having an urge to keep provin’ it? Nathan was an advisor to the King and upon finding the King in a low mood, he told him this story not using names you know, kind of a parody of the facts, about his protégé Urlich, and Bathsheba and the person who sent the guy into battle, hoping he’d get killed so he could have his wife. Well, the King was upset, demanding who is this person who would do such a thing? And Nathan pointed his finger at the King and said, “It is you my Lord, you!” And the King fell into a deep depression, and was never the same again. In fact, he went out to do battle hoping he’d be killed he was so repentant. That’s what bothers me, is this a factual story about King David or is this just gossip turned into facts that were not so? You know, things get distorted ‘n the more mouths talkin’ an’ ears hearin’ makes it worse. Was dreamin’ bout it so just want to find out a little more; ya know, David was a direct descendant of Jesus, an’ it was a weird dream”. (In geneology Elvis’ family tree went back to the time of King David. I do wish he had know that.)

Elvis told me about another dream saying that in it he was a warrior, riding a black horse in battle and that it was “a terrible struggle, men dying, swords and spears flying and blood everywhere”. His horse received a severe wound and fell; it was his favorite steed, one he always rode. He knelt in the blood to hold its head as it died, then removed

the bridle adorned with pounded silver Conchos he had made, and as he did this, his horse's spirit rose up from it's dying body and pranced around him, rearing up before racing off across the sand, free at last. He said he would never forget how it felt in that dream "to see his beloved horse joyfully running across the desert sands". After his death, I learned details about *Alexander the Great*, who had a favorite black horse he always took into battle. When it was killed, Alexander had the body brought and entombed where he himself planned to be buried. Paintings of this great leader show him astride a handsome stallion, black in color wearing a bridle with pounded silver Conchos. And the man astride the horse is profiled, one might think of Elvis, though Alexander lived hundreds of years before the world knew the name of the "king of rock 'n roll."

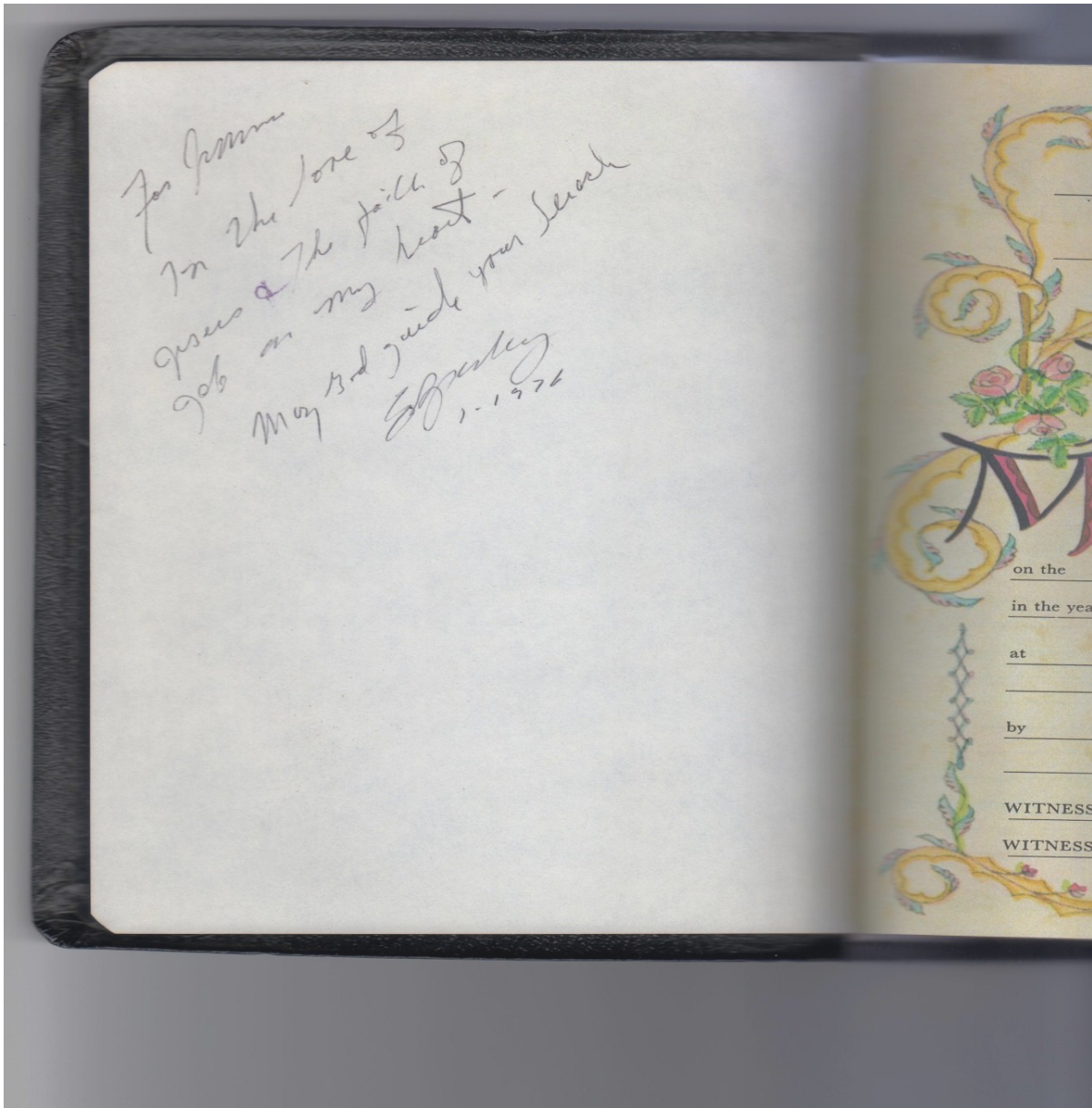
*(Interesting that psychic "readers" have said that Elvis had lived before in a place called Memphis, Egypt located near a major river, and Memphis, Tennessee is located near a major river, "The Mississippi" And that he said from the first day he saw Graceland, "it felt like coming home at last"... And he had "dreams about livin' in the desert -like maybe I did in some other time..." It has been in discussion that Elvis might have been "here on earth" many times, he thought so, and had dreams of being someone else in the past, usually he was disturbed by these dreams and sought to understand what they meant by reading and talking with people he felt "knew more than I'll ever think about" he'd say. Some of his dreams he felt very "close to" and that he was "reliving my past, maybe to help me with the present".*

*It is also very interesting that ancient statues of noted figures in history resemble Elvis a great deal—and after those statues that had sustained damage via age or war, they were repaired with the artisans using photographs of Elvis' face and profile to make the repairs! He would have been amazed to know that.)*

**Elvis:** You think I'd of made it as a...if I had jus' been a natural dirty blond?

*I don't know- that dark hair sets your eyes off more, and helps hide that big head!*

Elvis: (He snickers.) Yeah, tha's what they told me; eh, people in the business of of entertainment ya know, managers, so forth. An' I liked it darker; didn't go over real cool with momma, but she come around bout it though. (Snickers) I kinda think she got to likin' it once she was used to it, ya know. Sides that, if I had any boys, they'd be blond she said; you know, she had dreams 'bout grandkids. Me too really, I mean not my grandkids (snickers) that's down the road a ways; but jus' thought it'd be nice havin' a family. I like children, can learn a lot from them, like little visionaries, ya know.



This is the inside cover of the **Holy Bible, King James Version**, 1976 **Nelson Publishers**, in large print that Jimmie received from Elvis, for his birthday January 1<sup>st</sup>. Elvis wanted him to have this one because it was "easy to read and has a Study Guide in the back pages." (To Jimmie, In the love of Jesus & the faith of Job in my heart-May God guide your search." E Presley 1-1976)

Jimmie watched Elvis' favorite Sunday morning church service featuring **Rev. Rex Humbard** and his wife, **Maude Amie**; Elvis was pleased to know that, he tried to be near a television to catch that service himself.

**(I attended a Psychic Fair in late 1972)** I told Elvis I was going (he wished he could go along) I told him I'd try to get a reading for him, so according to instructions, I took a small picture of him sealed in an envelope to have readings done by psychic readers who would be there for that purpose. There was nothing written on the envelope, nor was the photo visible through the paper. No hint was given as to the sex or name of the person depicted in the photo by me. I handed it over to an older gentleman reader: this is part of the reading that was recorded by me. "This is a male – tall, considered above average in appearance or build – He is fun -loving, at present his life is in turmoil. There is a separating factor- someone he cared for is gone from his life ---taken away by another. I sense divorce. He is serious, a hard worker and takes things very personally at times when he should not. He possibly is a service worker – dealing with the public. I feel he has many followers – perhaps he teaches in some manner. And he is spiritual, gifted in the way he reaches people. He is well known among many- a writer or communicator. He tries too hard to please. I sense that he needs the approval of women to a great extent, and has often compromised his own needs to attain this approval. It must be that he feels "put upon" to return affection he would rather not return in order to have this approval. He is lonely, seeking someone – something- no – some person to fill his heart, his life. He will leave this Earth form early and he knows it. The first letter of his name is "E"."

When I gave Elvis the short recording of the reading, he said "Thank you – what did he say?" I told him he ought to go somewhere quiet and listen to it - that would be better than me telling him.

He never mentioned it again though as curious as he naturally was inclined to be- I think he listened.

**"The Time We Share Lasts for ever if *shared* again and always in memory that lives within the heart."** Elvis

I want to say a few words regarding some who knew Elvis on a more familiar basis, in his presence at home and other places, and spent time "face to face" with the man on a regular basis, feel when they are confronted with the fact that Elvis did not always tell everyone the same things. He listened, studied his friends and gave them what he felt

they needed, wanted and could use as far as his personal opinions and interests were concerned. At least, that is the conclusion I came to when I found out that he did not tell me some things, but he did share them with other people I knew who also knew him. It was kind of hard to take, I mean here I was listening to him, talking with him and sharing his thoughts, life and ideas via the phone, and then I find out he had told one of “our” friends something and had not shared it with me. And it happened a lot of the time; I just wasn’t aware at first, then I was kind of disturbed, questioning myself as to why had he not said anything to me? It wasn’t easy to take; I thought we had become close friends, so much so he was like my kid, my brother, a family member and here he wasn’t being “honest” or whatever it was? I got over it after a few days of thinking it over and realized he wasn’t keeping things from me, he just shared what he thought people wanted to know, what he felt comfortable saying, just like any other person would who cared about their friends.

It had to be a lot harder for his very close, live in friends to find out that he had secrets and he didn’t always share them, and that he had people all across the country that he talked to from time to time and he didn’t share that either! That he told someone “outside” their group things that he didn’t tell his close buddies; that had to be a shock to them, more so than it was to me when I learned he wasn’t always going to tell me everything he did or thought. It must have been and probably still is, hard to accept for many of those persons. Elvis had a way about him in dealing with people, he could meet them for the first time, spend a few minutes and the person would go away feeling as if Elvis thought they were special, that he singled them out in some way and that he was very interested in what they had to say. The truth is, he was. He looked forward to meeting new people, talking with them and sharing things he thought from time to time. He made everyone feel special, it was natural for him and nothing he did or planned, he “read” people quickly; he gave them what they wanted from him, he became “like” them and “fit in” accordingly so that they were comfortable and he enjoyed spending time with them. He loved people; he gave each something of himself according to their needs, when I learned that, it no longer bothered me when people questioned my experiences or my motives. I know that Elvis would give me that little nod of approval. That is more than enough for me! But then, I didn’t live my life for him as some seemed to; it’s understandable that they would question, especially if they shared a lot of time and confidences with him, doing his bidding and at times, getting “stabbed in the back” by other friends of his. Been there done that too. I just tried to understand, put myself in their place and realize what they went through was more emotional and life consuming than my own experience. Elvis was Elvis; he was a complicated human being and we all have our view, our perspective of what he was all about. We are all different...so of course that view is also.



## **ELVIS---“FACE TO FACE”**

By Wanda June Hill

*My memories of those days, for Elvis, with love-*

### ***The Impossible--Can Happen---***

It was just another normal, early spring California day, overcast as usual, though the sun did manage to “break through the haze around noon as it did nearly every day. It was hard for us to keep up with time; the days were a blur with no changing of the seasons as it is in other parts of the country. One thing we did love about the beach area of California, the weather was nice, cool nights and no humidity as we had in Oklahoma!

My “swing-shift” working husband Jim left for work. I took our daughter with me to the Laundromat and after loading the machines settled down with a discarded movie magazine. My nearly three year old soon found a playmate and his mother sat down near me. We engaged in the usual young mother conversation until she noticed the magazine I was looking through featured a story about Elvis. She told me her name was Diane; she was an actress, new to the area and currently working on a film with Elvis Presley. She must have noticed my skeptical reaction because she invited me to come to her home saying we could get tacos for dinner and let the children play. Her 4 year old son’s father was gone for a 6-week stay on a film location, she needed adult conversation she laughingly said, and then added that she was going to call Elvis. I could listen on an extension phone and maybe get to speak with him. She didn’t call him – he called her shortly after we entered her apartment to see if she was available for another film he was to start work on in a few weeks; she didn’t have time to show me another phone so I kept the kids busy and listened to her conversation. However, she did ask him if he had time to speak to me; he was hesitant, first saying no, he didn’t have the time, etc.

Elvis ended up saying hello to me, and intrigued that I did not know much about him or his career, talked for half an hour. My husband had been a fan for years, but I had been raised a strict Pentecostal. In fact, my first introduction to Elvis had been when our pastor preached an entire sermon on “how Elvis Presley was leading our youth into the fiery pit of hell” and for months afterward he was a “hot topic” at church gatherings.

During our first conversation Elvis learned that I was interested in getting a behind the scenes work at a movie studio and invited me to visit the set of the movie “*Kissin’ Cousins*” that was about to be finished, he just had a “little more things to do” before heading home to “Memphis”. My new girlfriend, Diane stood by open-mouthed, unable

to believe he was being that friendly to me, a total stranger; she told me she had never known him to be “that” friendly – unless it was his “type of woman and you told him you were married!” I didn't know enough about him or anything “Hollywood” to question; I was simply stunned that I had spoken to him and I couldn't wait to tell Jimmie or someone I knew! In fact, I don't to this day remember leaving her apartment, driving with my little girl in my MG roadster from the South end of Huntington Beach to the East end of Westminster where I “woke up” in my sister-in-law's driveway – and she wasn't home! So I went back to Huntington Beach to our apartment and tried to get my head straight so I could tell Jimmie everything that Elvis had said – he was the fan and I knew he'd be thrilled! As it turned out, Jimmie worked extra- 2 hours overtime – it figures!

My relatives didn't know what to think- doubting that it was really Elvis Presley- I mean why would he bother talking to someone he didn't know? I began to believe them- maybe it was someone else pretending to be Elvis, someone Diane knew maybe – but she had seemed to be really pleased he called, flirting with him and laughing. Well I wasn't certain – in fact I thought it wasn't him, after all – I didn't really know what he sounded like talking – I hadn't seen any of his films and walked out at the beginning of “*Flaming Star*” -- after seeing a movie we came to watch - so it probably wasn't him at all-- Then Diane called to invite me to bring Juliann and meet her and her son at the beach – she wanted to “tan up” for the movie that was to start soon. While sunning, I told her that I wasn't sure it was Elvis on the phone--she laughed and said, “Well, come home with me and I'll call him – maybe I can get him to talk to you again. I did – she did – and it WAS him! This time, there was no doubt--we had a three-way phone conversation and Elvis was a charmer, for certain! And to top that- a couple days later I went over to pick up her son to watch while she went to an audition; she had to call him to say she would be late the next day but would be there in time for the “shoot”--and she handed me the phone- he wanted to say hello! No one could ever tell me it wasn't HIM after that!

At Elvis' request, Diane called several weeks later to invite me to come to the studio with her. The idea of meeting Elvis was thrilling, but not nearly as exciting to me as the prospect that I might be able to land a job at MGM studios! Not as an actress but behind the scenes somewhere; my “dream” back then was to be a “script girl”. *They get to go* along on film sets no matter where in the world the set is located! Exciting thought!

On one of my earlier excursions to the beach (1962-65) with our little girl, I had met a very nice older lady **Mrs. G. Enid Miles**; she said her “main house” was in Malibu but she was sharing a beach house for the summer. We got acquainted when she came outside to sit on her balcony where she enjoyed watching my daughter and our little dog chasing sea gulls. On another day she and her housekeeper came down to the beach bringing a basket with some “goodies” and cold drinks for us to share. When Juliann and I had to leave, she gave me her telephone number, asked me to let her know when we could come

back because she so enjoyed our visit. She had been an actress as an extra usually, she added, but she had done some “on camera scenes and dialog” which was important in the “business”. I loved hearing her stories told in a soft slightly husky voice with a tinge of her native German dialect. She knew many of the older actors and actresses and had worked with many of them all the way back to silent film days. She had lots of “insider information” on older stars, and a few newer ones that was hilarious, much of it occurring in the costuming department of studios. I realized she was lonely, she said her son had died in an accident, her last husband, Mr. Miles had “moved to Europe to die”, and she was “outliving everyone”. Now that I am in my mid 70’s, I understand totally what that means,

I told Gretchen about speaking with Elvis Presley and his offer to visit a studio. Her eyes lit up; she told me by all means, “Go!” and she began telling me about seeing him “around Hollywood” when he was a “mere babe in arms, and that everyone knew he was going to make a big splash in the business”. If he managed to live through the ordeal of “steps” he would have to take to get there. I always wondered what she meant, but I guess he managed to take them “two at a time”. I spoke to her on the phone at least once a week; if I didn’t call her, she would call me even after she no longer was at the beach house. I think she enjoyed hearing about our little “escapades” and daily lives, many that made her laugh, and everyone needs that. The last time I rang her number, I learned that she had passed away---less than three and a half years after coming down to the beach with her basket of “goodies”. Thanks to your encouragements Gretchen, I “went down to that studio; I didn’t manage to land a job in costuming but---I met that “mere babe in arms”! You sure were right- he did make quite a “splash”!

It was 6:00 am on a “nippy” day with a cold wind coming from the Northeast, when Diane and I went through the studio gates. She went to make-up after directing me to “stay out of the way, don’t talk to anyone; if anyone asked, to say, “I’m here to stand-in”, and by all means, “stay off the (huge) sound stage and the set” while she went to wardrobe. There were more than a dozen attractive young women who were also in the film, standing near the area where I waited; they were discussing Elvis, relating stories of his love life and their chances with him. Judging from the things I was overhearing, he was pretty much their ideal man to have around. As I looked at those ladies, I felt very much out of place; these young women were beautifully groomed beauties who appeared to have great self-confidence. I on the other hand, was becoming pretty nervous about meeting Elvis- my teeth almost chattered, my knees jumped and time seemed to drag on and on. I even worried that I wouldn’t recognize him- after all, I had only seen him in magazines – wearing makeup at that. A sudden silence caused me to look up, the group of women turned almost as one and I followed their gaze. There he was, striding toward us, flanked by several men. Dressed in white jeans, white jacket and red shirt with his jet

black hair glistening under the lights, he looked like he was a piece of movie film; there was no doubt – he *was* Elvis!

He said “Hello” and “Uh-huh” as he passed the women, nodding and raising his eyebrows, chatting briefly, obviously well acquainted with them. That done, he came right up to me, held out his hand, looked straight into my eyes and pleasantly said, “Hi, I’m Elvis. Glad you came today- it’s gonna be slow, that gives us more time to talk.” His grip was warm, firm and masculine but I became aware of something squishy in our grasp. He let go; I dropped my gaze to see my palm smeared in a brownish gooey mess. I looked up; his eyes twinkled mischievously though his face was innocent; then with a muffled kind of mirthful snicker he wiped my hand and his with a towel and I realized it was make-up-he had played his first practical joke on me. (People have asked me if the men who came on the set with him were standing by; to tell the truth, I don’t know where they went or who was “standing by” – my total concentration was rather busy at that moment---and for quite a while after it!)

He asked me to sit beside him. My knees were weak; a muscle in my leg developed a nervous tick, causing my knee to jump. I hoped he would not notice-my voice shook however and he bit his lip, and then said with a sly glance my way. “If you’re cold---sit closer.” I couldn’t believe it, but there he was-Elvis Presley, crisp black hair, tanned skin, eyes as blue as an Oklahoma sky and he was sitting next to me!

As he studied his script-I studied him. His features were perfectly chiseled, reminding me of Greek statuary, his eyes, heavy lidded with thick charcoal lashes. He had a red rash on his neck caused by the wig he wore in parts of the movie he said. His lips were full but not as much as I had expected from seeing photos of him; I noticed his lower lip had a slight indention in the middle, with a “bump” next to it, giving that lip a pouty appearance. A few years later he told me his lip had been split when he was a kid and a front tooth chipped but his teeth had been capped and he had “grown into” his lips about the time he had his first hit record. When he spoke it was in warm, softly slurred tones, and he liked you to face him. He tended to look into your eyes, first one, and then the other. As I watched him he bit his lower lip, appeared about to chew his fingernails and then acted as if he were trying to break that habit. He kept an eye on the women, pausing from his study, holding the place with a finger, and appeared more interested in one dark-haired girl. Later, I learned he was supposed to have lunch with her-instead he asked me.

He had interesting hands, mistreated appearing, broad palms, and long slim fingers with delicate tapered ends. Karate, rough housing, football and carelessness had abused them. His arms were not hairy with what hair on them light brown as was his natural hair color beneath the black dye. He used his hands to talk, gesturing and shaping them to fit

his conversation. And when spoken to Elvis listened intently, totally absorbed in that person's conversation.

Besides those people working the cameras and equipment, etc, there didn't seem to be very many people around other than the group of girls, a few fellows standing by, and some who were doing what seemed to be "standing in" for someone else. Elvis said it was the "last day" and I think he said something like "filler work" but now I am not sure what it was called, though Diane called it "re-takes". I watched him run through a scene with his two leading ladies, walk with them, lip-syncing a song and then jump into a pile of hay. After the director said "cut", Elvis sat astraddle of one of them, playing with her and saying something that made both of them laugh. While this was occurring the other women talked about him, along the line of his body, his looks, his sexy walk and how they'd like to get him up, down or sideways.

Elvis was puppy-dog friendly, commenting on my freckles, saying I looked like a "strawberry sundae" and then "tasting" to see gave me a quick kiss on my cheek. I blushed, he laughed. As he held my hand he said he could remove warts (I had a flat small one on a finger-he had some faint scars where some had been removed from his forearm and just above one wrist) and he licked my finger, giggling when I blushed again. He liked my jade green dress and long dark reddish brown hair that was sun-streaked from living at the beach. As he ran his fingers through it he teased, "Ummmm...Natural; are you sure you're married?" I have always wished I had a picture of the mischievous grin and the wink that went with that question and his next comment. "You believe it's me now?" I nodded yes, thinking "darn- Diane told him"!

I remember he asked me what job I thought I'd like to do at the studio and I said I was waiting until the offices opened to fill out an application. He looked at me a moment, then said, "Oh--" and looked away; I got the feeling he took that as if I was "killing time" with him or something so I quickly said, "I'm sure glad we came early! I get to watch you work and talk to *Elvis Presley!*" He glanced at his feet, and then said "Yeah--um glad too--otherwise I'd be sittin' here alone--" Very seriously I said, "Sure--" and he laughed. I loved the way he laughed, and so many people feel the same.

He had to get ready to do a scene and said, "Excuse me, Strawberry," then asked, "watch my jacket" and tossed it toward me; his wallet came out landing open on the floor almost at my feet; he added "Please get that for me..." as he walked quickly away out of sight. When I picked up the fold over leather wallet that had a broken zipper, I replaced the loose items and looked at the small picture sleeve section. There was a photo of a group of men and himself, a cute one of Priscilla, a professional looking black and white photo of his parents, two gasoline cards, a couple of newspaper clippings and a Memphis driver's license but no money visible, though I didn't go "digging" through the wallet.

(His license photo was perfect; mine always looked like I was “on something” or “Ma Barker, the hatchet lady”!) I put it back into the jacket pocket before laying it on his chair; hardly had I done so when a young man came from somewhere and snatched the jacket up, taking it away.

When Elvis returned from redoing the scene they had rehearsed earlier he was sweating, his shirt soaked front and back and I realized though it looked like fun, he was *working* for the cameras. He was standing a few feet from me speaking with **Gene Nelson** the director who was telling him what he had planned in the afternoon. The Wardrobe lady came over, removed Elvis’ wet shirt, put a dry one on him, buttoned it, tucked it in and though he murmured a soft thank you, he hardly gave her a second look so intent was he in what the director was telling him.

He sat down and the make-up lady who looked to be in her early forties came over applied lipstick to his lips, kissed them and said, “That’s the way I like to blot that lipstick, honey.” Dead serious, Elvis replied, “Maybe you better do it again-feels kinda heavy.” She obliged, lingered over it and he murmured, “Move on honey-I’m getting excited.” She laughed saying “Oh you tease!” As she walked away he lazily looked over at me and with a sly grin said, “It’s a livin’.”

I was a little concerned about having “lost” his wallet and jacket so I told him they had been picked up by a man who had since disappeared. He glanced in the direction the guy had gone and said, “Don’t worry ‘bout it-he’s with me” and went back to chatting with a male background actor who was dressed kind of like what a Hollywood costumer thought a country boy would wear-I guess?

A bit later, Elvis excused himself, saying he’d be right back and walked quickly over to a group of young women who were also in the film. It was amazing how they all appeared to “light up” as he approached. He paused beside a dark haired beauty, took her arm and walked her a few paces away from the group where they two had a short conversation. She didn’t seem pleased, turned on her heels and walked away. Elvis nervously ran the fingers of one hand through the side of his hair as if momentarily unsure, a habit he can be seen doing as he steps onto the stage in the “*On Tour*” documentary of live concert performances that was filmed at various sites around the country in the 70’s. He stood there a moment and then came back, sat down in his chair, slumped slightly, crossed one leg over the other and drummed his fingers on his knee. “Back so soon?” I asked, as he appeared perturbed. He sort of shook his shoulders like a dog shaking off water and said, “It’s hot in here-maybe they’ll get the fans goin’ soon.”

That was my first encounter with his quick ability to “change the subject” without any further discussion of whatever it was he didn’t want to discuss.

Thirty minutes before noon Elvis confided that he had to take something to “tranquil ma lizer” before eating or his nervous stomach would cause him to “lose my lunch ‘n that ain’t pretty, ya know.” A young man brought him a small dish of yogurt and gave him a little white and red capsule which Elvis took with a spoonful of yogurt. He seemed to be enjoying it, licking the spoon etc. He sat down, got some on the spoon and held it out in my face saying, “Try some- it's good!” I said no thank you; I don't care for yogurt at all. He frowned saying, “You'll like it”-and held it closer to my mouth. His eyes had a look of “Damn it- do it!” so I let him feed it to me, swallowed hard and wished for something to wash it down! Elvis had a smug smile on his face and said, “It grows on ya--.” and walked away. It wasn't just that I didn't want the yogurt which I did dislike-it was the fact I didn't want to eat after him-- I mean he WAS Elvis Presley, a Hollywood star and according to “reputation” a woman chaser! I hardly knew him then, and was just beginning to see the man behind the “star”. I'm just glad he didn't notice the goose bumps I got from swallowing that yogurt which was terrible tasting stuff-fruit or not!

Elvis was nervous, constantly moving, tapping his foot or hands restlessly. I asked if he had an ulcer. He said, “I hope not! I’m not that old-yet!” Age has nothing to do with it, I said and as he looked at me his eyes turned serious. I was impressed with their vivid color, such a deep sky blue, enhanced by tiny specks of glittering black. “I’ve always been nervous”, he confided softly. “Since I was little; runs in the family to be hyper.” He went on to say that his parents often took turns, sitting up all night when he was a baby because he would not sleep. I said maybe it was because he had been born very intelligent and had nothing to occupy his mind at that age. Hyperactive children often have superior intelligence, I added. He stared seriously into my eyes a moment and then asked, “Do you read?” I said yes-do you? And he began talking about the book he was “right in the middle of”, explaining it was a true story of the lives led by Tibetan monks in India. Just then he was interrupted to rehearse a song he was to “lip-sync” in the next scene. I remember being surprised-nothing I had read or heard had told me that Elvis Presley *liked* to read.

He returned a little later wearing a different outfit, the lady keeping track of costumes came over, talked a few minutes then left for lunch. Elvis sat down, then leaned over, practically into my lap and spoke into my ear asking, “Honey, please have lunch with me?” I can’t remember what I answered but vividly recall him smiling sweetly as he took my arm to guide me across the set, past all the wiring, cables, lighting and cameras and other equipment and out into another area. As we walked Elvis spoke to everyone standing around or that we passed; apparently he knew them all by name, though I later realized some of the names he used were his own “nick names” for them- Diane he called “Clu” because she said she was always saying “Clue me-somebody-clue me” on the two

films she had done with him. Things changed so quickly she couldn't keep up and they didn't do many retakes on his movies unless it involved a scene he was doing. That was obvious-in "*Kissin' Cousins*" there are two different shirts on his body during the same sequence of film-only the color was correct!

He held open the door of his trailer dressing room and two men came out. Elvis stopped to speak quietly to one of the younger men, and then we went inside. He said, "I ordered bacon an' tomato sandwiches an' salads –hope you like them." He glanced my way, paused and then said, "If you'd like you could eat in the commissary, maybe see a star or two an' make your visit worthwhile?"

Realizing he was serious I replied, "This is great-you're the "star" I came to see today; thank you!" He smiled slightly saying, "Okay, please sit down "and nodded toward a chair at the small table. "Ya know" he said kind of off handily, "this fim's got a lot of good actors in it, really; they jus' ain't here today." He turned on the television, then said, "Excuse me" and pulled off his shirt and rinsed his hair at the sink to "get out the hair spray" which he said "itched" and in combing that hair, slung water around the small room. It was fascinating to watch him combing and shaping his hair, standing before that mirror watching his reflection, totally natural, appearing unaffected by having an "audience". He was well built though not heavily muscled and had tiny brown moles, and what looked like bruises here and there on his back and shoulders. I didn't want to stare, but there were mirrors on both sides of the wall reflecting everything including a small day bed like couch. As he dried off, he turned toward me and I could see that he was not a hairy guy and the moderate chest hair he had was light brown-not black. (As he grew older, he said he had grown "a rug" on his chest-he thought it was "due to the stuff doctor's gave me for helpin' me get goin' when I'm workin'" By this time he was having serious health issues.) He slipped on a pale blue, almost white shirt buttoning only one button and left the tail out. He paused to adjust the television sound up a tad and then sat down saying, "I got that on so we can talk-okay?" (Actually, as Elvis grew older he developed more chest hair as most men do; and he didn't have to "shave it off for fim's by then". Today I wonder what he'd think of the guys removing all hair off their body. Times have changed!

### *The Man...*

As our friendship progressed over time, I learned that he often had "background noises" going to cover up what he might be saying to someone in private. Apparently he felt he had to do that if he wanted to talk freely with anyone. He called his bathrooms "my office" sometimes and took people in there, shut the door and was known to run water to cover up his conversations...and many a time he was sitting on the floor inside the bathrooms wherever he might be, talking on the phone. A few times he said "they're



havin' a party an' I just wanted to get out of there, ya know...kinda gets to be too much sometimes."

A while ago, I read a piece written by a lady who was in a hotel where Elvis and his group were staying. She and a friend got off an elevator on the wrong floor when trying to locate their rooms; they discovered Elvis sitting out in the hallway, reading a book. Across the hall and down from him was another set of rooms where laughter and music could be heard from the hallway. Elvis signed autographs for them, and in talking with them explained that "they" were having a party, and he felt the need to get away from it for a while and that was why he was in the hallway alone. She said he was "gracious, polite and friendly" and of course, very handsome; meeting him was an unforgettable experience for them.

That day on the set he said he was tired, "they" had a party the night before and he had been working hard on the film, finishing most of it in just 16 days-[the whole thing took about 28 days] and he said it was the fastest he'd ever seen anybody make a movie. He stretched his arms over his head, popping his neck and added that he was hungry; he had not eaten dinner the night before and got up too late for breakfast. "I got to get more sleep" he commented, "or else have dark circles under my eyes an' look bad on film." I remember saying something like I doubted he could look too bad---even if he were covered in mud. He flashed that famous grin and shyly murmured, "Thank you."

I have to say, he had the cutest grin and the brightest smile of any movie actor anywhere-and it was so natural, totally unaffected and devastatingly charming. I was impressed by his attitude, his seeming lack of any sense of grandeur because of who he was, and the fact that he certainly was "the star" of that "fim".

He was courteous; saying we'd better wash our hands because they were bringing sandwiches and then getting a clean towel he let me dry my hands before he used it. He was taller than most men I knew, but he kind of kept his head low when he spoke, looking me in the eyes, and being very attentive as he moved my chair closer to his before I sat down.

Lunch was delivered. Elvis locked the door behind the deliveryman and then sat down. I felt him watching me and looked up to see amusement in his eyes and a little smile on his face as he was wiping off his fork before using it with the inside "clean" napkin and I was doing the same thing with mine. It was ironic coincidence when almost in unison we both lifted the bread off the rather thick "club" sandwiches to check the contents. We neither one said a word about that but over the years we discovered we shared other similar "habits" and we both wanted our bacon very crisp--as in "burned".

He wolfed down his bacon and tomato sandwich; I gave him half of mine – he ate it in three bites. One would think he hadn't eaten in days! He practically inhaled the little crackers that came with the salads, his salad and mine, drank his milk and part of mine and said he was still hungry, but was on a diet. Did I think he was too thin? I said he was just about perfect and he laughed, his nose wrinkling, white teeth flashing in a crooked grin and it was then I realized I had seen that face a hundred times in print. He touched my chin gently with a finger and said he wasn't "near perfect, but workin' on it ever day!"

After he had devoured everything but the containers, Elvis asked if I would like a cigarette and when I said I didn't smoke, he politely asked if it would bother me if he smoked. He lit up a thin cigar and made sure to blow the smoke away from me; I noticed he played with the cigar, using it as a prop kind of when talking more than he actually smoked it. I mentioned hearing that he didn't smoke. He bit his lip slightly, shook his head and said, "Yeah, try not to get publicity doin' that-don't want kids smokin' 'cause I do; ya know how that goes, really." I said, you have a pretty clean image, in fact the only publicity you get involves who you might be dating or just the movie promos-that's pretty good considering who you are.

He looked serious a moment, then turned on that slow fabulous smile that lit up his face and eyes so well and said, "Thank you very much; I try to leave the best impression I can out in public." He looked like he was going to say something more, but didn't so I said, well, you do a good job of it. He grinned and said, "It's my private life that I have to worry 'bout keepin' hid! I ain't no saint! Not out doin' nothin' gonna make headlines ... or maybe they ain't caught me right yet!" His eyes danced, he had the cutest grin on that face and I had to laugh along with him.

He made some comments about having the "fellows" working for him keeping an eye out for people-strangers-he made a point of saying, from "sneaking around an' interrupting the filming" etc. and I said, that was a good idea - because who would know, "I might have been intending to knife you in the back." He looked a bit surprised, then smiled saying he knew better than that – he'd spoken to me, after all; and then he said, "I might have been a secret hatchet killer, or worse- you're the one taking a chance!" We laughed, and any "ice" left was broken. (In speaking with my "one old friend who had been "there" a time or two" she reminded me that I had told her when we (Elvis and I) laughed about being "secret killers" Elvis had said very off handedly and with a very straight face, "Can't recall how many hatchets I killed, really...been a lot of 'em." He grinned so cute when looking at my kind of questioning expression; I wasn't sure what he meant, then it hit me- he had sense of humor! We both laughed about that and the "ice was broken".)

A kind of funny thing about that cigar- a bit later when we were back out on the set the cigar was “dead”; I thought he was going to throw it away when he glanced around as if looking for a place, but then I realized he was looking for someone to give it to when he turned to me, handed it over and then walked off to do whatever he had to do next. It dawned on me that more than likely in his experience, there would be a fan or someone who would want his cigar- just like they wanted just about everything or anything he might have touched. It wasn't ego on his part, just habit and wanting to be obliging and aware there might be someone who would be thrilled to get “Elvis' cigar”! I still have it; I wouldn't have asked for it or picked it up had he tossed it aside--but it's been kept in a sealed glass jar for all these years.

Elvis asked what work did my husband do, did he have hobbies etc. and then he hunted around for something to give him, apologizing because most of his things had been taken home as the film was winding up. Finally, he took a pair of cuff links set with black onyx stones from a white ruffled front shirt with French cuffs that was hanging in the closet and gave them to me. He autographed a couple of black and white movie stills, one of him with a stand-in for **Yvonne Craig** and another of just him. He included a small picture of himself in the “hated” wig and autographed it. Before I left he found a picture of one of his co-stars, **Cynthia Pepper**; I asked if he could get it signed. He looked at me a moment, then said, “I certainly...can ask her when I see her”. And he did and she did, though it was a bit later before I received it in the mail. Elvis liked her; especially her freckles and friendly personality, and said she was a very good actress. He spoke of his home in Memphis, then saying he lived in the hills of Bel Air when in Los Angeles. He smiled, and then said, “You know where I live-should be able to find it now you got the secret code”.

I had told him when talking with him on the phone at Diane's apartment, about how my husband's younger brother and I had tried to find his house months earlier and we got “lost” because he had just moved there and he had told me that, to discourage sightseers he and his “guys” had turned the sign posts around to point in the wrong direction so that anyone looking for him would end up driving around and around... which we did several times!

Elvis had been home that day we drove around and around those hillside roads in a 53 MG roadster trying to figure out the map. He thought it was pretty funny, watching that little car going around and around and was as gleeful as a kid snickering about that sign working so well. As we discussed that scene again he invited us to come back and visit, adding we should move to Memphis, including any family members we had too!

He mentioned he would like to have a family, children, but he did not have anyone in mind- didn't want to get married for a while yet. Then he innocently confided, that he did see one girl more than the rest, adding that she was "so young" (**Priscilla**) and he "wanted her to grow up first". With a twinkle in those deep "*Faded Glory*" denim blue eyes, he added that he liked all the girls and as long as he felt that way, he should stay single-right? I agreed, saying that he probably could have his pick judging from the bunch outside. He grinned, ducked his head shyly and said, "I know."

He moved to the couch, asked me to sit with him and played with my hand, my wedding ring and asked when I had married-how old? He said I didn't look old enough to have a child but he guessed so as he had come close to being married at 19.

That magical, mystical quality called, "charisma" almost overwhelmed me as he sat very close to me, his long legs stretched out, and so close I could feel the warmth of his thigh touching mine; it wasn't calming that he was jittery, never truly still. It was if some huge, pulsating "hulk" were sitting there yet he was not that large a man, five feet, eleven and three quarters in height and of medium build. Yet his inner being, his true self, the PRESENCE that made him Elvis was tremendous and overcame my consciousness, making it difficult not to stare at him and hard to say anything coherent. Fortunately he seemed to have no trouble communicating and appeared to be unaware of his effect. I wondered if this "take-over" was the result of his ability for intense concentration, for what they call in Karate, "one-pointedness". It was no contrived intent on Elvis' part: he made no effort to create this effect. This presence was merely a natural power, an influence inborn at his birth and Elvis, as unpretentious as he was could not, throughout his entire lifetime, conceive this charismatic "effect". It was as natural as breathing to him. In fact, he often wondered "what are they lookin' at, really?"

Time passed so quickly; he did most of the talking, relating how "fims" were made saying he was making one right after another and there were 3 lined up for the next year or so and he mentioned how fast this last one was made several times. I asked when it would be out in theaters and he said he wasn't sure, but it usually took several months to "put it all together" and there was another one due out first that he'd done earlier. He was looking forward to being home for the holidays, "home" being Memphis, and said he needed to "get the hell out of here" for awhile. That was surprising, at that time I thought it looked like fun but now I guess anything can turn into "work" after a while.

He checked his watch and then excused himself saying he had to "brush my teeth-the girls won't like it if I don't." He disappeared inside the small bathroom and shut the door. In a few minutes he came out, offered me a stick of gum, and had one himself and then said he had to be getting back to work as he tucked in his shirt tail.

We were stared at as we came back onto the set and I am sure I was blushing when he nuzzled under my hair and kissed my neck as he sat me back into the chair next to the one marked “Elvis Presley”.

Later I learned that he had canceled a previously made lunch “date” in order to invite me and heard that he often spent time in dressing rooms with his leading ladies or other women appearing in his films, and sometimes was not just having lunch with them. I realized that it had been his intention for everyone interested to think something had been “going on” during that lunch break! After a few more of those “intentions” during the first year of our friendship, I told him to knock it off ... He very solemnly said “Okay” but when I looked into those eyes there was that devilish sparkle going on and then realizing that I knew what he was thinking he said, “Okay. Promise.” He kept his word for nearly 15 years.

When he was between “shots” for a time, several girls asked him to break boards, and he did, splintering them with his bare hands. That feat not exciting enough, they asked him to allow them to “feel of your muscles, Elvis” and I was puzzled as he was not the body-builder type. He got up, let them put their arms about him and he began to shimmy the muscles of his chest much like a snake writhes. They squealed, one asked if he could do that lying down. “Standin’ on my head baby, if you want...” was the reply in a softly slurred voice, “but why would I want to do that?” His expression was as innocent as a little boy’s, until one looked into those blue eyes. The young women giggled then moved on; he turned to me and with a glint in those eyes murmured, “What can I do? They just won’t leave me alone until I let them have their fun...” I was intrigued by how patient and gracious he was toward everyone who approached him.

Years later when talking about his early career days, he told me that a lady friend who was an “exotic dancer” taught him how to execute (his word) that upper body shimmy and to do some other moves that he used on stage and then Karate allowed him to have the strength and grace for stage performances. He said he loved being able to move around, to feel and perform the music he felt when on stage; it was exciting for his audiences because it was exciting for himself and for his fellow musicians and singers.

It would seem that Elvis had every opportunity for sexual trysts and that was what I supposed, but after I over-heard one of his co-stars ask another, “So what happened with Elvis last night? Did you get him alone?” I began to see him in a different light. In a motherly tone of voice his dark haired co-star who also had a part in “*It Happened At the World’s Fair*”, answered, “Yeah-but poor baby, he was so tired! After dinner, we watched a movie in his room and before it was over he went to sleep!” I was amused, he was at least five years older than she yet she was concerned and protective of him as were

most of the young women working with him. They all had their “eye” on him but comments flew about how nervous he was, the fact he didn’t sleep enough and he was such a “sweetheart” to them all.

One of the young women said, “He paid my rent-can you believe it! He heard I hadn’t been paid yet-and he gave me the rent money!” She hadn’t worked with him before and he had promised she’d be called in on the next picture coming up later. She said, “He told me to call in daily to get work between films!”

I was to learn over time, that Elvis was always helping people in any way he could, sometimes in secret, but always if he could make their life easier in some way. So often did he do these kinds of things, he commented that his “daddy was gonna go bald from pullin’ his hair out stewin’ over things...” the money his son “foolishly wasted” all the time. His father grew up “dirt poor” and struggled-it was never easy for him to spend money-he’d seen it come and go much too often and he was “in charge of Elvis’ money and the bills”. He knew how generous his son had been from child hood-but it still bothered him when his son gave his money away so easily. Often it was cash and he didn’t get receipts or keep a record of what he spent making it very difficult for his father to account for that money. Elvis believed money was for one purpose, to buy things, to bring happiness to others and he said, “My pleasure is in knowing something I can do will make other people happy...it’s important to my happiness, you know. I get to see those smiles.” (Not to mention all the hugs and kisses.)

His father was concerned that Elvis wasn’t careful enough in whom he befriended, and was far too trusting of too many people, who in turn did take unfair advantage of Elvis’ generosity and his desire to help people. As I got to know Elvis, to see and hear about some of his “escapades” and his oftentimes childish trust in his fellow human beings, I too, worried about him getting “in trouble” with sly, conniving characters who would be more than happy to relieve him of his cash, assets and anything else they could do--one thing though, he did learn not to sign *anything*-except autographs. That lesson was well learned in the last year and a half of his life when to help out friends, he agreed to lend his name to a sports facility that would be in Memphis and then other states as it grew in popularity. He thought he was “jus’ lettin’ ‘um use ma name” but as it turned out, he would be responsible for backing up the company with his money--- as needed. And they “needed a lot- more’n I got for such stuff as that!” He exclaimed indignantly. He had to hire lawyers to get out of paying for all that, and then had to pay the lawyers to do it! He wasn’t too happy to say the least--but he learned to be careful what he signed.

Apparently that business became a sore spot in several lives, caused some debts and hard feelings and mostly because a few people didn’t like the fact that they were not “in on a sure thing” and began telling Elvis things that were not quite the truth. In the end,

everyone took “a fall” of sorts and Elvis learned “his lesson” – he never wanted to “get involved doing anything with “friends” in business again-that way he wouldn’t have to handle any “back lash” from anybody working for him, etc. And he sure wasn’t putting his name on anything he didn’t own,” lock, stock and barrel”!

### **Traps and Snares...**

When I left the studio that day, Elvis gave me his home phone number that rang in his bedroom he said, and asked me to call him. Diane was livid with anger- it had taken her a year to get it. On the way home she asked me what I had “done to him” during lunch break, accused me of betraying her saying she had told me to stay with the girls and away from Elvis. But no, she said, I had “just walked in and taken over”. She implied that I “owed her” for bringing me to meet him. I was in a state of shock, and not being the confrontational type, I was speechless.

She began telling me how to “keep his interest” saying I was “just his type-naive and innocent looking. Someone he thought would let him be the boss”. She went on saying “Elvis has a few “hang ups” about sex, didn’t want “his women getting knocked up” and since I was married, with a young child and none on the way, he would think I used some form of birth control and he “felt safe”. She said he would “love thinking he was better” than my husband. I “should use that” to keep his interest. That he had a “need to be hurt” and that he liked being “bitten and scratched” as long as it didn’t show; though he did not like aggressive women out of the bedroom, he very much did in the bedroom especially if they were “giddy over him”. She added that he tended to be macho when “unsure of himself “and there had been “problems with some women” that had “got that far” with him. She warned me that Priscilla was “the threat” and I ought never to let her know I had anything going with Elvis. His men, she said would break up any relationship he had and would be dirty and devious about it-to watch out for them. She informed me I was probably the “only married one on his list right now” and that fact would not matter to him---it was a plus!

When I tried to say Elvis didn’t seem that way to me, and that he knew I was married and he hadn’t *done anything*. She snorted, “Give him time-you’ll find out! If he wants a girl, he goes after her! I’ve seen that look and he’s got it aimed at you!” She went on to say that if he invited me to his house, if I “got that far with him” she would expect me to get her back in his good graces as she wasn’t signed on for his next film, or invited to many of his parties at the house and she added, “Sonny wasn’t around much lately”. She said Joe had seen to that.

I didn't have a clue as to whom "Sonny" and "Joe" might be and I sure didn't want to get involved any further with her plans in any way, shape or form! In fact I was appalled that this woman considered me a co-conspirator and had told me such personal things. I felt she was totally wrong, besides that, I certainly did not measure up to the beautiful ladies on the set and he knew he could take his pick. No way was he "out to get me"! By the time we reached home it was apparent that we two were from "different worlds" and I didn't care to join hers; after all, I had his phone number – I could call him myself.

Years later, when I told Elvis about the things I'd heard that first day, he was surprised, saying he did not realize that women made "attack plans" for him. He asked me why I had not tried any of her suggestions and wanted to know, "Didn't you want to---try me out-like all the rest?" I told him that had not occurred to me and then later, I was only curious at all the action he had thrown his way. He laughed; I asked, so did you think about putting me on "that list"? He kind of snickered and then said, "It didn't seem like a good idea, you bein' married- and it sure would have ruined a good friendship!" He kind of laughed and added in that semi-macho way he so easily adapted, "Sides, had other plans for you...baby... Really." I asked, and what were those? He laughed, lapsing into his "aw shucks" style saying, "Aww-no, ain't got 'em figured out jus' yet-but I'll let you know--"

We went on to discuss men and women having truly platonic relationships, if he thought it possible and he said that when he was young he had not thought that was possible, but as he got older and "grew out of that hot, urgent age" he had many female friends and it had created no problem that he didn't have a sexual relationship. In fact, he stated, "I enjoy their friendships, like I do with men friends." He added, "There's more to life than just sex anyway-took me a while-but got *that* outta my system." And he laughed that wonderful engaging, strictly Elvis giggling laugh.

I did not phone Elvis right away after getting his telephone number-several days passed.(though some *commercially published* stories/books say "the next day"! I didn't really believe that number rang in his bedroom-but he said call him at around 5:30 or 6:00 so one morning I did. He answered the phone, he was having coffee and reading the newspaper and was just going to "brush his teeth" he said. He appeared to be glad to hear from me and as months passed, I quickly learned that Elvis loved to talk, and talk some more, and that he was lonely although he had several men living with him and was seldom alone. It was not long before he invited my husband and me to come to a party. Jim worked nights and he would not take off work-*ever*-unless someone had died, but he got out a map to show me a quick way to get to Bel Air Estates –he was not upset or jealous-after all, it was Elvis.



Several months went by before Jimmie told me that Elvis had called him to ask would it be all right if he talked with me on the phone and could he “borrow” me once in a while to help him out with some of the charity functions that came up now and then. Jimmie said yes, and Elvis promised he would look after me like family. He also said he thought it would be best if I didn’t know about this conversation because “we don’t want any ‘hissin’ and spittin’ goin’ on, and you know how women can be.” I wasn’t angry-I thought my husband was wonderful and that it was sweet of Elvis to consider his feelings although I had told Elvis Jimmie wouldn’t mind if he called- and we discussed “jealously, etc.; Elvis was very jealous of his “Cilla” and admitted it. However when I told my Missouri born, Capricorn dad that Elvis had talked with Jimmie, *he* was upset! He was *sure* that “woman crazy nut” Elvis was “laying a trap”!

It’s funny now, but after Elvis died, some of his pals indignantly said, “He’d NEVER call some woman’s husband and ask permission to see his wife!” I told Jimmie who said, “Really--how the hell would they know- they had their nose shoved so far up his butt-it’d be hard to see or hear anything!” He sat in that Hilton coffee shop after the midnight shows several times with me and our friends and saw quite a bit of “action”. All of us thought about telling Elvis but we didn’t because it would have upset him to know how some of his group behaved in *public* places and *not* just at the Hilton. But you know, as Elvis said, “Truth is like the sun, you can shut it out for a while, but you sure as hell can’t keep it from comin’ back.” And by late 1976 Elvis became very aware of the duplicity of some of his “friends”.

It was an interesting party; his house was functional, not fancy considering he was a movie star and lived in Bel Air. There were some beautiful people there, mostly movie extras, a few who might have one line or two here and there in various venues and made for television movies, but there were some men who dropped by who later became TV stars and also starred in a few movies. The young women, of all ages really, were there for one reason-Elvis, who came out looking like he’d just stepped out of the pages of a magazine. He kept people laughing and there was back ground music playing though I didn’t hear any of his recordings that night; one thing I noticed right away was the lighting-apparently all the bulbs were red and bathed everything and everyone in a pinkish glow. A bit later he came by and stopped a minute and in typical Elvis style, as if he’d read my mind, began explaining that red bulbs were energy producers, red was a sexy color, making everyone feel good. I remember asking, so do the red lights work? He said what? I said do they make you feel sexy? He looked kind of surprised, then grinned and said over his shoulder as he was being led away by a beautiful young woman, “Don’t need lights for that, Sugar!”

The gathering was noisy, and I’m not a party person; I didn’t stay long as it was impossible to talk to Elvis anyway, and I didn’t feel that I fit in, and Diane, (De-De as she

liked to be called), was not there either. I had a brief conversation with one of Elvis' friends who said his name was Allan; he wanted to know if I was there "by myself". I said I was; my husband couldn't take off work to come. Allan was friendly, nice offering, that the next time I came, I could bring a friend; he wasn't always there but usually "would be around; if I needed anything, to ask for him. I asked if he would tell Elvis I had to leave; he said "just go over there and tell him." Elvis was engaged in talking football with the guys, it was too intimidating for me to interrupt and I decided to leave without saying goodbye. On the way out I saw a couple of guys who were busy talking with two lovely ladies that I recognized as being background actors in "*Kissin' Cousins*". (Jimmie and I actually went to an *indoor theater* to see it when it came out, and we had gone to see the release of the earlier film at a drive-in-theater. I had not seen "*Jailhouse Rock*", "*Love Me Tender*" or any of his early films until the 1970's when he was "hot" and playing Vegas and his films began to be on television or a special showing at a theater.) Later, I learned that most of the men who were at his house worked for Elvis, one of them was Diane's "Joe" and another was Elvis' cousin, Billy.

And I did meet one of his housekeepers who also cooked meals for him; she worked for him quite a few years when he was making films and living in Bel Air. He had a couple of ladies who worked at his home; one had been around longer, he told me. When I met her it was a brief moment, she was wearing a white dress as housekeepers in that area of town were often seen wearing. Sometime later on when she was at an Elvis convention I didn't realize until I was told who she was because she was not wearing that uniform and looked totally different than my memory of that brief meeting at his home. I didn't expect that she would recall me either; I went over to say hello, and to suggest that she should write down everything she could recall about those times with Elvis, because the memories of those who knew him would be important to new fans in the future. She probably thought I was nuts; it was something I felt I had to say; little did I know how my words would be "revised" by others who say they were present but apparently didn't hear what I actually said. Thankfully she did put those wonderful and heartfelt moments spent around him into a book, and now they are "forever".

Several of his male friends/employees turned up in the Presley movies, even his dad and Priscilla managed to be in background scenes in a couple films! Elvis definitely was "keeping it in the "family"!" His dad and Priscilla were in the background scenes of "*Viva Las Vegas*" when Elvis is singing "*Yellow Rose of Texas*" and trying to "empty the showroom to find "Rusty" who was **Ann-Margret's** character in that film. She was not in that entire segment so Elvis brought young Priscilla with his dad serving as her "guardian" to take part in the activities and see Las Vegas. Today it's said Priscilla was "dressed to look older" and "heavily made up, wearing clothes too old for her age and Elvis wanted her to look that way, etc." however, having lived during that period of time and having dressed *exactly* the same way at her age (16) I do not see *anything* out of the

ordinary. He was merely letting her watch him working and let her have a good time while she was visiting from Germany. And his father was right there, looking after her the whole time.

A few months later, I went to an address in Laguna Beach to a “get together” after Diane who continued working in movie background scenes and still had hope of getting back in Elvis’ good graces, reluctantly told me Elvis asked her to make sure I knew he invited me and my family, and she told me that Elvis said if I came, to be sure he knew I was there. Since he had expressed a desire to see her I took my little girl who was three and a half years old, going on thirty some times. I dressed her in a blue and white checked dress with puffy white sleeves and a big bow in the back. It had matching ruffled panties and she had new white *Mary Jane*’s to wear with a little matching purse. And her long hair was hanging in curls held back with a barrette that matched the dress. She stood turning this way and that, in front of the floor to ceiling mirror closet doors and said very seriously, “Sevis will like me- I look pretty!” She was right.

When we arrived several people were hanging around outside and one of his men stopped us and checked inside before letting me enter. Anytime I had to deal with his guys Elvis told me what to tell them and until 1972 it always worked but as time passed, and the huge success of his live shows increased, things changed.

The other guests were of various ages, most young and appearing to have known Elvis for some time. The men were discussing a touch football game that had occurred that afternoon and were talking about Elvis hurting his wrist and they were questioning his ability to play on the weekend. Elvis loved football and had his own team-even had all the equipment for each player and they played games with other actors etc; who had teams. I’ll bet Elvis’ team was the best dressed for the sport-they had full regulation uniforms- he wouldn’t have had it any other way! **Rick Nelson** and his brother **David** had played in a team against Elvis’ team but I don’t know who won. I would have loved to have seen that game! Ricky was “the guy” for me when I was 17-18 and single-my girl friend and I sat for hours at the *Cozy Theater* in Tulsa that was running a double feature and the first film was so boring I can’t even remember the name of it now though we sat through it twice! Ricky was debuting in his first full length feature movie “*Rio Bravo*”, with **John Wayne**, **Dean Martin**, **Walter Brennan** and **Angie Dickinson**. My girlfriend and I were there just to see Ricky who comes strutting on screen wearing a set of double holsters and guns--I still enjoy thinking back to those times when “*Rio Bravo*” comes on television.

Elvis “was wearing army clothes,“doin’ his time” when Ricky became the “heart throb” for millions of teenage girls and when I told Elvis it was **Rick Nelson** I might have squealed over had I been close enough, he just roared with laughter. I said my “first

love” in the rock ‘n roll scene was **Ricky Nelson** that my girl friend and I had sat all afternoon and half the night just to see Ricky walk on screen wearing those guns. Elvis was quiet a moment, then sounding like a young kid he blurted out, “I got guns! Can wear ‘em for you-shouldn’t of walked out of “*Flamin’ Star*”-wore guns in it!” I guess he thought those guns Ricky wore were what did it for us-and HE had guns!

Elvis entered the room from behind me, but I knew he was there as a sudden silence fell over the room and all chatter stopped as people turned to look at him. His eyes were dark, his face a stone as he walked past a group of women, saying hello and then made the rounds of the room. Apparently, he and Priscilla had been “into it” according to one female guest who said Priscilla was upset with Elvis for having so many girls around, and she “went ripping out of the drive and down the road” in the car Elvis gave her for her birthday. Elvis was angry that she had not come back. When he saw my little girl Juliann, his eyes lit up, he hugged me saying, “Strawberry! I’m glad you came-did you bring the family?” He turned to Juliann and knelt on one knee, to say, “Hi honey, man, are you pretty!” She stared, eyes like marbles, scared silly and he asked, “Are you afraid of me?” She was about to cry and he backed off saying, “Honey, just watch me a while, you’ll see-I won’t hurt you--” He sat across the room but her eyes never left him.

The girls were posing and jousting for his attention; the men used other methods to gain his favor but Elvis appeared to treat everyone equally. He didn’t appear to notice the many and varied things people were doing to get him to notice them, though it seemed obvious to me. As time passed, I realized he was so “used to” all of that, he really didn’t pay any attention as long as they didn’t get too ridiculous.

He began relating his thoughts, saying, “ Kids are God’s greatest gift” and that children are the truest blessings from God, entrusted to our care and he recited from memory, Bible scriptures, chapter and verse, that stressed adults should have the “faith and trust of a child” when praying. Later, he said he was going to keep her when Juliann moved to sit beside him, ending up on his lap. He leaned down, kissed her cheek, spoke into her ear and she beamed and then hugged him and he smiled a tender smile over her head as he looked at me. He excused himself, took my little girl in his arms and headed down a hallway saying, “My girl and I are goin’ out for a while.” Everyone stared after him, then several women began whispering and looking my way--- if looks were knives I surely would have been dead-several times!

After a couple of minutes, I went down the hall looking for Elvis. I found him outside on a patio, tossing my little girl into the air then catching her; she was squealing and loving every minute of it. He looked happy, his eyes dancing and he said, “She loves it, don’t you baby?” And my shy, quiet little girl squealed, “Trow me ‘Sevis”, trow me again!” And he did, swinging her around then tossing her high in the air. “I won’t drop

her!” he said to me as he caught her and she grabbed him around the neck. Later, when he had his own daughter and I saw pictures of her in his arms-he had that same kind of happy glow on his face and in his eyes. Elvis loved kids, and they adored him. He worked with quite a few young children and they all loved “their Elvis”; the surprising thing is, those “kids” are grown now and most have vivid, happy memories of Elvis playing with them between “scenes”.

I followed him back inside, and into a room, listening as he asked Juliann if she knew what a guitar was and he picked up a guitar, showed Juliann how to hold it and then softly sang and played “Twinkle, twinkle little star” with her sitting on his lap helping him hold the guitar. When finished, he handed the expensive Gibson guitar over to her and let her drag it around while I stood by petrified she’d break it-but he didn’t care-he gave it to her. I didn’t think he meant it and put it behind a chair when we left. A few weeks later he scolded me because I didn’t let her take it home and I had not told him we were leaving. I made the mistake of saying “Well, you were surrounded by friends and there were others arriving that I knew you were anxious to talk with so, we left before traffic got heavy. With fire in his “clipped off” words, he lectured me on “*never* do that; tell me-don’t just leave like that!” I got the impression that he would prefer to be able to say I could go or stay longer-- I soon learned that Elvis definitely liked being in “charge of things” he *could* control.

I’ve been asked if there were other children around when I took our daughter along; there were a couple of kids outside at the beach house; they were older than Juliann and I have no idea whose children they were.

Juliann fell in love that day, and she told me, “Sevis said he loved me, he whispered it. He said I was beautiful and he liked my dress so much. Next time I want a new dress for him to see.” She talked about him while watching his movies and liked listening to his records and though she was just 4 years old, said she wanted to marry him! But it was 3 years before he saw her again- he asked me to meet him in the park across from *Knot’s Berry Farm*, he needed to talk he said; I said okay, but Juliann would be with me.

He was already in the park when we arrived; he paid the carousel attendant to let her ride in all the seats and on all the horses that she wanted to ride on and she did...for about half an hour while I stood by listening to Elvis worry about his personal problems and that he felt the lackluster films were driving him crazy.

I had no idea when we met that I would somehow become his “listening post” but that’s what happened; Elvis knew what he said went no further, and apparently that was what he was looking for-unbiased loyalty and someone willing to take on that kind of responsibility...someone who would be honest and be his friend regardless of his faults

or mistakes. He might have been Elvis Presley, but to me he was simply a friend, albeit a darn cute one who had a wonderful laugh and a very interesting style of living. Jimmie and I both enjoyed hearing about the things that happened around Elvis at work and at home, we loved hearing about his adventures and we got his new recordings “hot off the press” too. So if he wanted to “vent” now and then, it seemed like a fair trade to me.

When I watched Elvis with my daughter, I got a glimpse of what he would be like as a father and later Priscilla and others who witnessed his relationship with his own child confirmed my observations. Elvis was a very doting parent who tended to spoil his child at every turn. He told me before **Lisa Marie** was born, that he had always wanted “a little girl with a ruffled bottom”. When he finally had one he never spoke of her except with love and awe, and a good deal of fatherly pride. She was precious in his eyes and heart and he called her that, “my precious little one”, “my Yessa”, “”Button Head” and after **Linda Thompson**, his long time girlfriend, called her “Punkin’ Head” he called her “Punkin’” a time or two as well. Elvis wanted his daughter to call him Daddy-but she liked calling him Elvis...though he said she’d say daddy when she wanted something from him. She knew early that she was daddy’s girl and that her daddy adored her with all of his being.

Before Elvis and Priscilla’s baby was born, he told me the baby was a little girl, and said “She came to me in a dream...she’s gonna be a little doll!” In those times there were no tests to determine the sex of a baby; at least none that were available to pregnant couples unless there was reason to believe the baby was in dire difficulties and old enough to be delivered by cesarean birth to save its life. Otherwise, one just “guessed” - but he declared, “You’ll see, my baby is a little girl!” A few of his “guys” say he had no idea what the baby would be; that he wanted a son. At first he did, but that changed.

### *In The Bedroom---*

Elvis had many interests outside of entertainment and playing games. He liked to study religions of the world, philosophy and books written by great minds, but what he enjoyed most was the discussion of things he’d read, passing on the knowledge to others, and this is what he did; in group sessions, often in his bedroom away from the men he employed (who were not interested in spiritual things) and away from other people. Elvis had a few men who attended at times, but mostly it was young women and girls because they were the ones most often allowed into the house by his men, who selected and chose the ones they wanted to have around.

Of course, the story from some of his men was, Elvis took groups of girls into his bedroom because he was into “group sex”, after all if it was them-they would be! (Not to say that Elvis was a “prude” about such things, just that his men seemed to think that’s all

he would be doing “in there”.) When things like that got out, Elvis couldn’t figure out why anybody would say or think that of him, saying, “I’m not like that at all-what’s the matter with those people?”

I said, oh really, when he made a comment like that; he kind of snickered and then said very seriously, “Nawww...not much...really... Been there a time or two...don’t need to go back over it. Some people who said someone they knew had met him back stage in Vegas and that all he did was “brag about the women he had etc” ...I have the feeling it was only gossip they’d heard, probably from other guys who might know his men who did a lot of bragging? No one I know of who got to meet Elvis back stage, or anywhere else, have EVER said he was anything but polite, friendly and funny. They wanted to hang out with him forever!

Elvis didn’t get to meet many outside people, he depended on his men to “protect him and his privacy” but that got out of hand when Elvis became so popular after 1969 and was doing live shows again. He could no longer go out and mix with regular people. Elvis was afraid of what could happen and had happened in his early career days, when crowds of people became aggressive and “crazed” in their desire to touch him, kiss him or get something to remember him by. He had been injured; his hair pulled out, stripped of his clothing and nearly killed on several occasions. The fear of how quickly people can become dangerous stayed with him the rest of his life. He trusted his men friends and employees to protect him, to allow guests to visit him and it seemed that power sort of took over as they became *very* selective as to who could see him in those last years of his life. To the point of keeping him isolated from people he might want to see and giving him the impression his invited guests didn’t show up. What could he do? He couldn’t go running down stairs looking for them...besides, would his friends/employees lie? You bet they did- they lied to many people, including me...about him and they lied to him also.

Other people who were around during those years are telling their stories today, though some of the “guardians” still stick to the same worn out excuses many of those who did care for Elvis’ well being as much as their own, admit they wish things had been handled a little differently, that they had done more to get him out of those hotel rooms even when he said no. Many times he stayed put rather than make them have to go through all the hassle of “getting the freak outside among the real folks”. He realized that his guys were “on duty” when out in public with him, and he didn’t want to mess up their enjoyment so he stayed behind and let them have some “free time”. He was always quick to add, “I kind of like havin’ some time to myself, ya know--that’s natural an’ I enjoy doin’ whatever I’d like to do--listen to records ‘n read or somethin’--like ever body does--’um no different--really.”

Quite a few of the men and some women who spent time with Elvis tell about how great it was to “have him all to themselves” *and at his request*, to be able to just sit around and talk with him, listen to him tell about his early days and what he thought of things, without other people listening or changing the subject. And they all remember how surprised, questioning and displeased his male friends/employees were to find out they “missed out” and Elvis had spent time “alone” with someone else other than one of them! Jealousy and suspicion abounded around that “old homestead” and it's “cronies”!

It is so nice to read books written by his backup singers, musicians and other people who worked with him because they tell of him coming to their rooms, of going to his suite, sitting around talking, just being regular “folks” with him---it was those times that kept him “sane” he said, “Jus’ sittin’ around bein’ like-- like normal, ya know?” What made me feel sad at times, was how often he would comment that he felt like “a freak” so out of place in this world; I don’t think he ever truly accepted his place in life -he just tried his best to be worthy of everyone’s idea of *Elvis Presley* and said, “Ya know, sometimes it--it... It’s impossible; really.”

## **The Teacher--**

I was invited to one of those 1964 “private bedroom lesson sessions” and I was most thoroughly amazed at this side of Elvis Presley. He came in, closed the door and locked it then stepped over the girls to get on his bed where he sat cross-legged with books laid around him. Glancing at the up turned expectant faces, he said, “Okay, ever’ body--just take a deep breath an’ relax.”

He moved a couple of books, picked up a well used looking Bible and began talking about God and how He is everywhere, just as the air we breathe and as radio waves are sent around the world, his Word is also. “He (God) transmits on special frequencies” Elvis related, “one that we can tune in to if we have faith and believe.” He told us that God could be felt in the mind, heart and body when one is receptive and that we are like Him in that we are made a “living spirit in His image” but we are housed in flesh. Our spirit is alive and is part of God. “God sends and we receive-we can even receive pictures as a television set if we are willing” he said. “Great visionaries” he concluded, “are like televisions, such as in our lifetime Martin Luther King who “saw” a better world in a vision from God.

When Elvis spoke to us, he became more vibrant, his very person appearing to take on a light that seemed to come from inside, his inner being, until he gleamed as polished gold or silver gleams. His eyes began to glow with a neon light, holding our gaze when he’d catch our eyes. He gestured with graceful movements to emphasize his words,



speaking softly, each word clear and precise though tinged with a slight Southern accent. I was absorbed, mesmerized by his lecture and his style of delivery. He began talking about God and His many names found in the Bible, explaining how people think that the word “god” is the name of the Lord, our Father but that isn’t so he said and read Bible verses to back it up. “People think that “god” is the Lord’s name and sayin’ god damn is taking His name in vain, but it isn’t so because the word god applies to so many things in this world that are revered- he paused, looked around at the faces and eyes peering up at him and asked, “Who knows what revered means?” One young woman said, “Treasured!” And he said “That’s a good word” then said, “it can be anything you value- even money, a career or a person, jus’ anything”--but when used in reference to our Lord, it means valued, worshiped, desired and all other words that relate to humankind’s appreciation of what is important to them. God then can be anything-but it’s not our Lord’s name therefore using the word “god” isn’t swearing in the Lord’s name or His “person”, understand? Sayin’ it is a word we use in many ways and in reverence, like a title and its okay to do that.”

He went on to say that a word would never cause the Lord to turn His face away, but we should be careful what we say because once spoken, it is always out there in the airwaves of time. And that “the Bible says it’s not what one puts into one’s mouth, it is what comes forth from the heart through the mouth in spoken words that will damn our soul to a fate worse than death”. He said that the next time “we meet here” he would explain about damnation and the meaning of “hell” from Biblical text. He said that the Lord wants our praise and gratitude for all that He had provided for us. “People don’t praise or thank Him enough,” he said, “They want and ask for things, call on Him when they get in trouble and demand things, but we ought to acknowledge that He already knows what we need and just thank Him for giving it to us.” He added that the hardest thing for any human being to do was to put everything into the hands of the Lord, say “thank you and then have the faith of a little child and jus’ believe that it will come, ‘cause our Lord promised “all this and more shall ye have, if ye believe.”

Time had passed quickly, two hours seemed like two minutes when “Reverend” Elvis asked us to pray with him, bowed his head and recited some passages from Proverbs and Psalms before saying a prayer of his own, asking for world peace, love and understanding, that our soldiers in Vietnam would be kept safe, and for companionship among all races and that we who were with him, would be blessed as we opened our hearts and minds to God’s will. There was no questioning his sincerity; it rang with every softly spoken word.

He said Amen, stood, reached out to touch each face as if imparting his own blessing and accepted several kisses as he said good-bye. He asked one girl to wait as he had a book for her, and he told me he would see me later.

As the group went down the hall I listened to the young women's comments on "how great, sexy and sweet Elvis was" and "gosh, I just wish I could be alone with him when he's like this"; I asked what they thought of his "lecture". One rolled her eyes saying she'd listen to anything as long as he did the talking. Another was more thoughtful saying she enjoyed listening and related it was only one of many "talks" she had heard. I asked how long she'd known him. "Since I was 13" she replied, and added that her sister had brought her to his house as a birthday present. Elvis had sung happy birthday to her and then took her to his bedroom, gave her a book of Bible verses and proceeded to explain salvation to her. She said he told her not to smoke, not to be promiscuous and to always listen carefully when spoken to, as what was said was not always what was meant. "I love that man," she said grinning, "He's the best there is!"

This was not a side of Elvis I had heard about, nor had the world at that time. I left his home slightly in awe and totally amazed by his sincerity and conviction-and how different he appeared to be from that public image.

### **Elvis...and "the girls"-- *"Women are the most expensive hobby a man can have."* Elvis**

There were a very few visits to Elvis' home, and they were obviously memorable and often a learning experience. I found him always unique, never quite what I expected and very entertaining.

I heard complaints from women to the effect that Elvis "was hard to get alone", "was shy", "was too wrapped up in Priscilla", and that when they did get him alone he was "too tired", "wanted to read" or "just talk" and they all feared falling out of his favor. The main complaint was that he was "**hung up on Priscilla**". The first time I saw her, she arrived surprising Elvis. She was dressed in sage green hip-hugger pants, pale pink ruffled middy blouse and a bee-hive style hairdo. A Collie dog was with her and she carried a sack from a fast food chain. She was slightly plump, her eyes heavily made up to appear huge and very stunning in that young teenage face. I remember being a bit amused at her appearance -all I had heard was how "beautiful" and "band-box perfect" Priscilla looked. She *was* very pretty, but a rather normal looking young girl and not at all what I expected.

Elvis jumped up to greet her, his face glowing happily; she glanced quickly about the room then gave him a fiery eyed glance and went through the house. He stood there, unsure of what to do, a bewildered look on his face, and then followed her. Everyone

stared after him. Presently, they returned; he sat on the couch, she sat at his feet, with one arm hooked over his leg and he talked about touch football and going to the park.

We had been told previously by one of his men that if Priscilla should arrive, we were not to talk to her-unless she spoke to us first. That must have been uncomfortable for her, as I never did see anyone speak to her unless it was one of his men or someone she arrived with.

Though I didn't have anything "nailed to the floor" to "pin" my conclusions on at that time, I thought the "other women" present were there for his guys amusement and it certainly was a good way to put a "wedge between" Elvis and young Priscilla who might have had a bit too much "control and influence" on their boss. Even his manager thought the way to keep Elvis happy was to surround him with beautiful women and that did appear to work. But what did I know, I hardly knew Elvis at that time.

Priscilla left the room shortly after a rather well endowed blond girl, who was quite an attraction in her scanty outfit, began coming on to Elvis rather openly, standing behind him, hands slipping down his shoulders and then kissing his ear—with her tongue. He turned his head, gave her a "knock it off" look, wiped his ear with his fingers and dried them on his pants. After that Elvis wasn't paying much attention to the blond or Priscilla; he was eagerly discussing football with a male friend.

When Priscilla left, Elvis watched her exit, and then went after her, only to return a few minutes later to pace the floor, eyes flashing, his face a stone. He said something to the blond who got uppity and left. Priscilla did not return and no one asked about her. Elvis' mood had changed, people stopped talking, a few left. One of the men got Elvis to playing pool and Elvis slammed the balls around; a few of the guys started telling jokes; Elvis wasn't laughing.

Elvis' housekeeper came into the dining room, looking for Elvis, "Mr. Presley" she asked and I said he's shooting pool. She was nice, friendly and very protective of Elvis, which made me glad that he had someone who would look after his well being- other than the guys. I noticed a script book lying on the table in the dining room. It was for a movie to start later in the year. I looked through some of the script-it sounded familiar, similar to another one he'd made in Hawaii.

A few minutes passed. Elvis came into the dining room and sat down; he looked at me and pulled out a chair. I sat down; he looked miserable and was wringing his hands on top of the table. I asked what was wrong and he glanced up, eyes welling in tears and quietly said, "She left...she left for--for good--; she doesn't understand...she doesn't

believe me when I say they don't...don't mean anything. That she is the only one..." He closed his eyes and tears fell. "I don't even know most of 'em-it's just rumors."

"I'm sorry, Elvis." I said. His face was pale; he looked at me with the eyes of a trusting child-helpless. I told him to tell her how he felt. He said, "She won't listen-she said I don't know anything about love...n I don't care enough. She wants me to lock myself in a room an' give her the only key an' that, *that ain't no gawd damn fxxxin' way to live!*" he muttered.

At that moment it appeared to me that we were suspended in time. He glowed as he sat there-a halo of light around him. I had never seen anyone do that before. I recall a chill coming over me as he brushed his hand over his face, becoming a different man, eyes cold, determination clenching his teeth as he muttered, "Someday she'll grow up, then she'll know what I am all about." He left the room to go to the park to play touch football with his men; most of the women and girls followed them and I went home.

Over the next few years I learned that several other people had noticed that Elvis "glowed" or appeared to be, sometimes photos taken while he was performing on stage in concert have captured this "glow". Of course, one would think it only the reflection of the strobe lighting. That might explain those photos, but when it is in the dark of night and there is no strobe lighting, and it happens--well, that can be "spooky"! More about that later--

One of the things Elvis did not seem to have among his many pals was someone who shared his interests outside of the entertainment world. Elvis read novels, mystery books, science fiction and books on the history of mankind also, but his main interest, his favorite books were on spiritual matters such as: ***"The Impersonal Life"*** by Joseph Benner: ***"The Autobiography of a Yogi"***: ***"The Prophet"*** by Gibran: ***"The Mystical Christ"*** by Bayne: ***the writings of Manly P. Hall.***, ***"The Secret Doctrine"*** by Helen Blavatsky: ***"Many Mansions"*** by Edgar Cayce: ***"The Infinite Way"*** by Goldsmith: ***"The Red Tree"*** by Hayes: ***"The Initiation Of the World"*** by Vera Stanley Alder, ***"Kings Cavaliers"*** by Shellabarager, ***"Rags of Glory"*** by Stewart Cloete, ***"Life & Times of Jesus, Vol. I"*** by Edersham, ***"The Road To Wounded Knee"*** by Robert Burnette, and many, many other such books, though he said the ***Bible*** was his favorite book and that he could always find answers and hope in its pages. He was also interested in ***Astrology and Numerology (Herald Sherman & "Cherios Book of Numbers")*** and books by ***Sidney Omar***, and spoke of being a number eight by birth and a five according to his name, Elvis. ***Eric VonDanikien*** was another author he was intrigued with, he 'wanted to talk to him about life in outer space'. He liked talking of the things he'd read, spent hours discussing with anyone who would listen, often holding party goers

“captive”, imparting the wisdoms he’d learned. Many of the books he read *were over my ability* to fully understand, though I learned a great many things listening to him explain from his point of view. Elvis could “read” another person pretty well, and then explain in ways that made things clear and precise. Many things he discussed, I would not have thought about in the way that he did; that difference made learning fun and interesting.

Some of his friends and relatives said he “read” a lot of books on spirituality and other kinds of “far out” subjects but that *he didn't understand* what he was reading. Those kinds of comments make me wonder that they might question his intelligence; *why would he spend hours reading* hundreds of books he didn't understand? Or at every chance he had, try to speak to others about what he had read and *explain the meanings*? The reality of it was just because his friends and family didn't understand, certainly did not mean that Elvis was unable to comprehend or that he truly didn't enjoy learning such things. Now, some of those same people say he was “boring and egotistical” but I feel it is just *they did not understand* his enthusiasm and devotion and that he wished to share his passion, and his deep desire to become more spiritual and closer to the God he so revered. And he did so through “teaching” from the books he absorbed like a dry sponge takes in water. Elvis was interested in reading more about the vast amount of un-translated writings stored at the Vatican underground vaults in Rome, and worried that those few men whose job was translating it might die since there were just three of them left who could read that very ancient language. Every time he learned something new, he would excitedly tell me about it; he knew I was intrigued at the thought of finding out there was much more to the world's history than our current *King James Bible* revealed.

Now, to make Elvis' style of communication a little more clear and “down to earth” and “real” as he would put it, he used some colorful and descriptive phrases. Most were Southern terms and expressions handed down through the years- some of it sounding very black but then he was raised among those folks and loved them. In fact his mentors, those he learned musical style from were black blues musicians and he never grew away from that influence though he said Hollywood tried to change him, his speech patterns, make him sound “like some kind of Yale graduate or somethin' but it didn't work much 'cept in fims”. Or when he was “out in the public view and hearing distance”, then he used “proper English” because he didn’t like it when in his early career days, he was called a “hilly billy country hick” because of his Southern dialect. When he was home around his buddies, and then later on stage in Las Vegas, he “cut loose” and was more himself. Especially at the late night cocktail hour shows- then we got to see the real guy up there, the fun loving, mouthy and colorful man. People who were at some of those shows know what I mean; if you weren't there, it's hard to explain the passion Elvis put into his shows, not just sexual but downright silly off the wall humor, sometimes full of innuendos only he could throw out there so innocently. We all loved it when he was “feelin' his oats” and the crowd was right with him.

But Elvis was spiritual, he loved as he put it, “God, my family, America and the people- all the people, it don't matter where they come from or what they do--they're our brothers and sisters.” And he meant it.

[So many things he said are revealing of his faith, this is one of those. **Elvis:** “Many people are so busy they do not listen. Life is so full, so needful and the rush to get necessities so strong in all of us, we neglect our spiritual bodies in feeding the physical it's needs and wants. It's the wants that will whip ya' man! Got to put it in God's hands- and then all of it will come to be that's right at the time. Amen!” He said breathlessly as if his comments were a prayer of his own.]

From my own brief observations and more detailed remembrances from other people present at Elvis' house when he would be “lecturing” was that most of the women who sat at his feet in his bedroom or living room were there for one reason-to get to Elvis. They pretended an interest to gain his favor, dressed in revealing costumes, hung onto his every word and were often comical to watch as they “came on to him”. He appeared not to notice, so intent was he in what he was discussing. Priscilla's presence inhibited some of the women, and resentment hung in the air. She was included in the conversation but Elvis didn't give her any more attention than the other girls-he didn't play favorites. When she left the room, Elvis looked up to see where she went and went on talking, leaving her to her own designs. After she left, some of the women were more than a little aggressive toward Elvis, touching him, moving closer; he fended them off with a look or a shake of his head and went on talking.

There were many complaints from fans when Priscilla was at the house, usually along the lines of: “Elvis is too busy-SHE'S there!” During those few times I was there I don't recall many of the women or girls saying they *had* managed to get Elvis alone for any length of time and those that did, were *eager* for “repeats”-- so they could “*try again*”. From my observation, I don't believe that ever happened, much to their dismay.

It wasn't that Elvis did not have enough chances for sexual encounters---he did, and I'm sure he *did*. After all, he was a young good looking man and as he said, “God knows, temptation is plentiful as baby rabbits in spring!” When he made that comment, I said something about him not being a monk.... He laughed saying “Lord no...but I'm not a-a--tom cat neither!” I said, “Thank heaven! We don't need a bunch of baby kittens scattered across the countryside!” He practically fell out of his chair laughing.

## **My Kissin' Cousin--**

The first time I stopped by Elvis' Bel Air home on my way from work; he spent quite a bit of time in the bathroom with a man -getting a haircut. A couple of girls who were stashed in the kitchen were complaining about how long it was taking. The "word" had come down from one of Elvis' men that all the "women" had to stay quiet and out of sight until the "stranger" left. The long wait wasn't going over well and one girl implied maybe it was something sexual. She was all but thrown physically out by the other girl. It was after 9 pm and Elvis still hadn't come out.

It was pretty quiet while the "stranger" was there, the guys were waiting for that service to be over so they could bring the girls in who were laying low down the street, and hanging around the gate until it was "all clear". There were some disgruntled comments bandied about among the men too, said one of the girls waiting outside. One of the men came out and talked to some of the young women telling them they might as well leave, Elvis wasn't coming out. A few left kind of in a huff, but some disappointed tears fell, and a few stayed a while longer.

Elvis had asked me to come by saying he wanted to give me some books to take home and read. It was getting late but I had told him I'd be there. It was an April night; I only had a cardigan sweater for warmth so I waited in my car that was parked past Elvis' gate and up the slope on the bend in front of another home. After a while I thought I'd go see if Elvis' haircut was finished before I left without seeing him and I saw the "stranger" leaving with his little leather bag. The front door was standing open and so was the gate as by then most of the people had given up waiting for Elvis. He was standing in the doorway with his back to me, talking with a couple of his friends who were going out; I decided to go home, he was busy and it was late.

I was almost to the front gate when Elvis came out the right side door of the house and called to me, "Berry-please ...wait!" He went back in and then came out carrying a stack of books. I said it would take me some time to get all these books read; he said "Keep them, read 'em and give 'em to somebody else to read." Then he said something about wanting to tell me about one of them and since no one was hanging around his gate, he carried the books as we went toward my car but he wasn't talking, so I told him his hair looked nice. He kind of snickered and said, "Thanks."

As we stopped beside my car I said something about it looked like it might rain; I didn't have the side curtains for the car and I had to pick up Juliann from my sister-in-law's. The MG being an English car had doors that were hinged on the right and opened from the left. I opened it and he suddenly threw the books onto the seat closed the door and grabbed me by the shoulders, pushing me back against the door and onto the canvas top of my car. When I realized he intended to kiss me-not just a peck but a real kiss, I was at a loss for words.

He had his right hand behind my head, his fingers grasping my hair, the other one at my throat; the last thing I saw was those incredible blue eyes and his lip curl up showing white teeth-then he kissed me. Forever it seemed--I hadn't expected that from him; he had been so brotherly but this was no brotherly kiss. I still remember his lips were soft and very strong. His body was pressing me against the car and he was not giving up, in fact-just the opposite as his kisses became more demanding.

Through all his "efforts" I was pushing him back with both hands against his chest though I might as well have tried pushing a wall down--- but I didn't return the kiss at all; no way was I going to allow him to think he could include me in his little *red* book! He gave it everything he had I'm sure-it wasn't his fault I was "frozen solid" by surprise that turned to determination! He was surprised also-I'm sure he wasn't used to *that* kind of reaction. After what seemed to be a *long* time, he raised his head looking with a quizzical stare into my eyes. I didn't notice he had moved his right hand until I realized he had my hand flat over his heart and was still half way laying on me murmuring, "Oh...my heart, my heart" into my ear.

He finally moved back; somehow I opened the car door, nearly hitting him in the legs, luckily he moved quickly- and for once that contrary little MG started immediately. I managed to say bye and took off, leaving him standing there in the street. Thankfully, he lived on a half circle street with two ways in and out- I didn't have to drive past him!

I was confused, totally shook and didn't know what to think. My teeth almost chattered-but by the time I got home, I decided it was a "test" and I hoped I had "passed" otherwise I'd never talk to nor see him again. I had no desire to be on "that list" him and his boys joked about. For the next 13 plus years, Elvis never mentioned that kiss- and I didn't either.

My husband just about fell out of his chair laughing when I told him how Elvis had scared me silly with that kiss. He wasn't jealous of Elvis at all-but he didn't trust the other guys. (I thought I was married to the greatest guy around and I had to be one of the luckiest women on earth!)

I have mentioned that night when he "really kissed me" and how I had reacted to him in my other book efforts, but I didn't tell everything. It took about 13 years for him to get to it, but out of the blue and totally off "topic" he asked me why I didn't like kissing him, did I think he was dirty or something? At first I was glib, being funny but he was serious and said, "No, I want you to tell me the truth." So I said, "You were never the type of guy I was attracted to, not that you aren't cute, funny and handsome Elvis, but the truth is, I didn't think of you in those terms at all." He didn't say anything for a moment, then



mumbled something about “if you'd met me first--” and I said I don't think it would have made a difference and that I believed everyone male and female, had a built in idea of what *the* person would be like, they just needed to wait for the time to come when they were supposed to meet the one for them. He kind of snickered, and then said something about like he thought so also-- I said well, then, now you know. He came out with, “You could of humored me--gawd, I thought I--eh--had bad breath or somethin'!” That did it, I was laughing and we both ended up laughing because he kept a running commentary about how “I'd blown his mind”, making him feel like he was--”worthless”. He ended up saying, “One of these days woman, you gonna want to kiss me!” Of course I said, “Don't hold your breath--or maybe *you should!*” That started him to laughing again- I loved to hear that laugh, no one could then, or can now---*laugh like Elvis* when he was really tickled.

## Similar Interests--

The barber who cut Elvis hair in the bathroom was **Larry Geller** – Elvis and he spent quite a lot of time together when Elvis discovered Larry was “into” the same spiritual books and interests as he. Elvis soon asked him to join his organization and Larry accepted. That shared spiritual interest proved to be an ill wind around the old homestead cronies and Priscilla, especially when Larry began spending more *private* time with Elvis than they and she, preferred. And he kept Elvis well supplied with books he thought would interest him and that took even more of Elvis' time. Elvis liked to read and he did--at every opportunity but he didn't have anyone in the group other than Larry who didn't just give him “lip service” or “turned a deaf” ear to what Elvis enjoyed almost as much as playing music---*discussion about spiritual and intellectual matters of the Universe, God and man's destiny in regard to life's ultimate goal. Larry became his outlet and fulfilled his need for someone who “understood” his spiritual quest, who didn't think he was “boring, delusional or foolish” because he wanted to know more about God, life and the quest for human perfection and understanding. Elvis said of Larry, “Ask and ye shall receive...” meaning that he had asked for someone to come, who would understand-- and Larry answered. He said many times, “God works in many ways...you just have to believe in it.” Elvis believed.*

He became interested in *Self Realization Fellowship*, a group that had a beautiful park-like retreat North of Los Angeles where he loved to go because he felt so relaxed and no one bothered him. He said he was “just one of them” when he was there, he took Priscilla with him hoping that she would also love being there; however, as she was much younger, she was not inclined toward such spiritual teachings though later on she did become involved in *Scientology*. Elvis didn't find that doctrine of much interest and said he thought it might help some people, but he didn't believe it offered a firm base with

God and that it put too much emphasis on human nature and not on a spiritual relationship with the teachings of the *Bible* and the Lord, our Father and he related, there was no “heart” in their beliefs...it was all “mental conditioning”. He also thought that unless the mind and heart were “connected the spirit that “lives inside us” can’t express it’s self fully, if at all and without that connection between the three parts there could be no real human compassion, no true understanding that life should be filled with love for all human kind, for all God’s creatures, great and small. “One must have the heart involved to be fulfilled” he said, “Otherwise we are only interested in our physical selves and end up feeling empty inside”.

**Elvis said.** “Without a belief that we are loved unconditionally, that we have a supreme being, a Father who loves us as his children, then we are lost like unwanted children tossed aside by a careless parent. What kind of life is that when no one gives a damn really; sometimes just believing you got the power on your own is a lie an' it's gonna kick your ass one day an' leave you with nothin' but dirt on the seat of your pants! Ain't no one gonna come dust you off 'n tell you it's okay, love you anyway baby-not unless you got the money to make it worth their while, that is. Naw--God's way is the highway to Heaven; he didn't promise no free ride, you got to give yourself to his will an' do the best you can with what He's given you. That's all he asks us to do, love one another, do good unto those who harm us and say thank you Lord for the good things he has given to all of us, freely given, an' all we have to do is accept Him as he is, Our Father, who loves us unconditionally. Ever one ought to take just 5 minutes out of their day to pray, meditate on God's word and reinstate ourselves as his children, and then thank him for lovin' us. Life would be better and better, because knowing we are loved makes things beautiful. It is life it's self.”

I asked him if he thought *Scientology* was like a “cult” and he said not entirely, but it did remind him a little bit of what he had learned in the army about “brainwashing” techniques though he didn’t think that was wrong, unless it was carried too far. He added there wasn’t any way he was going to become a part of that group, he had enough people telling him what to do! One comment he is said to have made when asked what he thought of *Scientology* sums all I’ve written up in one sentence, “It’s all head, ‘n no heart.”

For the next few years, Larry learned to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the slights and digs and comments about his being a “Jew boy” coming his way and happily supplied Elvis with books-but he didn’t realize how much resentment was brewing. Priscilla didn’t like infringement on her time with Elvis nor did she like the fact Elvis was more into spiritual development than he was in playing games and spending time with her. She felt since she was his permanent girlfriend and the one he said he would marry, she should have more “control” over time with him; she felt shut out by his constant

search for the “meaning of life” and “why he was chosen to be Elvis Presley, etc.” Elvis felt she should show more interest in learning the things he was interested in and she tried but didn’t understand why he was even interested in most of it and a crack developed between them.

Elvis didn’t notice, didn’t realize the wall that was being built between himself and his new friend Larry, built by resentment and anger from his other male buddies and Priscilla, and even Elvis’ father, who thought the whole spiritual thing was “crap and a waste of time and some kind of occult nonsense his son was being hoodwinked into” and there was fear over some group “taking Elvis for his money and his name”. And too, Elvis was so restless, so bored with the “lighthearted musicals” he was signed up for, everyone worried that he might do something “drastic” since he was “infatuated with the need to escape it all”. It was no secret how unhappy and sick he was of singing “to some guy I just beat up”. And he spoke of wanting to “go somewhere, get away from all this” and “scared some people” when he mentioned becoming *a monk!*

Word went to Col. Tom who “arranged” to have spies in the “camp” to keep tabs on just how this “voodoo” was taking affect on his “boy” and to report back to him.

This was pretty easy to do because a few of Elvis’ men worked for the Colonel and spent a lot of time at the Col’s MGM offices as well as staying at or visiting Elvis’ homes. So it was a while before Elvis began to “catch on” to the “spy games”-in fact he didn’t seem to until the last few years of working in Las Vegas, then he began to have his “eyes opened” though at times it appeared somebody was trying to keep them “closed” as much as they could.

In the late 60’s, when Elvis wasn’t feeling good and had the flu, Col. Tom and the rest of the anxious “mob” began pounding away at him for *letting* himself get involved with occult junkies, *letting* them “use” him for their purposes and do so by confusing him into thinking he *might* be more than just a “singer with a pretty face”. Elvis was taking medication for “stomach flu” and migraine headaches, he may have or may not have fallen and hit his head-*he thought* someone hit him over the head from behind but who’d believe that-- after all, he *was* running a fever and too sick to know what happened-right? Col. Tom came with a doctor who said Elvis had a concussion and needed to stay in bed, take medication and rest. To his last day Elvis believed he had been hit from behind-saying he had two bruised areas on his head, one on the front side of his head--and the second on the back of his head-- He was told he had tripped over a fan cord and just didn’t remember.

While he was sick taking medication and recovering from a *concussion*, (*no x rays were taken “he said”, but now it’s told by some that a “portable x ray machine was*

brought out to check him”. Odd that he “forgot” that but he remembered being told “it was just a bump”). He was not thinking clearly, and they raved away, convincing him how wrong he was and that he needed to burn all those books and get his mind back in line like a “normal man”. To please them, to please Priscilla who was very upset because he “loved those books more than her”, he allowed them to burn some of the books. (But he replaced most of them later.)

Later on after Elvis married Priscilla, Larry finally was under too much pressure, some say because the Colonel didn’t want him “influencing his boy” because Elvis was spending “too much time reading and *thinking*” and God only knows what Elvis was told. So Larry realized, with a little help from the Colonel, that it *was* time to go his own way-Elvis missed him, but he had kept some of those books and he found a way to have time to read them anyway. He took off to Palm Springs, many times without Priscilla, at home he read in the bathroom with the door locked, he read on movie sets, in his dressing room and when traveling. He laughed gleefully when he told me that he “sneaked around” behind their backs and just kept studying those books. He could recite whole sections from memory-I’d say he studied them well! He didn’t miss Larry so much because by then he had Priscilla and they had a new baby that he adored, and he did the “*Singer Special*” that was sponsored in part by “*Chevrolet*” and now more known as the ‘68 *TV Come Back Show*...and realized what he *really* wanted to do.

The two friends, Elvis and Larry, met again when Elvis was working Las Vegas, and he and Priscilla were divorced. Larry has spoken about what the first meeting they had after Elvis began performing in Las Vegas was like in interviews and written about it in several of his memoirs published after Elvis’ death. Larry says that Elvis took him into his penthouse suite bedroom and on the floor were all the books that he had given to Elvis; well worn, dog-eared and with heavily underlined sections, including notes in the margins. Larry knew that he had reached Elvis in a way that no one else had before – that he had helped him to search, to reach out and expand his soul and his mind. Elvis told me later, in a hushed and pleased tone of voice that “You remember the guy who liked reading like me-well, he came up an’ we talked.” And then he softly said, “I hope he’ll hang a round some agin” and then he changed the subject. Larry tells in his book “*Through My Eyes*” that he had given Elvis a special book a few hours before his death in August 1977. That book was clutched in Elvis’ hands, held to his chest as he died. [Larry’s newest book is: “*The Leaves of Elvis’ Garden*”, Amazon books. Larry has a website, join up and receive a news letter periodically from Larry who tells interesting and personal firsthand accounts of “life around and with Elvis”. You’ll love reading his memories! I haven’t read the last one yet, but other friends have-they loved it.)

Since Elvis’ death many stories have come out about what Elvis was reading the day he died, many comments coming from people who were not present at the time; some

saying he was reading “porn”, another said a book on sex and psychic energy that was not porn at all --and on and on--- Knowing Elvis' preferences, his comments about the *Shroud of Turin* (the garment Jesus had been wrapped in for entombment), I believe it was the book Larry gave to him, “*The Scientific Search For The Face of Jesus*”, a book Elvis would have liked very much. It was about the man Elvis admired, studied and tried to emulate in his everyday activities and in relationships with everyone he met, Jesus, the Christ. Elvis had spoken to several people I knew personally of wishing he could go to the Holy Land and “walk where Jesus did an’ maybe see the place of the tomb He rose from, gawd, that would be somethin’!” He said just thinking of it gave him “the shivers”.

One of Elvis' costars **Diane McBain** who worked with him in the film “*Spinout*” said in an interview that Elvis “showed her the face of Jesus” by the love in his eyes, the warmth of his smile and the sincerity of his heart and words and how he practiced his faith everyday by treating everyone with kindness and understanding. She said that in meeting and talking with Elvis she became interested in learning more, of being more spiritual and relating to others with love and compassionate understanding and her life changed for the better. She is just one of hundreds of people who met him, who were fortunate enough to spend a little time with him who say how impressed they were by his intelligence, kindness, unpretentious and warm personality and most relate they were personally touched by his spirituality. All of them say he was “unforgettable and a loving human being.”

So many stories and rumors abound, most of which spring from a few of the men who traveled with and worked for Elvis, but who were not always present or correct in stating what went on when he was behind closed doors. Quite a few stories reputed to have come from some of his male friends portray Elvis as being a cad, of having no respect for women, because so many “threw themselves at him, offering him anything he wanted etc.” and that he was a “womanizer”, using women and then tossing them aside for a fresh conquest where ever he went. I find those rumors kind of strange since if he was such a “terrible macho guy” why is it that so very few women ever say a bad thing about him? Even now, when he isn't here to “find out”? I know Elvis didn't like to be around women who were vulgar, complaining, or tried bossing him around, especially he didn't like any who caused a public scene around him or “tattled to the press” etc., but he sure didn't leave a “bad memory” for those who did make the “cut” as one of his buddies called it. I kind of think that Elvis knew full well what his “guys” thought, and he played along giving them what they *expected to hear* when it was just he with them. After all, it was he who said, “Man, they'd believe *anything*!”

Now, I am not naive enough to try to get anyone to believe Elvis was not “really” a “playboy” because I'm sure he was in *some* context of that title---he liked women, he didn't hesitate to get acquainted any way possible, even to having his friends introduce

him etc. and if he saw a young lady who caught his eye, he'd try to find a way to meet her. Yes, he did like women – still, isn't it kind of contradictory in some ways how his men friend/employees say he was “macho” and had “no respect” for women and the “women” say just the opposite and remained friends even after the relationship ended? All *I can say positively*, is he was nice to me, ornery at times true, but even that was all in fun. We laughed a lot, I miss his laugh that snicker, the giggle and that sudden burst of laughter that sometimes came rolling out of him. Thank heaven some of that wonderful laughter is recorded for all time.

### **Getting Back to the Young, Unmarried Elvis---**

People were always bringing Elvis presents and earlier the night I saw Larry going to Elvis' house the first time he came to cut Elvis' hair, two girls had brought him a book of poetry and a shirt. Elvis took them down the hall and came back a few minutes later wearing the shirt. The girls were elated-and telling everyone what he'd said and how he looked without a shirt. I overheard them saying he had told them they could stay a while if they wanted to another time, but he was “busy tonight”. And then I was amazed-they were around 17 years old but had fake ID's saying they were 21, and were making plans to get Elvis into bed with them...and planning what they were going to do- to and with him! I saw them a few times at his gate and also at a “party” going on after a game of football in the park. They were trying to give him lots of attention; however, he didn't seem to notice, accepting it as if it was just something that went on everyday- no big deal. It was an “unspoken aloud” *rule* around Elvis, *no underage women without chaperons allowed*. And that rule *was carefully obeyed* from very early in his career and right through his last week of life. He wouldn't let a girl lay down on his couch-if she was tired or sleepy, she had to go home! There was no hankie-pankie going on, said his housekeeper. Not when “Mr. Elvis is here!” He laid down the “law” and it was followed.

Elvis appeared to be very friendly, warm and loving toward his friends, male and female. He liked touching and being touched by those he knew, and he hugged and nuzzled all of the girls, some more than others. He liked being attended to and it came out in ways that were unexpected. Once, I found him staring at me as I talked with one of his male friends. That face was sullen, lip caught up between his teeth; eyes dark and I realized he didn't like it that I was spending so much time and attention on his friend and not him, Elvis. I learned that he was childish in that respect- and wasn't above showing his feelings about it. He told me to stay away from the “guys” because they might not think of me as he did. I asked and how's that? He looked at me with a stern expression and growled, “You know what I mean, damn it!” Big brother had spoken.

I overheard Elvis tell one of his men, “What's the matter with you guys? Don't you know a chick when you see one?” He apparently wasn't pleased with the selection of

young ladies allowed up to the house. The man left, only to return a few minutes later with a couple of pretty girls. Elvis immediately took one of them down the hall. The other girl was depressed and on the verge of tears. I asked her what was wrong and she said she had been with Elvis on another occasion but thought she had “blown” her chances with him. I asked why and she related that she was afraid she had been “too cool” and thought perhaps SHE should have asked him if he wanted to go to bed with her!

Elvis returned after a few minutes and the girl of his choice had one of his books in her hands and began showing it to her friend. Elvis began playing pool with the men and the young women were forgotten. When another young woman wearing a pink sweater arrived at the door, he lay down the cue and rushed her down the hall. She was a young star-let who was beginning to break into “the business”. They came back together and Elvis let her play pool in his place with him showing her where and how to shoot. Word beginning buzzing that not many girls got to play pool with Elvis, **Ann Margaret** and **Tuesday Weld** had that privilege, but for the most part girls were there to cheer, run errands and “get me's”. Elvis supposedly said after working with Tuesday in “*Wild in the Country*” that “she scared me man, never met one like her before!” I asked him about that, he laughed and said “no woman can scare me-unless she’s got a knife in her hand!”

I questioned him one day about his thoughts on Women’s Lib and got a surprise. He agreed that if a woman did the same job, she ought to get the same pay as a man, but in his opinion women should concentrate on the making of a home for her family-that he said was her “God given role” to be the supportive mate for her husband and the guiding force for their children. He got a *Bible* and began pointing out various passages of scripture to support his belief. He was also serious about a man’s role as a family provider and felt that he would not want his wife to work outside the home, regardless of his occupation. He thought once a woman made a commitment to a man she ought to devote herself entirely and totally to that role in order to be satisfied with herself as a woman. And he didn’t think a woman should try to boss her man around, but should try to please him and in return, he would be more inclined to be generous toward her and her wishes. “It works both ways”, he said, “but somebody always has to give a little more than the other now and then, that’s just life.”

By this time a cluster of girls were around him and they began questioning him. He answered carefully and easily squashed any negative remarks. He began telling one young girl how important virginity was to her- for her own self worth, he said, “don’t waste the one priceless, God-given gift you have to give the man you will love forever.” He went on to say that any girl who had already lost her virginity should refrain from promiscuous activity and “save those feelings for the man you’ll love forever.”

There were raised eyebrows, murmured questions and suspicious looks directed his way and one young woman spoke up, “Elvis, don’t you do it?” He stared at her, and then quietly replied, “We’re talkin’ about you girls now, honey. I’m tryin’ to explain the best course of life for you, if you want to be happy as the lovely woman--- *you will be.*”

Before I left his home Elvis had decided he was hungry and did not want “snack food”- he sent for pizza. When it arrived he took a medium sized one to the couch, sat down and ate the entire thing himself. Girls surrounded him, hanging onto his every word as he watched television and kept a running discourse of risqué sounding, often caustic and/or macho comments. The girls giggled, the men belly-laughed, but Elvis didn’t laugh much, he merely occupied center stage and when he did laugh, it usually just *busted out* of him, sometimes if really tickled he’d end up practically falling out of his chair; some say he actually rolled on the floor laughing at times; everyone really enjoyed laughing with him, whatever it was that tickled his “funny bone”.

## **Changing Directions---**

The fog in Southern California was bad that fall, making driving very hazardous, especially in the beach areas, and my little ‘53 MG roadster was “sensitive” to all that foggy dampness, and too, it was a little scary on those freeways running along side of big trucks with tires as tall as the side of my little car and more so in foggy weather, so I quit my job at MGM. On the way home my last day, I went by Elvis’ house. It was early afternoon, before the crowd of gate-hangers had arrived. His gate was unlocked and open. I walked in only to be confronted by several of his men who stood around a white station wagon they appeared to be loading with various things. I spotted Elvis on his knees in front of a motorcycle and hurried to him before I was stopped.

He looked up, blue eyes wide; his mouth fell open in surprise. Dismay crossed his face filling those sky blue eyes and he appeared to be embarrassed at being caught looking “normal”. Dressed in old, once black jeans, frayed cut-off sweatshirt, hair hanging in a face with oil smeared on it, he was disarmingly handsome. He stood up, wiped his hands furiously on a towel, mumbling something about being sorry he wasn’t “cleaned up” and then ordered one of his men to “clean up this shit” meaning his tools. He asked another of them to take me for “some coffee” while he cleaned up. I didn’t want to go but his tone of voice said I should. The “coffee break” lasted about 30 minutes with his man who was tall, looked like he hadn’t had many good meals and seemed to be upset he was “selected” as my “babysitter”, downing about as many cups before taking me back.

I had told Elvis how nice it was to see the “real Elvis” at home and when Elvis came out, freshly showered and smelling of lime scented soap he said into my ear, “See-THIS



is the real Elvis.” I said, “I kind of liked the one I saw earlier, on his knees, getting dirty and being human!” He put his finger to his lips as if saying “Shhhhhh...” about that. He looked stunning, black pants, black shirt and a red and black scarf knotted at his throat, hair perfectly styled, but I still preferred the old pants, mussed up hair and dirty face!

He asked if I wanted something-meaning why I was there so early. I explained about the job (I suspected he had something to do with my getting it though he never said and I did not ask). He sternly said if a husband provided enough income that a wife and mother ought to be home -*where she belonged*. And then he told me a producer was coming by in a little while and I was welcome to stay, he “could use the moral support”. And added that I could come up anytime but I should phone first to make sure he was home. He said to call and tell who ever answered the phone if it wasn’t him to say, “Hi, it’s “Bunny”, is Elvis there?” And he said, “They’ll get me.” Over the years when he changed phone numbers he again told me to use that “code phrase”. I used it a couple of times-and it worked. The only other time anyone but him answered that Bel Air phone number, it was a housekeeper who answered- Elvis was not there-she told me to call back later. (Ann Margret says in her memoirs that her nick name was “Bunny” and his was “Thumper” but he did not tell me to ask for “Thumper”- he knew I’d laugh at that!)

Years later just a few months before his death, he told me that “Bunny” was **Ann-Margaret’s** “nick name” and his reasoning for using it was he thought I sounded enough like her on the phone, his men would not dare to question the call. I felt honored that he finally chose to tell me and I thought it peculiar that other people had mentioned that I sounded a bit like her also, but more than a few people used to say I looked like **Vicki Carr**. Mainly I think, because we were the same height, weight and had a similar hair style, and she had a hit song out entitled “*It Must Be Him*”. It had emotionally charged lyrics, lots of drama and tears ran down her cheeks when she performed it on television shows; that made her memorable-my slight resemblance just reminded them, that’s all. Once when I was bringing in several nice, plastic encased outfits with a hotel porter wheeling in luggage for me and two lady friends, some people walking down the hall came up and wanted my autograph! They thought I was Vicki and it was kind of funny at first because they weren’t sure until I told them she was at another hotel where she was appearing; I was in town to see Elvis. I told him about my “**Vicki Carr** experiences” and he said, “It’s the eyes, the hair style ‘n she’s a nice lady too--” I didn’t know until much later that he and Vicki were good friends.

I knew that he would rather not be caught looking less than perfect after that visit. Elvis had a compulsion about being clean, almost to the point of it being an obsession. He showered and took baths daily, liked soaking in the tub and changed clothes often, usually leaving them in a pile where ever he dropped them- he had hired guys whose job it was to take care of his clothing needs, even to sometimes choosing what he should

wear for whatever occasion it might be. For awhile it was one of his cousins and later when his younger step-brothers were old enough, one of them more or less acted as his “valet” and was in “charge of clothing”. Later in 1976, when he was ill and tended to sweat profusely, he complained about feeling “dirty” and “clammy” all of the time and he thought he “stunk like some thin’ old ‘n rottin’” and said he “might jus’ as well pour some water in ma bed ‘n get in it-‘cause it’s so damn soaked up when I wake up, ‘m sweatin’ so gawd damn much day and night!”

In his last two years Elvis’ liver and kidneys were failing; the profuse sweating was his body’s natural reaction and effort to cleanse it’s self since those organs were not functioning normally, they were overwhelmed by his other medical conditions, most of which were inherited medical traits. Though he had a complete medical book collection, read profusely and knew a great deal about medical conditions, apparently it had not registered as applying to himself or he didn’t realize and perhaps had not been told how *seriously* his condition could become. Elvis was highly intelligent-but tended to put his own health needs last on his list of “things to do”. He was too busy working and taking care of so many other people around him- which in turn fulfilled his deep seated compulsion to be “needed” by those he loved....”my family” he called them, a multitude of friends, employees, his touring group, relatives and other “strays” he picked up along the way. During this period in his life, he was prescribed tranquilizers to help him cope and be able to sleep. He was often hyperactive, up for days until he exhausted himself and then would sleep for hours with the help of sleeping pills. This was “normal” since his schedule was often upside down due to working schedules.

One of his long time close friends who is the author of a good book entitled “***Me & a Guy Named Elvis***”, **Jerry Schilling** said in an interview in 2007, he thought Elvis might have been suffering from depression and perhaps was a “manic depressive” or what is now known as being “bipolar”. (In those days Elvis had not shared with many of his “boys” the truth of his health problems, choosing to keep it quiet and personal; they were kept “in the dark” and so developed ideas based on what they did see and hear.)

Bipolar is a term for a nervous/mental condition causing one to be over active and highly stimulated mentally and emotionally, then depressed and explosive by turns. Often these persons are also struggling with thoughts of suicide due to their inability to control their lives, even with drugs many struggle with everyday living activities. I found an article on Bipolar in a newspaper (**The Press Enterprise, Ca. written by a staff medical advisor, Dr. Donahue, 7/23/08**). After reading it, I didn't feel the symptoms described fit Elvis' state of mind especially not in those last months of his life, although he did exhibit bouts of excitability and depression though he had a good reason for the fluctuating personality changes and temper fits – a very stressful career and the fact he was ELVIS.

Elvis was not suicidal, he loved life, he loved *his* life being Elvis, performing and singing and he looked forward to having more to do, a future – and he had his little girl whom he adored. Suicide would not have been something he would find “attractive” or as a “way out”. If anything, Elvis enjoyed living – those who knew him said he was “more alive than any one they knew or had ever met.” I am certainly not an expert on such things but from my research on the subject, the more severe symptoms of “bipolar” did not fit Elvis' state of being. He was struggling with migraine and cluster type headaches and glaucoma all of which were adversely affected by the bright lighting used on the stages where he performed. He had other physical ailments some of which were made more severe by the very medications he was given to help with other conditions he had, yet he still continued working. Performing when family and friends thought he should cancel and be hospitalized. He had been depressed and frustrated for years while making those movies that became their own “remakes with new faces and scenery but the same old tired story line” he said, and he was depressed over the breakup of his marriage and being separated from his little girl, the family he had always wanted. However, he was still “in the game” fighting to overcome physical problems, making plans for a better future that included his child.

His physical health was not good and only because of that, did Elvis have reason to feel his time might be shorter than he wanted it to be. But I firmly state that he did not take his own life, he believed fervently that life was a gift from his Heavenly Father, one that he would never give up until it was “my time to go up those golden stairs, take Jesus' hand and walk through those gates and hear God, my Father introduce me, “This is Elvis, my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” When he told me that I was taken aback, but then I realized Elvis was speaking biblical truth, and most likely that is exactly what would be his introduction!

I noticed through the years that it was either up or down for Elvis, with little calm between it seemed to me. Elvis said at times his mind was racing away, he couldn't “stop the noise” in his head; I asked what kind of “noise”? He said his thoughts, musical arrangements, instrument sounds, and just thinking, that he could not stop thinking. His thoughts came so fast, racing through his mind, and he couldn't sleep or relax. He said, “Some times I just want to pound my head on a wall or somethin'.” And from what has been told by some of his buddies, he earned his nick name “Crazy” by exhibiting unpredictable behavior often brought about by his becoming “stir crazy” he said, from being “shut up inside with nothin' to do for so long” and “bein' so sick of the stupid fims” he couldn't stand it any longer, he had to get out, do something different to get it out of his system. This seems reasonable to me, nothing that many people would not be doing in those circumstances.

I have read and heard on television talk shows, that medical research has found that there are people who use *both sides of their brain* for communication and other activities, therefore they have sleep problems and are restless individuals. And part of the brain never “sleeps”, with the constant brain stimulation going on they tend to be overactive, restless and often have nervous health issues as a result of their brain over working. Since both sides are active, the person does not get enough REM sleep, and their brain has difficulty in doing the work it needs to do taking care of the body, healing and new cell growth. Elvis was given tranquilizers in his mid twenties to help him “calm down and rest”. This was not an uncommon practice-- in the 60's and 70's medical science was developing all types of “pills” and the stressed out public was eager for relief, and doctors were equally eager to assist their patients. They also loved the freebies received from the drug companies for selling the “newest medications available” and so, doled out “samples” to their patients – that was how I found codeine -it was a doctor’s “sample” and it worked for me. Elvis’ body handled it differently; he didn’t find it very effective; it made him break out in a skin “rash that looked somethin’ like the mange.”

Whatever were Elvis' problems, he was not given treatment that would help him cope with the frustration he felt- instead he was given tranquilizers that are “downers” and didn't help a person with a tendency to be depressed, and pain killers for the headaches along with other medications for his “sensitive stomach”, (colon) etc.. The pain killers and depressives given to migraine sufferers intensified the symptoms those sufferers already had from the migraine it's self – symptoms that are a tendency to be hyper active at the beginning of the migraine cycle, being unable to think clearly and becoming sound and light sensitive, and as it progressed, slurring words, stammering at times, sleepy looking, watery eyes, inability to think clearly or focus well, severe onset of pain in one temple that spread to the eye and top of the head, often bringing on spells of vomiting and ending in wanting to go somewhere quiet and dark and sleep for hours. All of these symptoms were at various times, accredited to Elvis’ behavior throughout his life; however those symptoms were misread by many as merely due to “recreational drugs” and his “overuse of sleeping/pain medications” when in fact, he was taking prescribed medications to try and “get through my day” and do his job.

The medications of that time frame put the person to sleep and with migraines, the person would wake up and find the headache gone, leaving an “empty” feeling inside their head. Often they came out looking pale and drawn, as if they had been on some kind of “binge”--when it would only be the end result of a severe migraine attack. I know a lot about migraines having suffered through them for years myself, without finding any medication to give me relief or a doctor who would prescribe something strong enough that really worked. Had I known how to buy pain killers off the street – I would have done so just to end the misery of those days gone from my life. I finally found a doctor who prescribed codeine and that helped though it barely dulled the pain; it

made me sleep and sleep often was a cure-- Elvis did not usually take codeine – he was allergic to it and at that time, it wasn't prescribed as “freely” as today. His medications were stronger and had greater side affects to them – such as slowing down the colon so that it could not work normally – something that he did not need with the colon problems he had since his birth, and eventually, those prescribed medications increased his colon problems and he was given other types of medication on top of what was already being given for migraines – adding to the problems he was already having and resulting in a vicious circle of “side affects”.

Unfortunately, Elvis was “on his own” in coping with all these things, trusting his doctors to take care of him and his friends to look out for him – after all it was their job – and Elvis believed people ought to do their job to the best of their ability at all times, after all, he did what he had to do for his job. And he had faith that others felt the same about their job. He felt in many ways, that doctors were close to being “gods” and said that if his mother had been able to afford a good doctor, his brother would have lived - He said to me, “My brother didn't live because my family didn't have money, but I can go anywhere to find the medical care needed--- but even money didn't save my momma--.” It didn't save him either.

People who have the type of personality and temperament that comes with being sensitive souls, talented and with artistic gifts are often “apt to burn themselves out” without proper care and understanding, especially if they don't find an outlet for their emotional stress. Elvis found something to funnel his frustrations and sensitivity into – singing his heart out for the people who loved him, gave him everything he ever wanted and for whom he felt a deep gratitude and love for in return. However he was never able to satisfy the great desire he had for becoming what in his mind would be “a great actor making good films”. Nor was he allowed to tour overseas, do gospel concerts and appear on stage at universities where “the folks who are gonna be runnin' this world can listen to God's word in a way they can understand and absorb via song and music”. He didn't have the four children he “dreamed about” nor did he have the “little wife waitin' for me at home, runnin' to the door with the kids' right behind her when I come home.” But he did have his “precious Lisa Marie”, and as he said, “God knows people love me; I can feel it walkin' out on that stage!”

Elvis was frustrated over not getting to travel overseas for concerts, he wanted to do films of value and he sometimes felt trapped; he had a lot of ideas going around in his mind, he wanted to do so much and I think deep down he knew his time was short – he said it so often, “I don't have much time”- “I got to get busy!” He was truly sensitive through and through and *he came readymade that way from birth*, and what he experienced as he grew up in those short 42 ½ years of his life shaped him into what he became as an adult; as are we all at the end of our days here and the circumstances of

our lives. But when it came right down to what he felt in his heart, he was happy performing for his fans, enjoyed being Elvis and he had plans, looked forward to living and said he loved his “life and job”-- And that's saying a lot, and is not the words of a suicidal person who's “holed up in their room plotting their own death”.

Elvis wasn't about to kill himself- he still had too much he wanted to do, hoped to do and needed to do. Killing himself would have brought no good to anyone – he believed he was here to bring good to all, to offer hope, love and a better life. My belief is he would never commit suicide. He was tired, he wanted to go “home to God and his mother” and yet if he had to stay, he would have stood up and made the effort like the good son he was--but God, his father in heaven looked down, saw his son needed rest and said, “Come up Elvis, you can work from here.” And Elvis said, “Oh damn! Yes Sir, thank you!” And off he went, free at last.

That day in Bel Air, the time came near for the producer to arrive, Elvis grew more tense, pacing the floor, asking if he “looked all right”, if his clothes were “okay”? He confided he had asked “some friends over to make me look good”. They were young women who were to “make over him” and they certainly did-even before the guy showed up! The time came and passed, Elvis nearly had a nervous fit, he began talking rough, saying things that I had never heard him say, some of them pretty colorful. In general, he became a brat, snapping at his men and pouting when told to relax, they’ll be here.

An hour later the man did arrive, with a beautiful blond woman. Elvis took him down the hall and his men began talking about his desire to do the film saying that, “if this thing don’t take, if he don’t get the part, he’ll bawl his head off!” One of them piped up with, “Hell, if he don’t-we’ll all be bawlin’” meaning Elvis would take his frustrations out on them. They put down his talent, his looks, body, his films and made derogatory comments about his interest in “spiritual books” and all the while his “make me look good” friends giggled. I could not help thinking how disloyal! I wondered if Elvis knew how they behaved in his absence.

Elvis returned alone, strangely quiet and uptight, so nervous he could not be still but kept going out into the back yard to pace back and forth. His men tried to talk to him and were ignored. A young woman who was said by other young women present, to be living there part of the time, went out to him and took his arm; he jerked away and snapped, “Leave me alone-Gawd damn it!” She came in, eyes welling in tears. Elvis’ men, who were practically breaking out in a sweat themselves, spoke among themselves, saying that he was “wired” and “apt to blow” and they debated on phoning his father or Priscilla.

Elvis finally sat down before the TV, flipping through the channels, ignoring everyone until a male friend sat beside him, talked softly, and asking if he would like a hamburger.

A few days later the rumor was that Elvis had been dieting, trying hard to win the role and had offered to do a screen test and relinquish top billing to get the part he wanted. And when asked if he would take a percentage instead of quite so much money Elvis had agreed though his manager was not so pleased and had told him if he did that he would be “on his own” he (the Colonel) didn’t want any part of it, nor did **Hal Wallis** who owned a big interest in Elvis’ movie deals.

It became more and more obvious to me, just from what I heard and saw over those years, that Col. Tom was interested in Elvis for one reason-m-o-n-e-y, which to him spelled p-o-w-e-r over other people who had to deal with him. He struck me as a cold, calculating man who didn’t appear to really give a damn about Elvis who to him, was more a commodity, “just one of his dancing chickens” as Elvis put it in 1977. I only hoped that Elvis would see through all the hype and hooey but it didn’t happen soon enough. Elvis told me he didn’t have much contact with the Col. “unless he wants something, or to tell me I hafta do somethin’ an’ usually it’s somethin’ I don’t wanta do!” But you never heard Elvis say a negative word about his manager in public--though it is told by several of his male friends, he had plenty to rave about behind closed doors, especially when it came to his recordings. It appeared to me that many of his “buddies” were afraid of the Colonel but there were a few who worked with the Col. and at his MGM offices. As a result perhaps, that is why I concluded early on, that Elvis deliberately kept his personal opinions and thoughts to himself, except for the few men friends he felt he could trust. In his last months he ruefully commented that he didn’t have any “real friends” around anymore, “none I can depend on to-to understand much.”

Later, I learned that Col. Parker and other people involved with Elvis’ career moves had turned down the film feeling it was “too drastic” a change and “too risky”. Elvis accepted their decision though his intense desire for change was obvious. The producer had wanted him for the role, had come by out of courtesy to give him the bad news and brought the blond to meet Elvis. And I learned something about Hollywood tactics—she was sort of a consolation “prize” for Elvis – if he wanted her. She left with the producer. Elvis’ next film was “*Frankie and Johnny*”. He didn’t feel well through the making of most of it and kept running a temperature -but he enjoyed **Donna Douglas** his co-star-she liked the same type books as he and they had long discussions between takes and happily exchanged “ideas and what if’s”.

We noticed that his appearance changed in some sections of the film; in part of it he is a little puffy in the face, dark circles and his clothing fits snugly at the midsection of his body. In other segments he is thinner, his clothing fits nicely and he looks as if he feels

better and the dark circles are gone. He said he was “havin’ nightmares again” couldn’t sleep much and that he was up “doin’ things that don’t make sense” (sleep walking). At this time he was also bored with the movies, needing a break that wasn’t going to come very quickly as he was signed for several “back to back” movies.

### **Good Hearted and Giving---**

Elvis donated a large amount of money to charities- mainly for the benefit of children although there are many stories of his generosity to anyone he happened to hear about or came across, who was in need. He simply thought that money was to be shared, if it was to be a blessing. He said, “Enjoyment is in the giving.” At Easter time he visited a blind school, “*The Sunshine Home*” that was privately owned and operated by someone he had met through one of his movie endeavors; it relied on public donations and accepted as students, children whose parents were not wealthy. It also housed children with mental birth defects. I was one of several people who went along at his invitation; I don’t know for sure, but the older lady who went along might have been Elvis’ aunt from Tennessee; we didn’t converse much past, “Hello” and a few generalities here and there. That day proved to be revealing moments with Elvis beginning with his temper tantrum when he wanted to take a car that was not ready and had to wait while his men ran around frantically trying to “fix” it, and ending with a group of people getting excited over Elvis outside the school as he tried to reach the car.

I don’t know who drove the car Elvis was in but they took off like a bullet and left us in the station wagon far behind; the driver wasn’t sure how to get to our destination and was fit to be tied! We weren’t exactly late, but it was quite amusing as the two guys in the front seat tried to “look cool” while hunting for the street name-

At the school that specialized in teaching blind kids to get along in the world, Elvis knelt letting the children feel of him, tears welled in his eyes when a blind teenage girl hugged him, felt of his face and said that she loved him. He replied that he loved her also, adding that she was “very pretty, do you know that?” She said if he thought so, it must be true and wiped his tears with her fingers; he kissed her on the cheek. She responded, “No-like this!” pulled his head forward and kissed him on the lips. He grinned like a possum as she ran her hands over his face saying he must be very handsome. He replied that he was “pretty ordinary” and told her again how pretty she was, “beautiful blue eyes”, he said and added, “Gawd, wish I was 17 again!” He looked very pleased when she gave him a beautiful, happy smile.

A small boy felt of his face, his arms and down his body and Elvis let him. A child in a wheel chair came up and Elvis knelt beside him. The boy could not speak well; Elvis leaned over, put his face up to his and whispered into his ear. The child began to shake;



Elvis took him up, held him on his lap in the wheel chair while one of his men pushed them about. The child was crazy with delight-Elvis also. His eyes almost danced out of his head. When he put the boy back into his chair, Elvis talked softly with him, straightened his clothing and then fastened the seat belt. I heard him saying that he (Elvis) had stuttered as a child and he appeared to be “coaching” him.

“You’ll do that for me, won’t you, son?” Elvis asked one hand on the lad’s head. The boy nodded, Elvis leaned down to whisper again. The boy took a deep breath, then got out, “Thank – you- El-vis” very distinctly. Elvis’ smile was dazzling; he ruffled the child’s hair saying, “thank you son”, and winked at the nurse standing by before turning to another child. The little boy’s brown eyes were blind but there was no questioning the love-light in them as he followed the sound of Elvis’ voice.

Elvis sat down at the piano that sat in one corner of the recreation/lunch room and ran his fingers across the keys, some of the kids who were mobile came over to be around him, and he asked them what they’d like to hear. Several spoke at once, Elvis grinned and said, “Okay, you” and pointed at a boy in a wheel chair with his hand in the air. “What do you like to hear?” The little boy grinned really big saying, “*Momma likes ‘Love Me Tender!’*” Elvis looked around asking, “Is she here?” A woman raised her hand and said, “I’m here, that’s my son.” Elvis nodded, and began playing the theme music, “**Laura Lee**” and sang a verse of “*Love Me Tender*” with a long piano section at the end. Everyone clapped, and he began doing a fast “boogie woogie” kind of beat and several kids who could get around began trying to dance. Elvis laughed and turned it into more of dance kind of song as the kids started telling their nurses and instructors to dance and when some did, those children just loved that.

After that, he got up to say good bye and made sure he hugged and kissed every child in the place, before heading for the exit.

Across the room, sitting alone was an older boy, Elvis went over, saw the young man was blind and said, “Hi there, I’m Elvis, that’s a great lookin’ shirt you have on-may I touch it?” He put his hand on the boy’s shoulder and was talking quietly almost into the young man’s ear. I couldn’t hear everything but he was telling him something about there being several really pretty girls there-had he met them? Elvis was telling him what to say, how to talk to them and encouraging him to give it a try because they were “real cool lookin’ chicks” and he was a good looking guy-they’d like it if he paid them some attention. The young man shook hands with Elvis who then leaned down, whispering into his ear and they both laughed. Elvis punched him lightly on the shoulder then patted him and said, “When I come back, be sure ‘n tell me how it’s goin’ son. Don’t worry, do like I said an’ you’ll have ‘em lining up.”

As Elvis was saying goodbye and preparing to leave, one of the nurses working there began complimenting Elvis on his handling of the kids and asked him if he would like to have some pointers and instruction in dealing with their many afflictions. She thought it would make him more comfortable intermixing with the kids, saying she would be happy to give him personal instruction; she would waive her fee as a consultant since he was such a welcome guest and the kids enjoyed his visits so much. Elvis listened; head bowed, then looked into her eyes with a slight smile and said that if he had the time, he might do that and asked for her phone number. He thanked her for the offer, smiling sweetly but the look in his eyes said that he might be interested. She gave him one of her cards, stood on tiptoe to kiss his cheek and thanked him again for coming to see the kids. Elvis accepted the kiss, put his arm around her waist and said something into her ear that got a surprised look from her and then a very warm smile. He turned and went out the door, his two men flanking him and the other lady who had come with us and I went out the door behind them.

Later, I heard that the nurse and Elvis' friendship lasted over several years and when she moved out of state, she flew down to see him occasionally and was with him a time or two when he was touring in her neighborhood.

People don't think of Elvis as being "out and about" where he could meet women; it seemed at times, that he met them where ever he went-at the dentist office, the bank, driving down the street, at rest stops, on airplanes and of course, a few times his men might bring one to meet him; and in Las Vegas, he met quite a few with the help of his friends and other celebrity guests. Elvis never had to be alone-if he didn't want to be and he knew it-- He also knew that he could have his pick of the "litter" but still, he tended to be a tad shy and reserved and at times very insecure and unsure. **Linda Thompson** tells that she met him at the movie theater in Memphis; he ended up sitting beside her, and didn't waste a lot of time becoming "friendly". But he had to pursue her, and those are the kind he liked the best- one who'd make him really want her company and be a little hard to get doing it. She was with him constantly for several years, and for most of those years, he was very happy and grateful to have her---and said so. Unfortunately, he wasn't yet ready to settle down or fully commit in marriage again, to any woman--and apparently he never got over that last "hill" in his life.

In the mid 70's in talking about the beautiful women he saw around the front of the stage he said that "Women are the most expensive hobby a man can have; emotionally, mentally and monetarily, an' they can be the best thing 'ever happened to a guy or the worst--- Damn, I love 'em!" And he let that laugh roll out and down the phone line!

When we left the school there were several dozen people milling about as word had got out that Elvis was inside. He was mauled, harassed and pulled at all the way to the

car. He was gracious, smiling, signing autographs, submitting to hugs and kisses, and took it all in stride but as things grew more frantic as he tried to get to the car he had come in people were becoming aggressive and his eyes were dark and glassy. I think he was afraid; especially when one of his men growled, “Get him to the car- NOW!”

The driver of the station wagon carrying me and the other woman pulled up close and Elvis’ two guys changed course, putting him in the station wagon and as it was moving away. Elvis said, “This is what I live for-did you see those children? This is what it’s all about-weren’t they beautiful!” As he spoke, the man who got in with him, wiped blood from Elvis’ hand that had been clawed in the excitement of people trying to touch him. It was all worth it to Elvis-he dearly loved bringing smiles to the faces of the children; his inconvenience was nothing to him, though his hand was trembling as he took the bottle of water his aid offered.

He started talking to the guy about doing more for the kids, saying that he’d like to do something for Thanksgiving and Christmas, saying that some of them didn’t have parents who visited much. His friend said something along the line “of well, you got things to do then, ya know-it might not work out that way--you done what you could today, let it go.” Elvis was speaking so softly I couldn’t hear him well, but his tone of voice led me to think he wasn’t happy about his friend’s response. Over the course of years, I had that feeling often, it was if what he wanted to do wasn’t worth the effort and he was being “silly” thinking he had time or should be doing more etc-- I wish we had talked about it--but I didn’t and he didn’t make an issue of it either.

Elvis asked me to take charge of arranging Holiday parties for “Sunshine’s” children who were mentally handicapped, most of which stemmed from birth trauma and some with severe mental impairment and I had to say no; for some reason that I still do not understand, some of those severely impaired kids scared me so much, I couldn’t stay in the same room with them. Maybe it was because when I looked into their eyes, there was no sign of a human spirit behind them-or maybe I somehow could feel the fear that lived in them?

An incident involving me and one of those children occurred when Elvis was visiting a few rooms down the hallway; the other woman and I were ahead of him, handing out little bags of “goodies” room to room when a young boy who was maybe 10 years old and screeching like a monkey, suddenly leaped up grabbed hold of me and held on so tightly with both arms and legs, two nurses couldn’t make him turn loose and the kid was trying to sink his teeth in my chest. Elvis appeared suddenly and took hold of him, instantly calming the child who then lay in his arms gurgling like a baby. If I hadn’t seen it, I wouldn’t have believed it.

It was a horrible experience and frightening to see a human being with the look of a wild animal in their eyes; if Elvis hadn't heard the noise, hadn't come in that room when he did, I don't know what might have happened; I still today, don't understand why it happened. I didn't wait to see what went on-as soon as I could move I went out into the hallway and stayed there. Elvis asked me to take over the holiday parties for "Sunshine's" children a few days after that incident, and I said I couldn't go back there, didn't think I could handle how I felt. He didn't understand, but told me it was all right, some people couldn't because they hadn't got that far in "soul growth" and he was sorry he hadn't realized, not to worry about it. But I still do when I let myself think back to that experience, and it bothers me-after all, those children are not to blame for anything that happened to them and I was supposed to be an intelligent adult.

When we stopped for lunch the day the young boy attacked me, Elvis asked me to wait a minute in the station wagon, everyone else got out and gathered at the restraunts back door; he slid in beside me, his aid shut the door. Elvis turned to face me. Staring into my eyes he said, "Let me see where he bit you" and unbuttoned my blouse so fast I didn't have time to react. Instinctively I held it together; he said, "Don't be silly!" pulled the blouse back, ran his fingers lightly over the now swollen red bite mark at the top of my left breast, and then sounding like a doctor said, "Didn't break the skin; it'll be all right, just put some warm 'n then cold cloths on it when we get home". His eyes were about 8 inches away looking into mine as he spoke, but then he quickly "kissed the boo-boo" as he put it, grinned and got out of the car and his aid held the door for me as Elvis joined the group standing at the restaurant door. His often said comment, "it never ceases to amaze me" fit how I felt by his *directness* in what he wanted to do and say. Definitely one of a kind! And he was right- no problems physically--

Elvis did other forms of charity involving his time. He received vast amounts of mail, all wanting to hear from him. Some he answered personally, most of those were from ill or handicapped children or teens. He commented that he wished he had more time, he couldn't get them all answered. A goodly number were from the seriously ill and those touched his heart and he felt badly when he couldn't respond fast enough. I said I was a good typist and if he wanted to dictate the messages I could type them easily since I was accustomed to using a Dictaphone, and he could personally sign it or add a brief note. He thought about half a second and said, "Really- would you, that'd be great!" I said I could drop them by when I came home from work. I wasn't sure he would do that, but he did put about 9 short responses on tape and I typed them up for him. He seemed to be impressed when I returned the cassette he made for those letters, and told him they were personal correspondence and as such, he needed to keep them in a secure place. He looked at me very intensely and then said thank you, I will do that. I had visions of the gossip column reporters getting hold of them-not that they were anything "bad" but just the fact he would not want his charities known, especially not recorded messages -he

would have hated it! He didn't do any of his good deeds for publicity and dreaded having to deal with them having found out he did things like that. He said, "They just try to shoot ya down ever chance they get-an' make one up if they can't find somethin'!"

I do not know how many letters, how many people he reached in this way as his home office staff took care of his mail and what they didn't handle went to Col. Parker's offices, MGM Studios and Madison, Tennessee. There were dozens of sacks delivered weekly and during special days, more than that. He told me, so much so, it took "a-while" to get through it all, plus he received gifts and "other things" all the time and his daddy hired in help when needed. I only helped him a short time with some that he might have brought with him from Memphis. I know he continued to try to answer some of the letters when he had some time, which wasn't that often. His phones were always ringing, someone always wanting something and he constantly had to go somewhere to do whatever. I vividly recall him phoning to say I didn't have to answer one of the letters as the young man had died. Elvis was desolate-he had not replied to his last letter. I said to him, "Elvis, you can't expect to always be there! That young man knew you did the best you could." His reply; "I should have known-I should have taken the time." Later he called me, asking me to listen to what he wrote to send the boy's parents, if it was "okay". He had written a beautiful letter by hand, pouring out his heart in every word, telling them how grateful he was that *they let* him write to and get to know their son. I could barely speak for trying not to cry, but told him they would be so pleased, he should send it right away.

So many times Elvis did good deeds for people as he did for a young man whose car broke down on his way to work. He was standing by his car, without any money, no cell phones back then and a caddy pulled up ahead and stopped. A man got out and walked up to him and said, your car broke down? The young man said he didn't know what to do, he didn't know anyone in Memphis with a car and had no money; the man handed him a \$20.00 bill and said, "Take this, it should get you home." The young man was stunned; went to work and when he came home there was a new car sitting in the driveway. His mother told him, it's your car; Elvis Presley bought it for you and handed him the registration and keys. The young man went on to college and became a doctor but never had contact with Elvis personally. One of many such examples of Elvis' generosity and willingness to help his fellow man and did so without ever seeking publicity or attention, in fact, he went out of his way to avoid having it become public knowledge.

Another time I recall was printed in the Memphis newspaper after it had a story about a gifted young person needing money for college; Elvis wrote a check to help out and of course, the recipient not knowing Elvis didn't like publicity and being very thrilled to have him offering help, told the newspaper who printed the story. Elvis did not respond

when the reporter wanted to speak with him. I don't know that he ever did give an interview regarding any donation or gift he might have given anyone; he abhorred publicity regarding his generosity. If the things he did to help people in need were known, there would be amazement on the faces of people around the world; this man gave from the heart; he truly believed helping others in whatever way he could, and he personally, wanted nothing from those he helped. He said, "Man, it makes me feel good seein' them get happy, that's enough, really. I don't need publicity."

### **Elvis Lives On As a Good Example—Sue Adams, England**

**A younger generation of Elvis fans** ---As we all know, Elvis loved children. Elvis said, "They (children) come first--the most precious things in life. A parent should do anything it takes to give a child a sense of family-- all any kid needs is hope and feeling he or she belongs. If I could do anything that would give some kid that feeling, I would believe I had contributed something to the world." I have heard so many stories from those who as children were helped through their troubled times by Elvis and/or his music.

One young man came to see me several years ago bearing a plaque he had made for Elvis. His story was one of being alone and heartbroken as a child. He said, "By the law of average, I should have grown up to become a criminal; but instead, I have faith in my lord, I am in college, and I play football for the *Ohio Buckeyes*. This is because of Elvis' example and his music, especially his gospel music." He had brought the plaque as a way of saying thank you to Elvis. His dream was to continue playing football for the *Buckeyes* and then for the *Detroit Lions*. I haven't heard from this young man, but I hope his dream becomes a reality, just as Elvis' did.

So Elvis, you did and have given kids a feeling of belonging and you did contribute something to the world. I once had a reporter tell me that it was too bad that all kids didn't have an opportunity to join Elvis fan clubs instead of gangs. The statement puzzled me so I asked him to explain. He said. "Well, there seems to be a "family" atmosphere in the clubs which would give them a sense of belonging. The clubs produce newsletters that teach kids reading and writing skills. The clubs work with all types of people which would give them people skills. There are dues to be collected and managed which would teach them financial skills, and they give to charity which would teach them humanitarian skills.

### **Elvis – *What he means to me* – Sue Adams-**

For the last quarter of a century Elvis Presley and his music has held a special place in both my life and my heart.

Elvis possessed a talent, a God-given voice that has always been there, for me and countless others over the years, especially in sad times to be comforted and uplifted, his music is a positive quality that shines through in my and other's lives.

Elvis' music and all that he left us in his memory, once on record album and tape cassette has now also been transferred to CD and DVD over the years, allowing for longer and more durable preservation in this, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Friends who have been made because of and through the love of Elvis have become like an extended family, global communication being made easier through e-mail wherever they all may be!

With that talent and indefinable quality Elvis had also, he was able to spread happiness all over the world, inspiring loyalty and love in those people and ensuring that he is remembered, still, to this day.

**Sue Adams, England “Seeks to encourage and inspire”**

**Elvis' thoughts on money--**

*“Money is somethin' to use, stickin' it up somewhere an' not usin' it isn't any fun---'less ya jus' get off on countin' the pennies it might be earnin' sittin' in a bank somewhere, makin' some other one rich keepin' it for ya-- I like makin' folks happy 'n sharin' what I get from what I do is a good way to do that. Man, I got the best job in the world --- 'n if givin' some of what it brings me back to those who's been helpin' me get to this point--well, it makes me happy an' that's what it's all 'bout anyway – doin' good to others-- Really, love thy neighbor-- 'member that don't ya? If not may be a good book to read now an' then-- really.”*

Elvis was very generous with his money, much to his father's dismay. Vernon had been poor all of his life, his family before him was poor as well. He knew the value of the dollar but it seemed kind of like he was “penny pinching” as he tended to micro-worry about money and had the reputation of being “stingy” but then, his son didn't worry at all, and believed money was meant to be spent, especially on fun and making people happy; he and his father argued and fussed about money quite often -so much so that Elvis finally had a “go-between” so that he didn't have to go home to Memphis to

sign those checks -he just signed them and sent his “go-between” back and forth. Eventually there were some of his men who could sign checks for him (or so I’ve heard).

Elvis wasn’t that happy with his father’s new bride; he loved her sons, but he didn’t want Graceland changed and she was prone to redoing the house-after all, she was now the “mistress of Graceland”, wasn’t she? Not in Elvis’ eyes, not at all. I don’t know what went on in those years before we knew each other, he didn’t talk about it much, but it was obvious that he felt resentment toward another woman trying to “run his home”. He soon began looking for a place for them to call their own and muttered that she now could “change things all damn day” if she wanted to. Elvis did say that he didn’t go home for several months because he didn’t want to “get into it” with his father and he didn’t want to be around his father’s wife any more than necessary-they just didn’t hit it off as well as she had hoped Elvis said, but he didn’t go into much detail other than mention he didn’t like her “taste in redecorating *my mother’s* house”! He soon bought a place at the back side of his property and had the house remodeled for them-he said it was close enough his dad didn’t have to go far to “work” and he (Elvis) didn’t have to “spend a lot of time with that---woman”. He did enjoy her three young sons, who loved being his “step-brothers” and all the things Elvis bought for them (including himself) to play with! During this time Priscilla visited in Bel Air at least once, and she soon was living with his father and his wife, going to school, and very soon, moved over to Graceland; she was also there when Elvis came home from his job in Hollywood.

Sometimes he and his guys went to other events, football games, Las Vegas and where ever he might want to go, before coming home; he had always loved traveling around, meeting new people when he could. Priscilla sometimes went along, though she was going to school and after graduating she enrolled in a “finishing school for young ladies” --part of learning everything she could to be his wife--someday. I have heard but not from Elvis, that his father's new wife “helped Priscilla” decide what would be best as far as furthering her education after High School. Elvis would have sent her to a regular college; however that wasn't on her “list”. According to him; “She just wants to be my wife” he said. “Whatever she wants is okay, but I want her to decide.”

In Priscilla's book written about her long relationship with Elvis, she says they were careful never to let her parents find out she was staying with Elvis, including sleeping in his room with him -though he would not have sex with her--saying she was “too young”. She also said that he “wanted to wait until they got married”. Elvis spoke of her lovingly, saying she was “jus’ a baby, didn’t know who she was yet” and that he wasn’t ready to get married anyway; he continued making movies, dating his co-stars and other women he might meet while Priscilla went to school, and then “studied” to possibly become Mrs. Elvis Presley – maybe - someday when “the time was right”.



Question: “So of all the women you’ve met, did you meet any you didn’t like?”

Elvis: (Snickers) “That’s a loaded question-I’d rather not eh...say; could get in a lot of trouble., ya know.”

### *Wet Bikini Parties---*

On the way home from the visit to the blind children’s school and the home for exceptional children we stopped for lunch at a Jolly Roger restaurant where Elvis knew the manager who seated us in a private dining room area. Elvis ordered chef salads for everyone, barely picked at his and was ready to leave right away. One of his men paid for the meal with a credit card and left what looked like a hundred dollar bill as a “tip” for the waitress who had fluttered around Elvis though he didn’t do much more than say thank you a few times and flashed that devastating smile her way once or twice.

One of the few times I was inside one of his homes, was an eye opening experience and also one that made me feel embarrassed for being a member of the female sex just because of how some females behaved in their efforts to get Elvis' attention. And I was also amazed at how easily he took it all, handling them patiently, being more of a gentleman than they were being ladies.

He asked me to “stay a while” when we arrived at his home-- there was a poolside “party” though there wasn't much going on and if one asked, they could get something to drink and someone had a portable radio playing music. There were several young women present who were aspiring actresses, a few I thought I had seen doing bit parts on television; all of them waiting for his return. He had changed from the dark blue suit and tie into casual gray pants and a white shirt and was reclining in a chaise lounge when a very curvaceous young woman wearing a skimpy bikini climbed from the pool, leaped astraddle of him, squealed and smothered him in wet, ample breasts. The chair tipped, Elvis cursed, hauled her off and shoved her back into the pool. His pants and shirt were wet and he was angry; he gruffly apologized to those nearby, excused himself and stalked off toward a sliding glass door off one wing of the “U” shaped house, with the cute, short guy Elvis called “Cholly” right behind him; I thought at that time this fellow was Elvis’ valet because he seemed to be “at the ready” for anything Elvis might need.

I sat down in a lounge chair and realized I was way over dressed in a blouse and skirt - all around the pool side were girls in bikini's and bathing suits and all of them keeping an eye on the open sliding glass door waiting for Elvis to return.

After a few minutes Elvis came strolling out dressed in pale blue, button front pants that were the current style for men and were very tight leaving no doubt that he was a male; the see-through yellow shirt that adorned his upper body had white Hawaiian style flowers embroidered down the front and was worn with the tail out as if he might have a tad of modesty.

Stories have been told about Elvis “not wearing underwear” as if there were some kind of “ulterior motive”- his housekeeper **Nancy Rooks** wrote in her book, *“Inside Graceland”*; that she did his laundry and he did wear briefs, preferring white cotton though he told me he “got all kinds of stuff like that” from designers and companies hoping to get his endorsement for their products. He also said he “liked the way silk felt”. I don't think he ever took them up on their offers other than what the Colonel might set up as a way to make money via the fans as was done in the 1956 era. After we were well acquainted, he told me he had sensitive skin, lots of things he was allergic to (certain detergents, skin creams, make up, spermicidal things, some dyes, sweating on stage, etc.) caused his skin to “break out in somethin’ that looks like the mange” so he was careful what he used and what he wore close to his skin and said he learned it well the first time he tried using “protective eh--devices--”(condoms) because he looked like he had a bad sunburn as his “skin was blistered an' liked to itched to death”. So he never used those kinds of things again! Though he was aware of the “non latex” and said they were made of “animal skin” which both he and I thought was kind of “gross” sounding. Of course he made some funny comments and we laughed quite a bit over the possible types of “skin” that might be. He thought “snake skin would be perfect- except some of them had scales”...then he decided that might be “interesting” after all. (Of course he snickered.)

He would discuss anything and loved to laugh, sometimes he could get pretty personal and reveal personal things and in discussing birth control methods, he told me he was not circumcised and if he had sons, they wouldn't be either. He thought it was “mutilating the human body” and “very painful” though it was said back then, young infants did not feel pain. Elvis told me that when he was in the Army the doctors were trying to tell the men they should have it done; he was one of those who refused. And he said those who did it were sorry afterward because “it was like bein' snake bit! They were miserable, could barely walk an' man, they nearly broke down an' bawled when tryin' to take a leak!”

I told him babies certainly DID feel the pain and that I was at a doctor's office when a week old baby boy was circumcised; he screamed so loudly and long it was pretty obvious that he felt horrible, searing pain! I know it has religious reasons and sometimes medical as well, but it was barbaric for doctors *not* to use a localized pain killer, however back in the 50's and 60's, they held to the “young babies can't feel the pain” theory; Elvis was right about the “after affects” for older males. His “theory” was that God made man

in his own image--and provided everything physically that all humans needed to live and be healthy, therefore he didn't think "cutting anything off could improve God's work - unless somethin' messed up in the "factory" (womb). God gave humans a brain, allowing them to learn the ins and outs of medicine and surgery so they would have the means to fix any screw ups". If anything, Elvis was "set in his ways"--- but he was not boring!

Having grown up in the hot, muggy South, I easily can imagine that with Elvis' fair and sensitive skin he was pretty uncomfortable at times--especially considering as hard as he worked on stage, sweat literally running down his face and body until his clothing would be wet through and through. He had very "white skin" and naturally blond hair when younger though it photographed dark due to the "greasy kid stuff" he used to keep that "pompadour" in place. He tanned beautifully, but what skin didn't see the sun was very pale – take a look at those photos showing some very white legs! He often had skin rashes and didn't like to go without a shirt at those times- thus in movies he's usually seen fully dressed while other people ran around in swim suits and shirtless. He liked having a tan and worked on it he said, so he wouldn't have to use so much stage make up in films, and later, on stage.

When he came out of the house he strolled over to a lounge chair, moved it next to me, kind of poured himself onto it, glanced at me and then said, "Um sittin' here so act like you're with me, okay?"

I guess I had a dumbfounded look on my face because he took hold of my hand, leaned toward me a bit and said, "Jus' talk to me 'n listen". The little grin I got was priceless as he tucked my arm under his and folded his fingers through mine while resting our hands on the chair arm, and then on his thigh a bit later when he asked, "Could you put that ring (wedding band) on the other hand an' make it look more real"? He was hoping the young women looking on would think I had his interest and it would "keep them off" of him and I soon realized why. The more "brave" girls kept coming up to him, some sitting beside him, with various questions or just to say hello and get a kiss. I was amazed at how patiently he fended off their advances. When briefly between girls he commented, didn't I think it strange that all of these women were "wanting to make it" with him, or was it like that "now for all the guys"? I replied he should know-it was his fame, his personality, and he was very attractive. He cut me a scathing look and growled, "Its *Elvis Presley's* name 'n looks and image -don't *you* know that?" I said, yeah, but he was good looking and had a great sense of humor. He replied that he was not all that special-then said his nose was crooked, his face lop-sided and he wasn't that tall either, in fact, he was "one of the shortest men in Hollywood".

While we sat there, he held my left hand with his right, with him doing most of the talking and he spoke so softly, I had to listen and watch him to hear what he was saying;

he would lean toward me, talking away and every so often a little grin would curl that lip, but those eyes of his would be darting back and forth, keeping an eye on everyone and everything going on. It was fascinating to me, just observing; I guess that sounds “crazy” to many people -but his fans understand, of that I’m certain.

One of the funniest things occurred when a couple of young women came into the courtyard; Elvis looked around, saw them and said, “Oh sh--t!” He then pulled my arm so I had to lean toward him and with my fingers held to his lips, he looked into my eyes and said, “Play ‘long with me, okay?” I looked past his shoulder and saw one of them looking our way; she didn’t look happy. Elvis kissed my fingers, his other hand was at the back of my neck and it looked like he was about to kiss me but he was faking it all. The woman walked past and he didn’t acknowledge her presence, instead his fingers were stroking my hair, he was so close we were almost nose to nose. He whispered, “She gon’ yet?” I said, “Inside the house.” He relaxed, ran his hand through his hair and kind of shivered as if “throwing off” whatever he felt and said, “Whew!!!” I almost laughed; it was totally comical!

“Gawd--”he muttered, then motioning to one of his guys, he got up, met him a few feet away and had words with him. The guy headed into the house and Elvis flopped back onto the chair mumbling something about, “--.what the hell they think I tol’ ‘em --.” I didn’t get the rest but I took it to mean he didn’t want her at his house anymore-period. She was very beautiful and voluptuous; a few months later I saw her playing a small role in a television show starring **Robert Blake**. [*“Barretta”*.]

What amused me also was that after she left, he picked right up where he’d left off in lamenting why women were interested in him by asking, “Didn’t they (women of all ages) know” the advances etc. only turned him off to them? “Sometimes”, he said, “I’d just like to sit down, watch a little TV and talk-don’t they think I have a brain, a heart?” He confided that sometimes he thought there was something “in me” that made women turn into whores in my presence – what is it that I do?” I said that he was so charming and represented the ideal man in many female eyes. It just got out of hand when he was near-they could sense that he was a nice guy. He shot a dirty look my way and went on with his lamenting.

He asked me if I knew what it was like “havin’ to listen to 3 hours of how to put on finger nails?” and he ruefully grinned adding, “or havin’ to keep girls off me ‘n still not hurt their feelings? You’d think they’d have other interests-you know?”

About then a lovely girl with long blond hair that she kept flipping back with a toss of her head, and dressed in a quite scanty, crocheted, pink bikini came up, sat on the edge of his lounge chair and purred “Where have you been sweetie pie, I’ve been waiting; see, I

made it pink-just for you.” Taking a deep breath, she leaned toward him, seductively staring into his eyes, running her fingers down the slit of his shirt, trailing them over his belt buckle and then twisting the lowest button on his shirt that was below that buckle. But she didn’t stop there, staring into his eyes she let her fingers do the walking- down the buttons of his pants. He gave me a lazy see-I-told-you-so-look, took hold of her hand, pulled her closer and murmured, “Un-un not now---later baby, 'um tired.” And he flashed that devastating smile as she stood up to walk away. She looked disappointed but said, “Okay, won’t let you forget!” She walked away performing a perfect “runway walk” and looked back to see if he was watching; he wasn’t.

After watching *that* rejection tactic, I teasingly asked him why he would question their continuing to make him offers-he misunderstood, blasted me with those steely eyes and growled, “Hell, I’d be dead in a week! Gawd damn it! ‘Um more than that!” Almost cat-like he sprang up off that chaise and stomped off into the house. I noticed that limber walk, more a strut and sexy-- as I glanced about the pool area every female there was watching him, thinking the same thing. After a few minutes and he didn’t come back, I left---I think I felt a breeze- from the sighs of relief coming from the other “ladies in waiting”.

I received a call from him a few days later; he wanted to know in a petulant tone of voice, if it would be “too much trouble” if I would let him know before I “jus’ disappeared without tellin’” him? I said, I’d try to do that; I knew it was “impolite” but he had gone in the house and I didn’t think it my place to go looking for him. He said, “Don’t forget--can’t talk now--bye-bye.” He hung up before I could say anything else. That was Elvis, blunt, to the point and no skirting the issues if he had something to say. This is probably why some people said it felt like he “owned them or something”. It’s sure true about his girlfriends---they were “his” even when the “thrill was gone and they left”, he wanted to be able to give them advice, tell them what he thought and “pick” their friends-especially male friends. At times it seemed that he was kind of upset if the lady “found some other fellow” too soon after she’d been with Elvis??? Maybe it was just his deep seated “need” to be “unforgettable” that got in the way in the form of jealousy; or just the Capricorn dictator influence-- He didn’t like people to “just leave” without telling him, and if he wanted them to stay--well--.

Though he invited me to come up a few times, over 15 years of knowing him, I was *inside* his house for “a while” just 3 times - and for a short few minutes a couple of other times and once was briefly inside his Palm Springs enclosed yard, most times were in the sixties before he was engaged or married and once after he was separated from his wife. Other times were at more public places and less chance to really converse. I wish we had tried to arrange more time for him now – but back then it didn’t enter our minds he would be gone – “in the twinkling of an eye”--

I regret that I did not make Jimmie take off work, forget the overtime pay and that I didn't drag him kicking and squalling to Vegas; he didn't like sitting around waiting for a chance to get upstairs, but as Elvis said, "Hindsight is what kicks you in the ass when you realize what you *could* have done..."

People can barely believe that I could have gone more often, could have created a friendship with some of the other "regulars" and chose not to. Maybe it's weird, but it was not what I was used to, there were always other people who knew him better doing the talking, I was never one to talk much in groups of people, nor did I have a big family or group of friends back then so being quiet and in a way "backward" socially, it was daunting enough for me to even be talking to him, much less among other people. And there was not much chance to talk to him when other people were present; after all, everyone wanted his attention and time. I preferred to talk to him over the phone, fortunately he too, enjoyed the one on one relationship a telephone provided. He could say what he wanted and he didn't have to "hide" his true feelings or worry that he would be mis read because no one could "see his reactions". That I understood right away.

*[The quotes in the following section were recorded when working on "Interview Tapes" section of "We Remember, Elvis- revised 2006 edition" now available through Amazon.com. This conversation and letter has not been published until now.]*

As I remember that day at the pool, I am reminded of comments Elvis made in his last year of life. He had just gone through a crowd gathered to see him arrive at a hotel in a Northern city, there had been several women trying to get a moment with him, and he was disgusted by their actions and comments. He couldn't quite understand why they thought he would appreciate their suggestions, and he read me a short letter one of them slipped into the pocket of his jacket. The main thing I remember was how he recited the words of this letter-he may as well have been reading the dictionary as there was no emotion in his voice; he was merely reciting the words, regardless of their meanings...and only when it ended did he take a long breath and expressed a softly said "Gawd" before relapsing into his normal style of speech. He was a true actor.

*[Quote] "Elvis, you are the sexiest, most handsome man on earth. There isn't anything you could want or think of that I wouldn't do for you every single day and 4 times on Sunday! I'm 33 but as you can see I look much younger; I keep in shape. I don't have implants! 42-28-36 at 5' 2" and my hair is naturally dark and below my waist. I was born in Hawaii- I can hula standing or on my knees; get the picture you sexy hunk of man? Please call me. I'm in the same hotel waiting for you. I just want to be with you Elvis. I love you; my biggest thrill would be to have your body writhing in pleasure under my*

*control. Paradise on earth baby-I know you need it—won't you surrender and let me take you out of this world. I'm booked for 3 days--just for you Elvis. Don't waste time-call me. You won't be sorry...If you're tired -I'll make it all better-you won't have to do a thing-unless you want to, come on baby, and give me a call. I love playing in the water-and so do you, oh yes you do! Remember Suggie? Big island Kona Kula Klub. Bet you remember who told me about you! Waiting for you, in baby blue. Jonnie. Take a good look at that photo-it's all me".* [Unquote]. Her phone number and room number were included.

"Gawd", he breathed, what the hell does she think 'um thinking after-after reading that? Good Lord is that all they think about-or is it just somethin' in me makin' 'em?" I asked if she was pretty and he said "Sure, aren't they all? Know who told her to write it!" He then said it was getting more and more difficult to be patient with women because they always seemed to lose all sense of pride and morals in his presence. "I don't understand what it is about me that make them behave that way. It must be somethin' in me that brings out the worst in people, especially females." Some people think that was all "fake" coming from him, actually it was his insecurity and the belief that he wasn't anything "special, just got a lucky break, that's all".

He was serious; he really did not know why as in his mind he was only a normal male, with normal attributes and just happened to sing for a living. And he liked women, but they were becoming less appealing in his eyes though he said he thought he might like to find just one nice lady to keep him company, and maybe he might want to get married again, but had no plans for it or anyone in mind, "not now", he added.

I let him talk it all out and then as he did, to try to get him to cheer up, to laugh, I said, "So, why don't you give her a call and invite her over? You could just get a nice back rub, right?" There was silence on the line, I could hear him breathing, practically hear the wheels in his head turning, finally he growled, "Good Gawd woman, didn't you jus' hear what I was sayin'? Um not gonna call that-that woman up...don't even know her or nothin'!"

"But you could get acquainted pretty quickly, she's all for that..."

"Your puttin' me on, jus' teasin' me...damn it woman, don' go doin' that! I'm kinda in a low spot here an' don't need nobody draggin' my ass around like this. Sure, it might be kinda fun to call one of them but jus' don't want to get into nothin' like that. Got too much other stuff on my mind an' just not- not interested in whatever she's thinkin'. Maybe a while ago I'd do it, but don't care for doin' that with-with strangers. Don't want to be messin' around with-with God knows who sendin' me invitations. Let 'em find

somebody else. This boy's been there, done that an' don't wanna again, really-- Is that too hard to understand?"

"Just teasing you Elvis, I know you're pretty busy and your rope is stretched quite far... I was hoping to make you laugh... she did say she can hula-and she likes showers..." He wasn't laughing.

"See the thing is", he said quietly though his words were kind of all running together, "it'd be nice to have some company, a nice girl who's not just here for --for whatever, but I can't get into that either-I need time alone, friends who don't expect nothin' from me, like that...peace and quiet, that's what I need. So gonna go lay down and read some an' if I'm lucky, sleep too. Didn't bring anyone in here with me---'n if I did it would be somebody I chose-not them choosin' me. There is a difference. Now it-it's not that I'm not-not interested in-in that, it's just don't want to get involved, especially not with somebody I don't know -just tired of it...it all. Maybe I'm just getting old...whatever - too damn tired, 'n ma head's spinnin', thinkin' too fast to figure it out now." (He was at a hotel and going to do two shows the next day before heading on to wherever the next performance would be. Ginger was on the tour, but he said he "didn't bring anyone here" (his room?) with him. Her sister often traveled along too, maybe they had other rooms; I don't know. I didn't talk with him about his girlfriends unless he brought the subject up and that wasn't often; he wasn't one to blurt out things about his personal life unless he had a problem or wanted to say something funny.)

"Okay Elvis, I *was* just teasing you; I wish you a nice restful sleep and happy dreams and that you wake up full of vinegar, ready to knock them dead! Just as you always do Elvis. Always, I wouldn't lie or joke about that, so bye, until next time. Love you, buddy."

"Thank you darlin', love you too baby, an' I'm gonna have nice dreams...cause 'm gonna picture me layin' my head on your shoulder, snugglin' up an' sleepin' safe 'n the arms of a friend that loves me...um no fool..." Soft snicker..."Gottcha on that 'un; didn't I. Bye-bye, hope, eh don't keep you awake. (Giggles)

"Oh yeah, you wish...sleep tight, bye-bye honey." I remember hoping that he would sleep and not have to take pills to do it – he had been struggling to break that need and was winning most of the time-but he wasn't getting enough real sleep and it showed in his face and his performances. His breathing sounded labored over the phone and I could hear him wheezing now and again as he paused to catch his breath. I kept thinking he was a lot more ill than he was letting anyone know, except perhaps his doctor if he was on the trip. (Apparently he was not with him on some of those last tours and Elvis had to use



other doctors, or go to emergency for whatever he might need; that alone, could “screw up” anyone’s reactions to medication!.)

[This conversation and the letter content were taped. *I sent all of the original complete conversation to him before his demise- as he had requested. I kept only the transcripts and none of this taped conversation.*]

I know that Elvis had been with a lot of women, more than one at a time on occasion; he was no saint and was the first to admit that. However, the guy I knew had “been there, done that” and was trying very hard to be a good “role model” for his young fans. His private life was just that- *private*. It is to his credit one *never* read torrid stories about him nor was he ever front page news for being a louse or being vulgar in public places. He was “known” for having a bevy of women passing through his “revolving” bedroom door, according to some of his “friends” and he enjoyed the “playboy” image, playing with it on stage, occasionally getting a bit colorful for fun and laughing about it, but Elvis’s public reputation was “squeaky-clean” and that’s the way he wanted it. In the last few months of his life he joked about his “playboy image” saying, “It’s a lot of fabrication--really--I’m not that stud they talk about--well, maybe in the beginnin’-- (Laughs, squeaky snicker) Hell, it was--Gawd--so long ago! Get ‘in too old for doin’ much of that--‘un workin’ too, ya know. An’ sides that, I got a baby girl, jus’ an old divorced daddy--nothin’ sexy ‘bout that! Gawd--least I don’ have to run so fast no more!” And he giggled and laughed. “Yeah sure”, I said, “then why is that-- line so long outside the show rooms and ticket booths?” “Curious, they’s jus’ curious--” he snickered. “They find out what they wanta know, ‘un then it’s over--really.”

[1976 -77 conversation from “*The Interview*” that was not included in the revised **We Remember, Elvis**, book released paper back in 2006. My questions were along the line of “how do you feel about all of the gossip and the vast number of women who can’t get enough of seeing you”, “wasn’t it difficult for Priscilla knowing there were so many around you” and “why do you think they find you so attractive?” He responded as follows:]

**ELVIS:** “You know, didn’t want to get married, not then really; didn’t want more responsibility, wanted to stay young, kinda like get ‘in married was old, ya know, bein’ old. Too much goin’ on, in my head, things wanted to do ‘n nobody would let me. Havin’ to sing or not get a script or anything, not allowed to sing anywhere else ‘cept on fim (or) at home, couldn’t write nothin’ with anybody; RCA owned it all an’ they’d get into it. Hands tied all the time, anything wanted to do that-that mattered to me; I know--it-it was too much kinda--

I know she was wantin' things; she was waitin' -it was good 'tween us; she knew how it was waiting; the time had to be right ya know, an' me--jus' not- not- too much confusion and-an' indecision goin' on--the damn fxxxx fims all same shit--nothin' better--down the line--.

Yeah, there was gossip sayin' me and the boys-- (Snickers) were a bunch of queers (homosexuals)--or somethin'. I dunno where that comes from--ya know. Gawd that was a joke! Fer sure! Ask more 'n hundreds of women-they gonna say no way man! Jus' opposite really! Lord, whole world seemed like was more women than men an' all of 'em was in my area---where ever! You know never did know why really, don't seem right jus' sayin' it's 'cause 'um a star-a musician-singer of songs-or somethin' 'cause started when I was nobody, in it was goin' on even then! Man it was like I was some kind of mouse 'n they was cats! Ya know man, 17 years old 'n they were lookin' at me--that way. I'd like to know why?

Um nothin' special, not then fer sure really! But wasn't outta school in this woman I mowed her yard -'n she invited me to sit on the porch 'n have some lemonade 'n it was real hot so I did 'n she started get in' ma shirt off 'cause it was so hot 'n it was wet---sweatin' ya know. 'n next thing I knew she had me down on her swing 'n man, was fixin' to-eh---eh-anyway she was gonna get me outta ma clothes 'n scared me more'n anything on account of--I mean anybody could come up an' seen what was happenin! Lord! (Laughs) See, I wasn't nothin' special--but there she was-- She hung ma shirt out on the porch an' momma come by an' seen it. She told momma she'd give me some lemonade an' it was hot un I'd left ma shirt--- Shhh--I ran off so fast I forgot to get it! Any way she told momma what a good boy, un good worker I was an' all that an' momma- she was proud of me. Momma knew I didn't forget it but she didn't say nothin'. Gawd, if I told her what really happened she'd of- of tore a piece outta that woman! (Laughs) There's always been them kind of women hangin' after me, lots of other kinds too (Snickers) I don't know what it is man, I'm not that good lookin', lots of other guys better'n me, an' they were stars, had money an' all that goin' for 'em--don't know why it is-wish knew what it was-could bottle it an' sell it Tom said! That'd be somethin' could do what wanted un jus' set back un sell 'em a bottle! Lordy, I jus' like to understand what it is gets 'em goin' like they do. Wish somebody could tell me--I mean I know it's the image an all that--but it's always there, all time got to watch out or-or there's trouble. Weird man, jus' not reality--like science fiction gone haywire at times--(Laughs) Gawd--it's a trip!

Ya know, momma told me there'd be--always be them kind of women an' they'd be after any man-not jus' me-only thing was, seems like it is jus' – just me---an' then only takes others if can't get me. I'd like to know why that is, really. I-don't see it. Gawd, those days so long ago, been a long time baby--real long time--wish it weren't--man,

never wanted to be get in' old 'n know 'n it. Vain huh, man vanity is a-a hard one to swallow--wish it wasn't-- Awww shh--. growin' up ain't my style, no way!"

It is true that Elvis was unsure if he wanted to get married-he liked being free to meet women, to do things he wanted to do without having to consider a wife's wishes. He also wanted children, and he thought one should be married to give them the right type of homelife. But that was all down the road anyways-and he was never sure if a woman liked him for himself...or for his fame and popularity. That was a big hurdle.

## **Invitation to--the Bedroom--**

One day in 1966 he invited me to come to his bedroom, first saying with a gleam in his eyes, "Are you afraid to be alone with me?"

His room was neat, with a bedroom set, TV, record player, desk-like table and a couple of chairs, a small couch and a large bookcase full of books. The colors were his favorite--drab green/gold and white. I've been asked if there was a fireplace; to tell the truth I don't remember any except the stone one in the living room area and the many mirrors, but Elvis liked mirrors, not necessarily to "check himself out" though he did often do that but to keep an eye on everyone else; I think it was a "lost twin" thing too, he spoke about being "one of identical twin brothers" and wondered if "it would have been easy to tell us apart". He had a nice view of the courtyard and out at the hillside beyond the back yard. The mirrored closet doors were partially open; I noticed women's clothing hanging inside as he closed the doors. "Priscilla keeps some of her things in here for when she visits," he said matter-of-factly.

He sat at the table signing letters to fans I had typed and brought by and was going to mail on my way home. As he signed and added a note on a couple, he talked about his home in Memphis, the remodeling that was being done on it and how anxious he was to return, saying that "it is really home to me".

"This is really your room?" I asked, it was rather bare and kind of like a hotel I thought at first glance. He didn't say anything, just smiled slightly, nodded his head and kept signing his name, occasionally making a little comment about the addressee and how long he'd written to them, saying he enjoyed keeping in touch, being able to bring something "different" into their lives, and lamenting the fact of not having enough time to do "it right".

He noticed me looking at a sleep mask and a long towel with snaps down the edge lying on his bed. He stood up saying, "Imagine me layin' here with this on" and he

snapped the towel about his neck (it was to keep his throat from getting sore) “Lookin’ like a mummy or somethin’ wearin’ this” and he held the mask over his eyes and lay down on the bed as if asleep.. “Not very sexy-huh?” he said with a little snicker.

Beside the bed on a chair lay a folded set of blue pajamas, a couple of movie script notebooks lay on the bed and a well used looking Bible was near a lamp on a small bedside cabinet. Looking at him laying there I wondered how many women had been laying there with him but didn’t say anything; it was weird though, because he peeked from under the eye mask and said, “Not near what you might think-um workin’ too much for playin’ ‘round a lot.” That kind of startled me-it was as if he heard my thoughts!

As I got to know him better, he occasionally appeared to be able to “tune in” and know what I was thinking and not just me I learned over time, but several people who worked with him and were around him said the same thing. Years later he commented that he had to “be careful around the guys (people he worked with recording etc. and on stage) because sometimes know what they---eh--thinkin’ – they think ‘um crazy any way---” (Laughs) “If I forget--it kinda spooks them an’ makes it eh--difficult to- to work together kinda--ya know. Like ‘um a mind reader or somethin’--” (Laughs) Several of his background singers and musicians have made remarks about how perceptive he could be--that it was like he could “hear” their thoughts; all most all of them relate how unique Elvis was compared to other people they knew. Some have said, “I’ve never met a guy like him---ever before or after.”

“Want to see my sheets?” he asked as he got up, and with a sneaky grin turned back the spread. They were pale beige; plain cotton with one light blanket. “Not real dangerous lookin’- huh? Bet you expected satin or somethin’ sexy like that...” He sat back down saying sarcastically “Elvis Presley-*stud!* If I did ever thing I’m *supposed* to be doin’ there would be nothin’ left of me for anything else!”

I said he appeared to have just about all the offers he could handle and must need lots of vitamins to keep up. He chuckled, looked at me for several seconds then said, “you’re not put off or anything else bein’ here with me, are you?” I replied, hardly, but it is a bit warm-isn’t it? He cracked up laughing and we talked easily after that, he didn’t appear to hide anything and was very open about his life, thoughts and dreams.

In talking he was candid and funny by turns; I said, so you aren't bringing all those girls back here to fool around, really? His eyes sparkled, he frowned slightly, pursed his lips as if puzzled then said, “Not really---eh, never did like sleepin’ alone--guess cause when I's little we all slept in the same bed, momma an’ daddy an’ me ‘n in wintertime, we did ‘cause then we didn't haff to keep the stove goin’ ya know, an’ too, I was just little then--but still like havin’ a warm body--- to keep the chill off--” He was looking down but

he glanced my way and we both laughed. He ended up saying he was “too busy for much socializing, really”. He was cute-head to toe--I'm sure he had plenty of willing warm bodies “to keep the chill off”.

Elvis did like nice clothing, silk shirts and cashmere suits, and he liked having things different than other men might wear; **Bill Belew** made his costumes for the stage and another fellow Elvis called “G”, (I think his name was **Gene**), and **Richard Davis** who worked for Elvis, came up with suits, shirts for daily use. And special “affect clothing” such as capes etc were made by Belew. Elvis didn't care for satin sheets much because he said they were too slippery and he preferred plain white cotton or muted colors- saying he didn't like “goin' to bed in wild lookin' colors” and he slept in pajamas (he did not want to wake up with a “camera in ma face or anywhere else!” so never slept nude! Apparently from things I've heard and read – he wore “normal” pajamas at home but in Vegas he often wore designer pajamas made of silk or something that appeared to be silk, and often they had his initials on them. He was partial to black or blue though at least once, had a pair of Chinese red coloring. He often “shared” those designer sets, letting girl friends wear the top half if she didn't have a nightgown handy.

Some of his girlfriends have said that he was “old fashioned and somewhat of a prude at times, usually locked the bathroom door when in there, though he sometimes invited them to share the shower with him. Other girl friends say he was a lot of fun, inventive, experimental, and sexy and very much a “stud”. I told him I'd heard that about him when he was into his 2<sup>nd</sup> year of performing in Vegas, expecting him to laugh but he was silent a moment, then quietly said, “Awww--I don' know--guess if they think so--it's okay--” and he changed the subject. Though *he* could joke about all those things it still didn't “set well” when “personal things” were being told, and he heard about it from somebody else.

(He told me about his early school days--) **Elvis:** “Man, there was this one--eh--girl, she's older 'n me an' worked at a little diner down the lower end of town off Beal. I'd go down there 'n sit jus' to look at her! (Laughs) Man, she was somethin' worth lookin' at--ya know, 'specially for a young guy jus' tryin' his wings! She'd get me some coffee 'n I always was gonna say somethin' but never could get it out 'fore she'd move on. (Snickers) One time was waitin' on mamma to get off work, 'un walk home with her 'n she was late. Lord, finally got the nerve to say somethin' (to the waitress) an' she smiled like she was maybe okay with it, so I asked her if she'd like to take in a movie or somethin'. 'n she cut me down quick; sayin' for me to go home 'un let my mamma dry me behind the ears! Man, that was 'bout the quickest I ever got mad 'n it was a good thing for her I couldn't get nothin' out 'fore she got outa sight! Lord, lord, that chick don't know what she did--made up my mind right there, some day women like her'd be eh-- eh--beggin' to get me to notice 'em! (Laughs and giggles) Silly, I know, but man, I learned--” (I asked if he had

seen her any place since he began having hit records.) **Elvis:** “Yeah, she came by to catch us playin' but I was too busy, ya know--” (Giggles)

I did notice one thing about his bedroom that was highly memorable---the scent in that room was wonderful...it smelled like him-the cologne he always wore. And at that time, I could never find anything like it for sale, he wouldn't say where or what it was then, but he said he liked to “put the powder in ma bed, you know, on the sheets” and that way he didn't have to use so much of it and it wasn't “overpowering”. It wasn't a strong scent on him but...believe me, once you got close enough to get a whiff- you would never forget who wore it! He said he “found it” when he went to the *Moulin Rouge* in Paris when he was in the Army, that it didn't have a name but had a number-- however so far, no one has been able to find out anything about it. The *Bourgeois* Company that makes “*Evening in Paris*” perfume doesn't know what it might have been and EPE has nothing in the archives about him ordering anything. It might be that one of the girls he met who were part of the Lido performers may have sent him the cologne, however so far no one has come forward with any information. The Graceland Archives have no record of him ordering or receiving anything via overseas; although he did receive packages from all over the world, and they say there are “blank pages” of time where they have “no idea where or what he was doing; they encourage anyone who has information (photos, etc to help fill in those times) to come forward. He is said to have worn several brand names, *Brute* being just one scent -and many women gave him cologne for his birthday and Christmas -he said he could open his “own store” and that Priscilla liked different types so he had “plenty to choose from”. Some of it gave him headaches and many perfumes worn by women made him “feel like throw'n up”. And he preferred not to be around those who wore “scents that make me feel sick”. Though he didn't mention it to me, it seems that he made at least two of his leading ladies angry because he asked them not to wear whatever brand it was they used, and he had not bothered saying that it gave him headaches etc; they took his request as an “insult” apparently, and from then on he had someone else handle that request. Several of his girlfriends say that he always smelled like he had just come from showering, and that he was a man who preferred to be well groomed. Elvis was the active type male, he tended to perspire profusely at times and wouldn't want to “stink” and I know he used soap made for sensitive skin, but it wasn't just “his soap” leaving an indelible scent memory; whatever it was, it was part of him, “one of a kind”.

### *My Embarrassing Moment...*

Elvis had a great sense of humor, could put people at ease with a few words and was the “life of the party” when he laughed. It was easy to talk with him but still he was Elvis

Presley and that tended to put one off no matter how friendly he could be, and he knew it. As a result he liked to tease covering awkward moments, and sometimes coming out with some “off the wall” comments or actions aimed to shock or get a rise out of whom ever his “target” might be. One such moment happened to me. I was sitting on a couch with several dozen people milling about, mostly watching and listening for a word from Elvis. A good friend of mine asked me to get just a single hair from Elvis, and because she was such a loyal fan of his, I wanted to do it for her and that effort was probably one of the most embarrassing I ever had—with anyone.

Elvis was sitting on a stool almost in front of me; on his shirt collar were a couple of stray hairs. I reached out carefully, trying not to touch him. Just as I had my fingers on a hair near his collar, he turned instantly with a startled and very cold-eyed blue look.

He stared first at me, then at my hand, frozen in the air, holding one black hair. Coldly though softly, he said, “What the hell?”

I stammered my reason for doing such a thing (which was totally unlike anything I normally would do and he knew it)

He got this sly look in his eyes, grinned and said, as he pulled open his shirt, revealing his chest, “Well, you want one of these?” Then he stood in front of me, hands at his belt buckle and with a flashing eyed look and wicked grin said, “Maybe you’d like somethin’ further down?” He deftly unfastened the heavy buckled belt and the top button of his pants and then stood there as if daring me before sitting down to happily gaze at my red face.

Several people near us laughed; he reached over, touched my face and said, “Here honey, take these to her.” And handed me half a dozen hairs that he had just pulled from his head, he quickly leaned forward and kissed me on the cheek murmuring, “It’s okay, darlin’” into my ear.

I was recovering from that, when he stood up and let a young woman who was sitting on the floor in front of him, button his pants and refasten his belt; he had the little cigar in one hand, his glass of “soda pop” in the other. The other females sitting near were practically holding their breath watching as she with trembling hands struggled to fasten that top button. Macho pose, cigar in hand, he stood there watching them with amusement dancing in his eyes and a mischievous grin on his face. When she finally got the belt fastened he bent, gave her a quick kiss, then moved away from her to go join a group of the guys; whatever he said to them we didn’t hear but he and they, laughed loudly.

I remember watching and listening to the things going on around Elvis and it was kind of like his guys were “taking care of him” true, but also as if Elvis *actually did need* them around at times to do that very thing. He was so used to having them “help” him and sometimes he seemed not to use good sense at times, like a teenager might, but they were there to make sure he didn’t “mess up” because of anything he might spur of the moment do or want to do.

It’s said by some of those men who worked for him, that he was a man, *he did whatever he wanted*, nobody told him “no” etc and that “most certainly, very few people ever questioned his ideas or what he wanted to do”. However that was not entirely a true statement. Elvis did what the Col. said, he had to fulfill his movie contracts, and though he asked for better scripts he didn’t get them. He had to follow instructions given to him by hotel management in Vegas, he was “tied hand and foot” to RCA and that contract and he was never “allowed” to perform overseas as he wished to do. Nor could he sing gospel concerts nor could he sing anywhere outside of his home or a recording studio unless on a stage where he would draw a lot of people and get paid for it. And in his last year and a half of life, even though he asked, pleaded, and begged, he was “forced” to go on stage even though because of his deteriorating health, he could barely move, think or get his breath enough to sing properly. Facts are facts...and prove he could not always do what he wanted, and *he was being told* by several sources what to do... *And he tried to do the best he could – in all ways*. Yes, he was a man, and powerful because of his image and career, but he had to make hard choices every day of his life due to the circumstances of that rocket ride he took in the entertainment world until he stood alone for half of his life. And all along the way, he had to follow orders...or risk losing “it all”. And he made it “look easy”...and as he said on that last tour...“I faked it...for a long time...” Most certainly you did, Elvis; you *were* a consummate actor in real life and on screen.

## ***Life Changes---***

Elvis was energetic, liked to roughhouse and was a big fan of football; he had memorized team member names and numbers and could tell you what position they played and was pretty good at picking the winners of major games. He organized his own team for games, played against other celebrity teams and even went so far as to have uniforms made up for HIS team. During the ‘60’s he was pretty healthy, except for bouts of flu and sore throats, not to mention sprains, broken fingers and bruises he always acquired playing touch football and roller skating games, and he spent hours and hours practicing and studying Karate. He played rough, whatever he attempted and played to win, heedless of injury to his person. He told me he had wanted to play football in school but he wasn’t “big enough” or heavy enough for the main team and he didn’t want to sit on the sidelines-besides that he added, “Momma didn’t want me to play - afraid I’d get



hurt. Lots of guys did, you know.” That was his story, but the truth lies somewhere in between. Elvis had to work after school, sometimes putting in a full 8 hours a day, in order to help his family as they did not have much income, and as a result there wasn’t enough time for sports. Now that he could afford things, he became an avid game watcher, taping football games and watching his favorites over and over, especially one game that was played in a pouring rain, in a muddy field where the teams were so covered in mud, sliding and splashing in comical plays which he said, were more like the **Keystone Cops** than a football game. And when he got to attend actual games, and was sitting in the announcer's booth, he was in “hog heaven” though I don't know how they managed to keep *him* from taking over the announcer's microphone-it must have been comical!

When I recall how he looked, his body firm, flashing eyes and the energy he had up until the early seventies, I can believe it was a serious illness dragging him down-he was just so eager for life, so ready to have fun. It has been proven that emotional turmoil causes ill health, and Elvis suffered emotionally over his divorce, his inability to control his career, and then becoming unable to perform in the fashion he felt his fans expected as his body began to fail him.

In the '60's Elvis was making one movie after another with little time in between so when he did get some free time he wanted to have fun, drive to Vegas with friends, see shows and he stayed up all night and slept days, something he had done most of his life after becoming an entertainer-it was easier for him to get out and about after dark so it worked well for him to be a “night owl”. He was hyper active during those free time days and would at times take “Dexies” so he could stay awake for two or three days, just as many truck drivers and people who have to work nights, did back then and still do today. When it came time to get ready to go back to work, he would take a sleeping aid; usually they were the type readily available and quite popular in that time frame. During the 1960's I believe that Elvis never used anything for sleep or for the severe headaches he often suffered, except over the counter medications or doctor prescribed meds and that he was *never* “strung out” on anything; he was dependent on prescribed medications, often they stopped working as his body adjusted to them, and his medications would be changed periodically. This has been confirmed in different books written by several people who lived with and worked for him, including **Ed Parker** who was one of his Karate teachers, **Charlie Hodge** whom he met before he went into the army. They reconnected later on while stationed at the same military base; their units were sent to Germany at the same time; it was Charlie who roomed with him aboard the ship that carried them to Germany. And **Larry Geller** whom *Elvis* considered one of his best friends offers an insightful and real look at the Elvis he knew in several books written about those days. I highly recommend Larry’s books and Elvis trusted him.

(I met personally and spoke with Larry a few times since Elvis' passing; we've had a few brief correspondences by email. He and his lady friend came to our Garden Grove Elvis Convention (1979) where he gave a talk and I had put together and then ran a photo slide show with Elvis speaking in the background. After the show Larry and his lady friend came running upstairs to the projection room. Larry was in tears when he said, "It's so good to hear his voice". In response to questions from some people, I cannot say that I know him well, nor does he say he knows much about me, though I have heard from a few people, comments he supposedly has said related to me. But I personally have had no recent contact and don't take those "supposedly said" things to heart. I have always made it a point not to become one who "runs after Elvis' friends trying to "find out things", or "use them" etc then or now. There would be no point in that. Sometimes I think some of those friends did not know the guy we knew; perhaps that was how he planned it.)

I remember the first time I thought, Elvis *must be sick* – he had phoned and he wasn't doing anything, had no plans but was "just layin' around, resting" he said. "I'm so tired all the time lately, just can't seem to get goin'" He added softly, "Can't sleep either...you know. My legs ache...like it's the bones or somethin'." With a slight laugh he added, "Maybe it's just old age settin' in". He used to say, "Well--I don't know what's keepin' me lookin' this way, really. May be one of these days Ah'll jus' fall apart--all at once." At that time he looked fantastic but now, just a couple of years later he *actually* suggested *he might be getting old!* I was astounded.

He was 38 years old and looked great but he "felt like 180" he said when appearing in Vegas. That was when I noticed he was less active on stage; his eyes were faded, dull and he was telling people that he "hurt all over" and was spending much of his time "layin' around restin'". His weight started fluctuating, up and down, sometimes within days-from puffy to slim. He mentioned that he felt as if he'd been run over by a truck, maybe two or three times. And he looked worn out many times when we saw his performances, though he would pull himself together and do super shows even when he was suffering "the flu" which became the "mantra" for all things wrong with him.

I asked him to see a doctor-someone well trained and up on things. He said, "They don't do nothin' but push pills- don't care to be a guinea pig for some pill-pusher!" Then he said he had a doctor who was taking care of him. "Just have to eat right and rest-it's nothin' serious. I'll be jus' fine." When in Vegas he often had a cook who made his meals in the kitchen of the penthouse. Contrary to what many of his friends/employees say, there are those who admit that Elvis ate many meals alone or with someone other than any of them, those *other* people who *had dinner with him* speak of his eating healthy foods and that he didn't over indulge in deserts nor did he drink alcoholic beverages. Those "triple scoop sundaes" sent up to his suite were barely touched according to those

who were with him, who say he would have a few bites of cold ice cream because it soothed the burning of his throat caused by infection from many bouts of the flu and of his often having indigestion due to his colon issues; the sundae would then sit untouched. Sometimes if Lisa or a friend wanted ice cream, Elvis would order two or three to share with whoever was present. These facts were told by several people who were present with Elvis over periods of time, two being; **Kathy Westmoreland**, his lovely soprano vocalist of whom Elvis said “has the voice of an angel”, wrote in her bestselling book, “*Elvis and Kathy*” that Elvis was a diabetic and he spoke with her of his health problems, saying he didn't expect to live to be fifty years old. **Ginger Alden** his last girlfriend who was often on tour with him in those last months, said ice cream was to cool his throat and it usually “just melted” because no one ate it. (Kathy has a website *where* she posts stories of the times spent around Elvis. She went with him when he was looking for other doctors, hoping to find someone who would know what was wrong with him, and perhaps help him recover. *Kathy is (and was) a true and caring friend; she kept his secrets.*)

Though it was not commonly known outside his friends, he had borderline diabetes and though he wasn't on shots yet – he had to watch what he ate and was grumping about having to give up soda pop-- he didn't like the diet kind. People often gave him boxes of candy when he was on stage; he thanked them, and passed them on to **J.D** or **Charlie**, saying he couldn't eat that kind of thing anymore. He took to sucking on *Tootsie Pops(R)* when he needed something sweet to keep his blood sugar going correctly-he liked the brown ones best.

He told me he had closed-end glaucoma and it was painful and he explained in detail how eyes needed to be able to drain or fluids built up pressure and hurt “awful at times” as his “drains” were not working like they should and he joked that they told him he couldn't use “*Drain-o*”. He was going to need the excess fluid drained from his eye balls-“Imagine that!” he said, “stickin' a needle in an eye ball - but they said it wouldn't pop like a balloon- it's kind of solid in' full of fluids.” (Actually the eyeball is hollow and “under pressure” to keep its rounded shape, his had too much pressure building up; when I told him that he appeared surprised and a bit irritated that his doctor had not informed him.) He had bad cluster headaches and migraines that sometimes lasted for days and both were made more painful when he was working under stage lighting. He said that sometimes lighting technicians couldn't keep them out of his eyes, “I move 'round too quick, too often.” He added that sometimes it hurt so bad he couldn't keep the tears from running down his face and that he was “sweating on stage so much, people couldn't tell”. (After doing several shows in a row, he said he “lost so much salt out of his body sweat didn't sting his eyes.) He didn't like wearing makeup because it “stung his eyes” so he tried to stay tan. But he was concerned that he might be losing his sight and said, “Goin' blind is nothin' to mess with--” He had dozens of pairs of sunglasses...and wore them for good reason...to protect his vision. He thought about wearing them on stage, but knew

his fans wanted to see his eyes and face...and he could not wear contacts though he did give them a try...he said he could just see it now, “here I’d be crawlin’ ‘round the stage tryin’ to find ‘em when they come out.”

There were a few times that Elvis did indulge in “over eating” though he had done this his whole life; he liked pie, ice cream and the cakes that his long time cook prepared, and of course the old style Southern cooking since he was raised on it. He knew he had to watch that sort of thing to stay slim for the movies, and nearly always had to diet after being home between films, still he would continue to slip up and eat something he wanted and then paid the price for it later. However, he was *not* a “glutton” nor did he constantly over eat; he was a type II. Diabetic and in his early 30’s was diagnosed as being close to needing insulin shots. He had to watch sugar intake, and also salt intake due to having high blood pressure. Elvis knew he couldn’t eat as he did when a teenager and he wanted to look good on film. He did love hamburgers, but those were not an everyday staple. He practiced the art of Karate daily, it was his exercise routine and he was strong, said the guys who experienced those sessions. The only reason he began to look as if he had gained a lot of weight was due to his health problems, mainly fluid retention caused by health issues. He began having liver problems, was supposed to stick to a special diet, although when at Graceland he would occasionally surrender to the old ways. But aren’t we all like that at times? Elvis was no different-he was just a bit more spoiled. I told him that and he said, “No I’m not; just know what I want an’ gonna get it if I can!”

He had medications for headaches, to calm his nerves, to help him sleep, for his eyes, for high blood pressure and for another problem that he’d had his entire life; it had been kept quiet for years, but that was about to change along with the circumstances of his life. He was in and out of hospitals during 1973- 1976, he said, he was having severe pains in his mid section from a partially blocked colon condition that could have killed him slowly but surely though he was going to be okay, it was caught in time and he had to watch his diet but there was no guarantee it would not kink up again. Elvis was in pain quite often, but he continued working, took pain medications and didn’t complain or quit doing his job. He couldn’t let his fans down or his friends who worked for him--just because he had a ‘few aches ‘n pains’. The doctors talked to him about surgery, scaring him when telling and showing him what removing part of his colon or all of it, would entail; he flat refused that option. He told me the colon surgery was no guarantee it would fix things much better so he didn’t want to do that-he was afraid he might live but be unable to perform-that to him *would* be a living death, one he didn’t want to face. He said his colon was only partially blocked, so it “wasn’t life threatening as long as it didn’t kink or somethin’”. The truth was, it was life threatening but Elvis didn’t want to hear that; he said, “I just put it in God’s hands; His will be done.” He didn’t want to die, but if there was no reasonable choice, death didn’t scare him. He looked forward to “sittin’ at Jesus’

feet an' lettin' him explain every thin' to me 'cause I sure don't have the brains to figure it out!"

We never discussed in any great detail the reality of his needing a colonoscopy; he said "removing some of my guts"... but now I realize, he knew all the options, and it scared him, to the point he would rather "take my chances" than have to risk losing his ability to perform in the way he wanted. According to **Dr. Nick** ( from his book), doctors were not confident about removing the (entire) colon, medical science had not advanced enough in those days, though today it is done "routinely" with most people doing well and living better afterward. But in the 70's, Elvis did not have that assurance; he lamented in those last months of his life, "It (his health problems) is takin' ever' thing I love to do away from me...gawd, why is this happenin'? What'd I do? Wish could find somebody who'd tell me...maybe could fix it..." He didn't know then that there was nothing HE could do; it was also beyond the medical science of that time period.

*Note: Elvis did discuss the things the doctors told him concerning a possible colon surgery with Grandma Suzy, (who had been a back office medical assistant and liscensed thearapist) in 1976 but she said nothing to anyone until his death; she said that he cried, saying he was afraid that to do that he would have to give up his life, his career and that Elvis Presley couldn't have anything like that...he had to be perfect, look good and be the image. He was afraid he would lose everything he'd worked so hard for and that it would "kill me" to have that happen. Even if his time was short-he wanted to continue to work as long as possible. She felt that he was worried that he would live, but life as he'd known it would end and so many people would be hurt, their lives would never be the same. He asked her to pray for him, saying he" put everything into God's hands".*

People have concluded that Elvis was often depressed, tending to be a loner at times and morbid in thoughts, especially about death. It wasn't that death "scared"him, but so many in his family died suddenly, some of them in rather violent and horrible accidents,to the point he lamented that he "didn't think he could stand another death in the family", There were only the 3 of them "his immediate family" and he feared losing his daddy and "bein' alone". Being alone was what he said often, that no one could know how alone it was "in this place that I am livin' in." He meant, the "fame that came back like a roaring train on a down hill grade" once he began doing live shows again. He loved his fans, but he truly appreciated his time alone, with "maybe a few friends" now and then. But Elvis never did like to sleep "alone"...especially when he was not at home, behind his locked and guarded gates.

### **Discovery---**

I tried to find out more about Elvis' health, but people around him, who should have some knowledge, after all they were with him 24-7 and either were glued to his side or

spent their every second “watching and listening to him” according to their recollections and they simply would not admit there was any physical thing wrong with Elvis-saying he was “just addicted to drugs”, all of which were prescribed. They were either blinded by his “image” or under some kind of “spell” perhaps of his making (?) or just didn’t see for the glitz of working with Elvis Presley’s organization. Right to the end of his life and even afterward for a long while, few of them seemed to be willing to say he was ill, or having any troubles in those last years. Oh no, he was having a ball, making out like crazy, “deflowering young maidens” while on tour in 77, to hear them tell it, and enjoying every perk that could be had being Elvis, so said those who were supposed to be “lookin’ out for me” (Elvis).

I know now that Elvis **kept his secrets**, that he “faked it”, keeping his physical problems close to himself, and did not tell or let most of his friends/employees in on his *true health problems*. I believe he did this to keep the public from knowing, he just wanted to work and do his best for as long as possible, and he was well aware that there were “loose tongues” among any group of people. His private life and problems were carefully orchestrated to fit what being “ELVIS” meant to his fans and to himself. And rather than have the truth “slip out to the public and press” he preferred that his “men” think he was just like them, taking too many pills, etc. (I believe they were not told the true facts- at least I hope that is so, because it would be hard to accept that his “men” knew and didn’t care or else chose not to believe he was ill and truly needed the medication prescribed for those problems. After all, Elvis did tell them “I need them (meds)” but he did not tell them why. He knew if *some of them knew the truth*, the whole world would know sooner or later. And he was right to think that...because they “talked” and the whole world still wants to believe he was a drug addict, thanks to those “loose lips”; all one need do today, is read Dr. Nichopoulos book out now- there you find a little “varnish” and a lot of “*the truth*” about Elvis’ health and medication difficulties. **It is an astounding revelation**, Elvis’s days were numbered from the moment of his birth, yet he still managed to be “the most famous entertainer of all time” according to those who keep track of such things. He always said, “God gave me my voice-I have to use it.” And so he surely did - across the US and around the world via satellite.

**Ed Parker**, his long time friend, bodyguard and krate teacher witnessed the bloody bed Elvis had been using after a night's performance on that last tour. Ed related that Elvis wanted Ed to spend the night with him, but Ed was tired, knew he wouldn't get much rest keeping an eye on Elvis, so he told him he would be up early, come over to help him get ready to leave and go with him to the next city. Elvis had been taken from that hotel before his trusted friend/bodyguard arrived at the previously appointed time to escort him out of the hotel. Nearly two years later while on a book tour for his own book “*Inside Elvis*”, Ed told me and others, that he and a woman friend (a hair dresser for the group at times) walked into that empty room and the bed Elvis slept in was “full of blood stains”. Obviously, his colon had been bleeding while asleep but those of the “boys” who

were clearing the room; packing up what Elvis had not taken with him, said Elvis was fine,” having fun deflowering young women, etc...” Ed and I were in a “green room” waiting to be interviewed for the book tour for our own books; Ed's eyes filled with tears as he lamented, “If I had just stayed with him---” (that night).

I've thought about Ed's comment and other comments made by people who worked with and knew Elvis on tours and in Vegas engagements, it seems they all feel a bit guilty because they experienced moments with him when he seemed “needy” and there was no one there “taking his side” so many times. Some who were not around often but were there to see various things going on involving Elvis, feel he was treated like a “spoiled child” who needed to be kept “under control” and “watched so he wouldn't get in trouble”. And a lot of them feel he was “pacified” and “patronized” by his “guardians” who controlled the environment in which he was allowed to live. I say “allowed” because Elvis referred to his life as “restricted” due to his being “Elvis” and sometimes, he was “stir crazy” but had no recourse other than to accept it for what it was- being “Elvis Presley”.

(I remember one of his guys confronting me in 1979 at a convention, asking me “what was wrong with Elvis-you got any ideas?” It was a surprise to me that he even spoke to me, but I immediately felt like it was a trick question or something. So I said,” he has some issues with his stomach...” and he quickly concluded, “You don't know anything!” and he turned and hustled away. It didn't bother me what he thought, I sure wasn't going to “spill my guts” *since I knew Elvis* had been very selective as to which of his “men” had the real facts about his health problems.)

In 1977 Elvis many times was on the phone at 3:30 or 4:00am or still up at 5:00 am after being awake and alone, in a hotel room, and was even writing down his thoughts, saying he was “*glad they were all gone, he didn't know who he could trust anymore* (the guys) and saying *he wished he had someone to talk to and he felt so alone*”, with his eyes and head hurting so badly he couldn't sleep or see to read and feeling so bad he didn't want *any* female staying with him, though he didn't like being alone when he took sleeping pills to sleep. During that kind of “sleep” he felt vulnerable and depended on a friend (usually the young lady of his choice at the time) to watch out for him since he couldn't do it for himself. And there were many times that one of his guys (apparently his cousin **Billy Smith** or Charlie more often than not) would stay up to keep an eye on Elvis if he didn't have a girlfriend with him. Elvis himself said, “They'll check on me, so don't worry 'bout it” on several occasions and a few times he fell asleep talking on the phone – he told me and others to “just hang up, it'll disconnect after a while--” and he was right, it did. I still do wonder why no one checked on him that day- he said often, “they'll check on me” *but nobody did- for hours and hours...* Knowing Elvis, maybe he planned it that way-

He counted on his men to look out for him, for his safety when on the road tours, and to keep people from touching and grabbing at him, a thing he dreaded and sometimes had nightmares about, though he never let any fan or audience know how vulnerable he felt around crowds. One can't help wonder why no one appeared to truly understand or notice what was going on with the man, not just the image. Or maybe they did but it was "out of their hands" to do anything. Some say they tried to intervene but Elvis would become angry, and they backed off rather than stir up that temper of his, which would according to his family, make "*Star Wars*" key villain "*Darth Vader*" look calm. But the *main reason* they didn't "notice" I think, was that Elvis *didn't tell them* much about his health, instead he "fibbed" and let them believe it was "too many sleeping pills, etc. or the flu etc." because he didn't want to worry his friends. After all, he *was* their job-he *had to be* "perfect" and in control. And he couldn't bear having them worried about him, treating him differently, ruining everyone's enjoyment, and their life with his problems. And he WAS Elvis Presley--he had no problem that fame and money couldn't solve--- Just ask some of those 24/7 bodyguards--who envied "his" lifestyle, the women who lined up to get to him, and those who did, his ability to buy whatever he wanted, including the large rare black pearl ring, or the diamond studded cross he chose not to give to any of them, but gave it to a little child he didn't even know, at a concert. I guess the solid gold TCB necklaces he had made for them didn't count. The cars he gave them, the many times they lived under his roof, ate his food and all the fun many had being in those movies with him, the houses he helped them buy or the "doors his name opened for them", the vacations, medical bills he paid, cosmetic surgery he paid for and so many other gifts at Christmas, including those for wives, girlfriends and children -- all dust in the wind? And toward the end, Elvis wondered aloud, "I tried so hard, lord why can't they just be happy!"

After Elvis' death it was confirmed that he had an inherited colon condition that caused problems from childhood, necessitating his parents to be constantly diligent in order to keep young Elvis healthy. He had what now is commonly known as "mega-colon", and in his case, he had a much enlarged one that tended to twist and kink; being enlarged, his colon did not do its digestive process very well and didn't empty as it should. All of his life, to have a functioning colon he had to use prescribed suppositories quite often and was supposed to carefully watch his diet although in later years, it was determined diet ***was not*** the problem, **the nerves that controlled the constriction and movement of his colon were not functioning** and would not allow his colon to empty normally, it was always a "struggle" for him and often caused him excruciating pain as he grew older, and there were increased trips to hospitals to relieve the problem. At that time medical science had no knowledge of what to do for babies and children with this condition much less one that managed to grow into an adult. Being an active young man, with other things to do and headstrong, Elvis continued his stressful life. And he paid the price later



on, enough that when he composed the *TCB Oath(R)* about combining all *Martial Arts* into one, etc. he threw in a line about “freedom from constipation” as a “joke”--- or was it?

The constant stress of being Elvis Presley from 19 years old didn't help. Stress cuts back the circulation of the blood which cuts the body's enzyme production by thousands. The body needs energy for the heart and muscles and so diverts its attention to producing adrenalin and that shuts down the ability to digest foods and his colon was already compromised. The more stressed, the more the digestive system is affected causing constipation, heartburn, nausea, gall bladder problems and more. The immune system is also affected, allowing more infections, flu and other health conditions including liver problems. Elvis' entire life as an entertainer was full of stressful situations, including his home life since he was surrounded by other people whose lifestyle affected his own. All of that stress caused an “over production” of adrenalin that in turn kept him awake, made him restless and sometimes “fueled” his temper and aggravated his already compromised health. Over time, what with the constant Vegas shows, touring and all the stress that went with working as he did, his overworked adrenalin glands were worn out and slowing down production, and that caused havoc and health problems, and further affected the colon problem. That he lasted as long and did as well as he did is as he often said, “My life is -- a miracle -- can't argue with that!”

The severe headaches he suffered (migraines) were aggravated by the bright lights he worked under for films and later, the stage. As he grew older, was under stress and pressure from having spent half his years under the spotlight, making movie after movie, recording and filling obligations, and his health problems became more evident and took their toll on his body. He had bruises and skin infections popping out on his skin, especially his back and shoulders, and was subject to boils and other blood related skin conditions, possibly due to his blood sugar problems. He told me as a young man he had skin problems and sometimes it was embarrassing because people didn't understand that it wasn't because he was dirty and had “the mange or somethin' “, and then he “grew out of most of it”. But it was all coming back, he said, and especially so after he began the grueling road tours and stage performances across the country. Not to forget, he blamed himself for losing his wife and daughter in those years, and he carried a load of emotional stress over that. As has been said, Elvis lived more in his short 42 years than most people do in a full lifetime, he also had more stress, emotional shakeups and *personal* defeat than most people do throughout their lifetimes. That he weathered it as long as he did is a wonder. He said that the love and affection of his fans, the people gave him courage and strength, “just knowing that they'll be there...and they always are, ya know, bless their hearts.”

Today, there are stories told in books by those who worked with him, some lived in the same house and ought to have been able to see and know that Elvis had physical problems, that he was suffering pain, trying to continue doing his job and he HAD to show up for that job even when feeling awful. Plus, he had to LOOK GOOD to do it.

I don't know why they tended to think he was "putting on" that he was claiming to feel bad when they didn't see outward signs; he still "looked good". And the fact that he always said he didn't think he would live to be old, didn't want to and that he wanted to continue doing the things he did as long as he could manage to "look good". It was that pressure he woke up with every day of his life...he was ELVIS-*he had to look like people expected ELVIS to look*. Or, they wouldn't "love me anymore" as he said a few times when pouring out his thoughts to me and other's whom he trusted to keep his private thoughts untold.

My personal feelings and thoughts are that he did the best he could do with what he had to do with, put up with and still be able to be ELVIS for his multitude of fans. I will say that it bothers me that so many of the people who were around him, face to face on a daily basis but they did not understand this man, instead they compared him to themselves and thought he was doing what they would be doing under the same circumstances. Many thought he wasted their time, was selfish and stubborn and that he took drugs just to get high...as did they. The thing was, Elvis did what he had to do in order to do the things that put food on the table, gifts into their hands, a roof over their heads and their families and to provide all the things they became very used to enjoying. And if that effort added more stress and discomfort to his life, they just didn't see it apparently. Sometimes it was as he said, "Most people don't see the tree for the forest...it's just human nature 'n always has been. In life, we are too busy getting' what we want, we forget that maybe we miss out on a lot of life that's right in front of us. An' then we pay the price...an' most of us, bitch about it."

At the same time I was interviewing him in 1976 -77, we discussed his health, and I asked him about the tranquilizers and sleeping pills that he had taken since before we met. He said he still took sleeping pills when he couldn't sleep which was almost constantly but they were "under control" and he was on the least amount of other medications possible, but sometimes he had to take more to get any kind of relief. "Can't make it go away, like I used to-you know, self hypnosis" he said, "when it's bad and I'm tired out, like I've been." He still had the nervous stomach and had to be careful not to "rile up that bleeding ulcer". He told me an interesting story about when he was 19-20 years old, out on the road, trying to make a name for himself, along with other musicians performing across the country. He was young, put a lot into his shows and became so tired he could not sleep, plus he had a problem relaxing all of his life anyway, and he was having severe headaches quite often. The men working with him got tired of keeping him

company on those many occasions and one of the singers on the show gave him a few sleeping pills and Elvis said, with wonder still in his voice, that he “had slept all the way from Memphis to Texas and it was like-like heaven!” And he added, “Ma head wasn’t killin’ me either.”

His mother wanted to lose weight, to look nice for his sake and he had learned that the diet pills his mother was taking would pep him up when he was exhausted but he didn’t know about sleeping pills. After that he often used sleeping pills given to him by the fellow entertainer. Later, it was doctors who prescribed them, but it was the United States Army that introduced Elvis to “speed”. His army group spent a lot o\’f time out in the field and he stood watch in freezing weather in Germany, for hours in extreme cold and in order to keep the men from frostbite or falling asleep and freezing to death on duty, they were given Dexedrine. Elvis learned that he could wake up quickly and not be groggy from the sleeping pills, if he took Dexedrine upon getting up *and that’s what he did so that he **could** meet the time lines required for making films, and get some sleep too.* He admitted it, never thinking how it sounded or that it wasn’t the thing to do. After all, the United States Army encouraged its use for the “same reasons” and in combat conditions it’s still in use.

**1977- 4.45AM (Orange Co. time) April-not sure of date or if he was in LA or Memphis; he was listening to a gospel group that kept repeating as we spoke.)**

**Elvis:** Man, my mouth is sore...raw all on the top, the palate-is that right?

*Wanda: Yeah, do you have a sore throat?*

**Elvis:** Kinda but I got no skin up there-jus’ woke up with it; maybe it’s the sh-tin’ infection had in Vegas...Damn! One thing after ‘nother’n...fxxxxkin’ tired of this!

*Wanda: I bet you're tired---when do you go out again?*

**Elvis:** Couple weeks--um jus' beat man--so much sh---- goin' on--damn--never ends! Why can't people jus' get along? Seems they always got to go changin' things an' get in' upset--gawd--

*Wanda: Human beings are complicated creatures with lots of needs--sounds familiar, huh?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--jus' wish they'd go find somebody else to come cryin' to--naw--not really--'um jus' tired clear down to ma bone morrow-- (Deep sigh) Tell me somethin' good--okay?

*Well, let's see--Juliann's team won and she's excited about that--and Jimmie got a raise! That's good.*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh--see, you all don't have all these mind blowin' kind of sh--- go in' and comin'.

*Elvis, we only have one child, we have a nice quiet life without traveling around in a group, with a major star personality and all that goes with it. And we don't have to fight off other people protecting that star. This is a simple life here in Garden Grove--we don't have a big family or people we have to get along with in close quarters--big difference.*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh, well, if I'm the “major star” man, wish I could jus' be a little bitty one a while--. (Snickers) No-no don't! Been there, it wasn't all fun either. Ya know, seems like ma whole life has been tryin' to figure out what to do, how to make things fit and dependin' on other's to do most of it for me--guess that's what the problem is--ought to be doin' if for myself more--time to step up to the plate maybe. (A few months back he had told me that Priscilla said he should “step up to the plate”.)

*How can you do that though? You have the biggest job of them all--you are the center of everything- even their lives -you know. You should be tired buddy, you've just got off the road, and you've been dealing with all of that and the personal problems that you have to handle too. Why shouldn't you be worn out?*

**Elvis:** (Silence)

*What's going on in that little pea pickin' brain now?*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Pea pickin' huh? Never did that don't think; maybe in the garden, when I was little--picked green beans an' planted some stuff and it grew big. Wish those days were here now--peaceful- though they were kinda messed up a time or two--Still those problems aren't anything compared to- to what's here now. Gawd--can't there be some kinda happy center – a medium to it--jus' not up or fallin' hard?

*There will be, just relax and think about getting yourself back together and let the rest do the same- lock your door, don't answer your phone and don't take any prisoners for a while.*

**Elvis:** Prisoners?

*(Laughs) You know, be by yourself a little while and do some simple thinking instead of dwelling on all the other people's problems.*

**Elvis:** Hell, I need to have two sets of doors – one they can knock on and the other'n soundproofed so's I don't hear 'em! Maybe that'd work. (Sighs, softly says) Don't want to be alone--

*You don't have to be.*

**Elvis:** I know--.'cept I'm get 'in tired of--of--havin' to be nice an' bottle'n ever thing up--ma cork's about to blow-- You know, like a bottle wine or somethin'--

*Call someone you know who you like being with, someone that's easy going and just enjoys being with you, doing what you like to do Elvis. Don't you know anyone out there like that? Someone you already know?*

**Elvis:** Called a couple of 'em but they got plans--an' couldn't come now. See--they got lives--somethin' else.

*And you just have this--I wish there were something else you could do--that's different from what you do, honey. But that's got to be something for you to come up with, I guess. Don't know the answer.*

**Elvis:** It's alright really, I know it. Been doin' this so long--it's my life--jus' feels like--kinda bein' on a merry-go-round an' keeps comin' back to the same place all the time. Hell, I got it made, I know that. I love my life. Really. I do. I'm just feelin' sorry for me--guess--do that when I'm --lonely--kinda--

*Yeah, I'm sorry Linda isn't there.*

**Elvis:** Me too.

*Did you get to see Lisa?*

**Elvis:** Yeah, stopped by to see her--'n --Cilla. She's sure growin' up--gawd--makes me feel old sometimes--

*You are old.*

**Elvis:** No, I'm not.

*Really?*

**Elvis:** NO--I'm not! Um jus' 42-- (Softly says) but I'm feelin' more like 92 today--get 'in forgetful, can't think straight, ma legs don' want to do what I'm tellin' 'em an' got so couldn't hardly see nothin'--it was scary--

*Yes, that would be--it was the bright lights--huh?*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh--wore off after few hours--jus' right in the middle was nothin' but a big purple-black hole 'an' couldn't see nothin' but that--didn't tell no body--jus' my girlfriend--one that was with me an' she helped me out. Worried her silly, she was cryin'- jus' broke ma heart hearin' her cryin' for me--don't want nobody cryin' over me--not ever--not like that.

*People cry for people they love when something is not right with them. It's not a bad thing.*

**Elvis:** It hurts--hearin' it--momma used to cry--when I was leavin'--no--no, gawd not gonna think 'bout that!

*What has Lisa been doing in school? Does she play sports and do things like that too?*

**Elvis:** (Very softly) yes--she likes doin' Karate with me.

*You don't make her be your dummy?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Not much--she wants me to be hers an' she beats me up. (Laughs) She--we have lots of fun sometimes--kid amazes me--I was her age I was stupid an' proud of it!

*I'll bet--but you probably thought you knew it all just like everyone does at that age.*

**Elvis:** Naw--knew I wasn't smart--I'm not dumb--or nothin' but it takes me some time to get it to stick right--have to read somethin' over several times--might remember the words but to get the meanin' I have to study on it some. Like to be alone to read an' think about it sometimes. Cept its get'in hard to read much when I'm workin'--

*Then have your friends read to you.*

**Elvis:** I do--some of 'em like to do it--some don't-- sometimes I ask 'em to anyway--it helps me relax an' then I'm in a better mood for them also--guess I expect too much, maybe. Spoiled--huh?

*Rotten--*

**Elvis:** Stinkin'--

*Moldy too--*

**Elvis:** ummm--stagnant--no. Putrid!

*(Laughs) I can't think of one now--*

**Elvis:** Beat-cha!

*Okay, I lost.*

**Elvis:** I always win.

*Really--they let you!*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh--No, I just win--'cause I ain't--dumb--no more--

*Dense-maybe--*

**Elvis:** Lord-lord-- (Laughs) Okay. You can have that one.

*Thanks--have you had dinner-supper?*

**Elvis:** No--wasn't hungry-- an' doin' some kind of test at the hospital -somewhere there--later on. Testin' my blood to check on my liver--or somethin'; don't know now what he said so not supposed to eat 'til later on.

*Oh--well, better let you go; it's getting daylight there, isn't it?*

Been a while--since I had that test done--maybe for sugar, you know--see how things goin'. Not hungry though--jus' would like somethin' to drink but can't have that either now- gotta give 'em urine sample an' said no coffee either, damn head's reelin'. Anyway, thanks for puttin' up with me--an' the blues--think I'm over it.

*Good!*

**Elvis:** Really honey, thank you. Try to do better next time promise. Bye-bye – eh -- have I tol' you lately, love ya darlin', I do.

*Love you too buddy, have a nice day. Bye.*

*[He went out and did 55 shows, in severe pain from his nearly blocked, non functioning colon, his head hurt, he was almost blind on stage and could barely see for hours afterward. He was having breathing difficulties, leg pains, back pain, throwing up daily and the stomach acid was eroding the skin of his mouth and throat and he had dizzy spells when first getting up. And anxiety attacks because he feared he couldn't perform as expected, and he was letting down his fans, and everyone working for him. His doctor said he was "doing okay, just needed to do shorter shows" that he was "over working"; his manager said **"the only thing that mattered was that man has to be on that stage - tonight!"** Col. Tom Parker wasn't going to risk getting his "full cut off the top" just because his "work horse" didn't feel good; heck, shoot him up with "B-12" (or was it?)*

*To this day, I cannot understand how those around him, who saw the misery he experienced and the effort it was for him to go out on those stages, yet they could not see that it was NOT "drug use" causing the suffering, when it was obvious that he needed to take medications in order to continue living and being able to go on those tours- I can only guess that their lack of "noticing" and their suppositions it was "drugs" came about*

*because of their own drug use, and need to keep him “out there” in order to keep their own needs met. Often we don’t see the tree for the forest when we are busy filling our own needs. In Elvis’ case, it is exceptionally hard to understand...he was trying to “go out there one more tour” but no one noticed...and he ended up dying just hours before scheduled to leave.*

I wonder why so many people who were in his upstairs rooms at home and who also saw the contents of his “medicine bag” that went with him on trips, would not realize he was physically ill? The counters and dressers tops wherever he went and at home, contained various over the counter easily purchased medical aids such as: Alka Seltzer, allergy tablets, cough syrup and throat sprays, Tums, Anti Acids of all kinds, PeptoBismal, laxatives of various types, eye drops, Aspirin, mouth washes, Colgate tooth paste and mineral oil for softening stool. Lotomil was used for stopping diarehea and was not considered a narcotic type of drug. Elvis’ worst fear involved being on stage or in a crowded area where he could not “make it to the john” because of the colon issues he had little to no control over. I still don’t understand why there are so many people, some not even born when he was alive, who see video’s and filmed concert footage and continue to believe that he was “just a druggie” when it is so obvious that the man is ill, very ill and becoming more and more “feeble” and unable to perform in the ways he had just a few years earlier. Instead, they listen and look at him talking and believe so easily that just because he stutters slightly, or is having problems speaking and trying to converse, that he is “high” or that he is “drunk” when in fact, the man is only being himself, trying to conquer his “stage fright” and yes he did have that when he wasn’t physically up to being the “ELVIS” on stage, and on that last concert footage, it is not ELVIS talking, it’s Vernon and Gladys’ boy. Who most of the time those last days of his life, was in severe pain caused by internal problems he was born with, and having to take stronger and stronger meds in order to continue working, living and trying to be a father to his child and a role model for his many young fans. Read on if you want to know more about the man Elvis truly was.

## **Separation by Choice---**

In the first couple of years of knowing Elvis, and though I was not ever “hanging around his gate” at his homes, some of the men who worked and lived with him were around but they ignored me as I was not “interesting” or interested, but then came the hits, out right suggestions and lewd demands from a couple of them, if I wanted to keep seeing Elvis; they thought they were “scary”; they weren’t. Of course these things never happened when Elvis was nearby. I thought of Diane’s warning to “watch out for his men” on many occasions. The last time I was at his house I realized it was time to stop being around those guys after one of them made me an “offer that I ignored” and he then

informed me he could fix it so I'd never get near Elvis again and suggested he had the power to make or break the situation. I can't recall my exact comments but he probably had singed eyebrows---I grew up under the tutelage of a Southern Mississippi stepmother who could spin "cracker put downs" with the best of them when she was angry.

I knew in those early days, it wouldn't have done any good to complain to Elvis, who *might* have said something to one of his "best friends" but I doubted very much Elvis would have appreciated hearing about it. The whole episode made me realize I didn't have any business being around those guys or Elvis and so I just didn't go back again. It worked out that Elvis became engaged shortly thereafter and he didn't seem to notice that I hadn't been by to see him though we had conversed by telephone.

It wasn't just the men around Elvis that caused problems for him; most of the women trying to get to Elvis were jealous of any female who seemed to have his friendship. I was not aware at that time how fortunate I was to have his trust, that friendship with him. He knew I was not "after him" and that he could trust me that I would not discuss him with anyone, not even the people I met in his presence. And nothing he said to me ever got back to his ears-he appreciated that fact.

It was about the 3<sup>rd</sup> time I had been to Bel Air when reporters began to approach me and followed me home. Very early one morning, I opened my front door to get the newspaper and a photographer snapped my picture with my hair in big rollers! I refused to talk with any of them-regardless of the money offered and told them I didn't know Elvis, pretending I didn't know what they were talking about-and that was that. Another time I was offered what to us was a "hunk of money" to be a "spy" for a magazine that specialized in what now would be called "yellow journalism". One of their "spies" had taken a picture of me getting into my car that was parked on the street near Elvis' house in Bel Air- they were surprised when I said I didn't know anything-That I worked for a temp service and did some cleaning at a house in Bel Air, just that one day and didn't know whose house it was. I thought it was just a rental property. I told Elvis about lying to the reporter and the magazine spy solicitor and he laughed. At the time of those events, it didn't occur to me that he *might have had* someone *pretend* to entice me to "talk"- I don't know that he did, but he might have. He was *not* against secretly "testing a person's loyalty".

He took me into his bedroom, thanked me and then asked if there was anything we wanted, needed, could he get us a car-or anything? I said no, it was not his ability to "get things" that we liked him for -thanks anyway. He had a puzzled look on his face, had nothing to say for a moment then said, "Why do you like me..." in a timid hesitant voice. I knew he wasn't kidding, but at that moment I couldn't tell him the truth- instead I teased that it was his body I was after...and he got a silly, puzzled look in his eyes and



ran a hand through the side of his hair, before it hit him that I was teasing. He laughed, then said, “It’s nothin’ to get excited ‘bout really, but I’m free now-if you are-” We both laughed, he opened the side door to his room and walked me outside with his arm hanging over my shoulders. Dead serious he said, “I hope you don’t ever change--even if I do somethin’ -- really silly or stupid on down the road.” I said, “Well, depends on just how stupid!” He grinned and lightly punched me in the shoulder as he said, “Drive carefully--don’ wanta lose you darlin’--” After his death I thought about the many times he mentioned “losing friends”-- more than any one of us know about-- and then, we lost him.

Elvis liked my sense of humor, that I would tease him and the fact I didn’t take his bossy attitude toward serious discussions without telling him what I thought, even if it wasn’t what he thought; so many of his friends appeared to give him lip service agreeing with him, right or wrong. It was interesting that the larger portion of his women friends were of Gemini birth-as am I. Including **Priscilla, Sheila Ryan** and **Linda Thompson**; we Gemini’s made him laugh, encouraged him to think, to want to know why things happened and I think, shared his desire for knowledge and we Gemini’s are usually willing to listen to other views. Capricorns tend to be rather narrow-minded, stuffy and usually are loyal to the core, even when they should run like hell; they’ll stick it out hoping for the best. Often choosing to overlook and ignore rather than face up to reality until it kicks them in the face, then many of them lapse into deep depression and morbid gloom and doom before they pick themselves up, if they ever do.

Elvis had a good thing going for him-the planet Jupiter-thanks to his rising sign, Sagittarius giving him a good chunk of optimism- so said his astrological horoscope. It seemed to fit; he pulled himself up many a time over those short 42 years he was with us. “He said, “Well, if you get laid down low enough, it’s easy to reach those shoe strings, grab hold and pull yourself up!”

Elvis was enraptured with the metaphysical and spent long hours locked up in his room with his books, often carrying one with him to read in the car, on the airplane, between concerts and hotel rooms. One of the first things he gave to me was a small poster of the “*Desiderata*” by **Max Ehrmann**, he recited it word for word from memory as he handed it over-I still keep it in my home office. All one need do to know the type of man Elvis was is to ponder its words-he tried to live by them.

He knew at least 1/3 of the *Bible*, old and *New Testaments* by heart, was at times called “preacher” though not in a flattering context, and was able to find things in it with ease; sometimes he changed a line here and there to give it more modern meaning. He became so involved, so excited by what he was reading that he would “lapse” into a more Southern dialect, using phrases from his “roots” and at times, gesturing and acting out the

story lines. People, who didn't understand and did not realize what he was doing, sometimes misunderstood and thought he was "making fun" or "putting on" but in truth Elvis did not realize what *he* was doing, he was only enthralled and passionately expressing the excitement and joy he felt at the time. He expected his friends to understand; he appeared let down when they didn't.. Those blue eyes filled with dismay and shyness, he would become less talkative and let others do the talking for him.

Many of his male friends didn't understand Elvis' passionate desire to understand why he was "chosen" to become famous, why he kept asking nearly everyone he met "why me"? Or that he should even care how he was picked from nowhere and made into Elvis Presley; he would say "I don't know why I'm here, doin' this: why me? I'm nobody really-- God or somethin' just plucked me out--" Sometimes he became so focused on wondering and pondering, to the point he was apt to run people off with his going on and on about it all. His men just didn't understand why he was constantly reading and talking about things that they had no interest in, especially spiritual things. They thought no one else would appreciate those type things either, and they tended to "direct" him from getting into such things with other people, discouraging him from talking and keeping anything and anyone, they thought would be interested in spiritual material away from him as Col. Tom and even some members of Elvis' family, thought they should "for Elvis' own good" etc... That Elvis "put up with their attitudes" is proof of how far he would go to "keep the ripples" out of his "pond" even though it hurt his feelings when he expected someone to call or come by, and they "didn't show up".

Elvis mentioned his unhappiness in their attitude toward his spiritual interests one day, saying, "You know, it's like they never expect me to change, to grow or have a mind of my own. I'm just a thing-like a windup toy, turn my key, wind me up and I'll play for you." He had a faraway look in his eyes and softly added, "You know, sometimes I don't feel like it...really."

He spoke of Priscilla saying that she didn't like reading "anything more complicated than *Vogue*" and he laughed, adding, "She's jus' a baby though-she's got a lot of growing to do." It was obvious to me that Elvis cared deeply for her, his tone of voice, the look on his face and in his eyes told a great deal more than his words. I asked him if he was going to be getting married soon as that was rumored. He laughed, shook his head and replied, "Hardly-I'm just a baby too!" He thought he had too many commitments to have the time for a family---that required full concentration, especially at first. "Un there's plenty of time," he added, eyes twinkling as he glanced around at the number of young women who waited anxiously for any sign they were noticed from him, saying, "Besides, haven't met 'em all -yet" and he became the fun loving tease he affected so easily to hide his real feelings.

It would be unfair to say that all of his male friends etc. didn't "try to understand or keep Elvis feeling better"- there were some who did, but Elvis didn't open up to them apparently, instead he used anger and harsh words to cover what he didn't want to admit, perhaps even to himself. He knew he had too much dependence on pain medication and sleeping pills, but he felt he had no other recourse; he trusted his doctor to help him. He had to work, he was the "machine" and he couldn't break down, couldn't show weakness, had to be what he thought and believed *Elvis Presley* would be. Invincible, able to handle anything and most of all, a man who had everything so how *could he* have any problems that mattered, after all just look around, if there's anything he didn't have, he could get it easily enough. Right?

For quite a few years, I guess that was pretty close to the truth-outwardly.

***"That isn't me – it's a – a concept of what---"***

Mid 1970's

*Wanda: Well, you know your image is one of being a playboy type, you know that--*

**Elvis:** It is? (Snickers) That isn't me – it's a – a concept of what the eh--press, the publicists, my manager 'n jus' ever body workin' on ever thing makes it seem like I am. Not that way – really. Not much--mean I dated lots of women, but 'um not--eh – really don't – don't think like that. I'm a man sure - - but – 'un like women-- What 'um tryin' to say is I'm not---fxxxin' ma brains out ever damn time it's offered! Really.

*Okay, you know that so don't let it bother you what other people say and think--or write.*

**Elvis:** (Big breath) Try not to--just getting so ever time pick up somethin' there is some kind of trash shit bein' said an' I wasn't even there! Un don't know 'em!

*Then don't read it!*

**Elvis:** Some one's all time tellin' stuff – so read it then I know what the hell the whisperin' is about.

*They say "where there is smoke there is fire--"*

**Elvis:** Shit! See! Now you gonna do it!

*I meant to say-before you interrupted ME for a change (laughs) that's probably what they think – I mean, you are Elvis Presley!*

**Elvis:** No, um not!

*Yes you are – go look in the mirror!*

**Elvis:** Mean 'um not that image! The image is one thing, then there's the man – he sure as hell ain't goin' 'round huntin' virgins or nothin' like that! Damn it!"

There are so many stories told about Elvis and "those women" that flew in and out that "revolving" door of his bedrooms. And there are some stories that are a bit sordid and told mostly by the more "sordid" of the men friends that were around day and night, peeking through keyholes no doubt. There also is a story about Elvis having a "fun time" filming a few scenes with Priscilla before they were engaged or/married and that it

included another young woman; Elvis is said to have directed the scenes between them. This is what he told me in confidence and “just talking” about his getting married or not, and how it was between he and his “Cilla”. She, he said was very insecure about him, keeping him etc and that she was afraid he wouldn’t find her attractive enough, or that she was not as beautiful as some other female might be. He got “tired of hearing” that so he decided to “prove to her” that she was just as beautiful as anyone she thought was “better lookin’ than she was”. He asked her to name someone she thought was “more his type, beautiful etc” and then he “hired” that young woman to come over. He had his “Cilla” dress provocatively and he posed the two women in various ways, so that “Cilla would be able to see that she has nothing to worry about”, and he said, “Man, she (Cilla) was by far the most beautiful, and she was somethin’! He said he “kept the film so ever’ time she got into that insecure faze he’d “just get it out”. An’ he said, “that shut her up ever’ time!” He said the “camera loves her...” I said, you better worry about that - she might want to make films too! Anytime her wanting a “career” came up he always said, “Naw, she turns ‘em down, she just wants to be my wife...’n have a family of our own, ya know.” This might be the “film of her and a woman” that his cousin said he retrieved from Elvis’ room and gave to Priscilla when Elvis died. I don’t know that is it, but it might be. Elvis said it was a “little racy if someone saw it and didn’t know why it was made.” His cousin knew Elvis would not want to embarrass his “Cilla” whom he tried very hard to protect from his “fame” and its “dark side” as told by the “rag sheets” and “journalists”.

### ***From Alna***

#### ***“ELVIS” –***

He was my first love and will be in my heart and my soul forever. Although I was never lucky enough to know him in person I feel so connected with him. He is my guidance in good and bad times and I just cannot imagine a day without seeing or hearing him. He was the most handsome man that ever walked this earth, but beauty is not enough to capture millions of people for as long as he did. There was a lot more: there was inner beauty, gentleness, a talent and a charisma beyond any explanation.

I have learned to know him better through Wanda's books and a few others who have written about the man more than the image, and through all the wonderful people I have come to know here on ELC. I think Elvis saw deep in my heart that something was missing, that I had so many questions unanswered and he guided me towards you and Maia and ELC; we became friends although we live very far away. He brought us all together, and here we are all so different, but so connected through him, that wonderful man whose name was Elvis Presley.

Alna

## Behind the Image-

During the mid sixties, Elvis was making movie after movie, with the sound track songs being released on records, 45's and LP's but he wasn't happy about it. He couldn't refuse because of the Colonel's dealings with *Paramount Pictures* and **Hal Wallis**, the Colonel's long time friend, who had Elvis under contract for those movies. He couldn't choose or have much say about the movie scripts or the songs he had to sing for them. People who worked on some of those song sessions say he was at times physically ill over recording them and he felt badly for those having to write such things. I wondered why Elvis didn't complain to the Colonel and didn't speak up more than he did. I asked him, he gave the standard answer, "You don't mess with something that's working so well." And he went on trying to find things to keep himself busy, interested and able to put up with those same old movie scripts. He devised new ways of finding people to talk with, someone other than those he was "allowed" to meet. He began reaching out via telephone, his only "vice" as he often called it, became a line to "sanity" and he apparently kept those connections quiet, personal, and to himself. It might have been he knew if "they" found out, there would be a stop put on that, so he didn't say much to anyone around him. Considering what did happen around him, he may have had reason to think that.

At that time in my life and knowing him, it didn't occur to me that his many of his friends, etc. were not "in on" his use of the telephone and I was surprised to find that out after his death. In fact, there was some of his 24/7 friends/employees who flat denied Elvis used the phone---or knew how; saying he "hated" talking on the phone. He probably did considering how many people were trying to call him, friends or not and *he said* he didn't like to spend a lot of time talking to his "employee/friends" because if they called him, he knew "something was up"-and it would probably entail complaints, unhappiness or his wallet. His last girlfriend, **Ginger Alden** commented about his "endless telephone calls" and how "boring" it was sitting around while he talked to other people. **Kathy Westmoreland** says that Elvis had one phone line that was private where ever he might be, and no one other than Elvis had that number or answered it. (Or perhaps those whom *he wanted* to have it?) Several of his lady friends say he called them, usually at odd hours of the day and sometimes talked for long periods of time, his ex-wife said the same and regretted that she had not at that time, fully understood the pressure and insecurities of fame and wished she had so she could have been more understanding. I think the telephone had become a way he could have friends who *listened, were interested and didn't tell him he was "crazy", "confused" or being "hoodwinked" by people wanting to "use him" or "take him" for his fame or his money.* It was he said, an "ever day thing", someone would be wanting a chance to do just that, especially after he began live performances and was "out and about" among people across the United States. And that's why people were "screened" if they weren't with

somebody familiar, before being allowed to meet him. Elvis didn't like being “put on the spot” he said, “'less it's showin' me my mark”-on stage or movie sets.

What he didn't talk about much was that along with those kinds of people were a few who wanted to *do something to him*, and he had received “death threats” thousands of them, some more “serious” than others, and especially after he began doing live shows in Las Vegas and touring the country. He didn't understand why anyone would want to hurt him or kill him but still, precautions had to be taken on tours, as well as anytime he was away from home. More added stress for him and for his employees whose job it was to take care of him; at times he couldn't control the emotionally charged atmosphere of fear that he felt because it could happen to celebrities and that kept him worrying about his family, especially his little daughter Lisa Marie. Elvis wanted her to grow up living at Graceland where she would have “better security than in Los Angeles etc.” but Priscilla made her life in Beverly Hills and didn't like living in Memphis under “lock and key”. To keep the “ripples in his pond” from becoming waves, he surrendered and let her have her way, as long as there were responsible guards always present.

I was most surprised over “phone calls” when in 2006 I found out that **Red West** who happened to be one of the three male friend/employees who authored the salacious book “*Elvis What Happened?*” released in August of 1977, had ***recorded the last conversation he had with Elvis (Oct. of 76), and in 2006 posted it on the Internet*** for all to hear and read the transcripts-- He said he recorded it hoping to “have proof “of what they said was Elvis’ “drug use and mental deterioration”.

In 1978 when our “*We Remember, Elvis*” hardback book was coming out I was doing a lot of interviews and related that Elvis had told me about the book done by three of his “friends” and that he said he had called Red and they spoke about it and other “things” and that Elvis forgave them...but Red was the *only one* he had mentioned by name. I also said that Elvis was told he needed surgery to remove part of his colon as it was enlarged but he wouldn't do it. Those friends/employees of his immediately began saying right away that Elvis had never called any of them and no one had spoken to him since they got “kicked out, with two weeks’ pay etc, etc.” and Elvis never had “anything wrong with his colon”, he was fine except for being addicted to sleeping pills etc.. But *there it was*, Elvis talking to Red whom Elvis called himself apparently, talking about “things” and the book just like he told me he had done. The guy (Elvis) talking to Red, who had been his friend since high school and whom he trusted, depended upon through all those years, was miserable, trying to make amends, not quite knowing how; saying he loved Red's family, offering help should he need it and taking the blame for being too rushed and torn up over his own situation to keep things in line like he should have. Sure he was going into details of his legal issues but that was typical of Elvis who was trying to explain his own confusion. Not only were the transcripts on line-one could “hear” the

conversation-not clearly but clearly enough if one spoke “their language”. Also in that conversation, Elvis talks about his “big gut” (colon) and how they wanted to operate on him, just as I said he told me- just weeks before his death. How ironic I thought--- “They” said I was “lying” but **Red West** *got the call!* And his posting it 27 years later *verified* that what I had said in 1977- 78 that Elvis told me, *was true*; Elvis also told me that he “wished it could be like before, wished they (he and Red) could talk about the old days, laugh and have fun remembering”. But he concluded sadly, “I guess it can never be...” It never was.

[Source- *T.C.B Forum*, 8/23/2006

#### **4-24-08 ---”Integrity”---**

It “never ceases to amaze me” when things “suddenly come out” that I said in 1978-80 and was called “crazy”, “delusional” and etc. by those “who knew everything and everyone Elvis ever spoke to, thought about or was in the vicinity there of---” and today I’ve learned there is another one “out”. **President Nixon** and Elvis’ trip to meet him etc. is well documented by the press releases, but now President Nixon’s “right hand man” **Gil “Bud” Krogh** has written further about the friendship between Elvis and “Mr. Nixon” as Elvis called him when speaking of him after he left office. In Mr. Krogh’s new just released (2008) book entitled “*Integrity*” he relates that Elvis stayed in touch with the President by telephone and that Elvis called the President when he was suffering a life-threatening attack of phlebitis which is blood clots in the lower extremities, usually. Elvis told me he called him to tell him he needed to take large doses of good vitamin C several times a day every day to get his blood back in shape. Apparently the President was happy to hear from Elvis and perhaps did follow his advice because he recovered; Elvis said he told him, “it won’t come back if as soon as you think it’s showin’ up, start takin’ the extra “C” to stop it cold.” Elvis also told me he was “lookin’ for some “two “ha” jokes” to tell Mr. Nixon because he would only go “Ha!” as he didn’t have much of a sense of humor--and that he “was kinda shy about laughin’.” Well, we all know Elvis loved to laugh, so he was “gonna find somethin’ that would merit “two ha’s” out of Nixon! Later, he said he found one but he couldn’t tell me--it was “kinda racy”. He didn’t say he spoke to him often, but he did mention it a couple of times. When Elvis was ill and in the hospital, Nixon phoned him; Elvis was pretty pleased to hear from him. Later on Elvis mentioned that Mrs. Nixon had a stroke, he tried to phone Mr. Nixon but “their people wouldn’t put ma call through--” he said, sounding as if his feelings were hurt, though he said he guessed they “just didn’t believe it was really me or somethin’.”

The naysayers who jumped to call me “nuts” said that Elvis didn’t “give a damn about Nixon because he got caught and kicked out of office!” Elvis didn’t seem to feel that way

when he spoke of talking with him, in fact he said he felt it was “just “they” wanted him out of the way so “they” could do somethin' 'bout changin' somethin'--jus' politics in action--somebody else had power plans--”. Anyway, thank you **Gil “Bud” Krogh** for your book “**Integrity**”!

[Source: “*Caffeinated Politics*” <http://dekerivers.wordpress.com/2008/04/24/richard-nixon-and-elvis-presley-kept-in-touch-by-phone/> ]

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**Recently Marie Osmond's book** entitled “*Might As Well Laugh About It Now*” was released (2009). In her book she relates about her mother and Elvis knowing each other, having met when he came over to the hotel in Vegas where they were rehearsing their first Las Vegas show. Her mother's face and eyes resembled Elvis' mother whom he lost to illness just before he was to leave for Army duty in Germany. Elvis was devastated by the loss of his mother; he noticed Mrs. Osmond's features and liked her personality and sincerity. Marie says that the biggest and most beautiful flower arrangement she had ever seen was delivered from Elvis on their opening night--but it wasn't for the Osmond kids--it was for her mother! She also reveals a secret her mother kept right to her last day. Elvis often called to speak with Mrs. Osmond, usually late at night or very early mornings and her mom would never discuss what he had to say to her. Marie, used to sneak into the room and hang out trying to see what was going on, but her mother would shoo her away so she could speak in private with Elvis. Marie writes that her mother was spiritual, understanding and gave everyone she met hope and inspiration to be the best they could be and she was a wonderful, loving mother to all her children, even to Elvis who missed his mother very much.

One more person who has revealed that Elvis *did use* the telephone to reach out to people he *felt he could trust*, who would listen to what he had to say and understand how he felt. Mrs. Osmond, a wonderful lady and one more friend who helped him cope. (Of course, those “guys who knew every move made and word said” rushed to deny he had ever called Mrs. Osmond! They are so insecure within themselves, it's pathetic.)

### ***As of this writing---***

**Dr. “Nick”**, Elvis' long time personal physician who traveled on tours with him, who also took care of the medical needs of all the people working and touring with Elvis, has written a book about those many years with Elvis. He is revealing health secrets and physical problems that Elvis carried with him throughout his life, from birth. The doctor details the efforts made to keep those secrets, explaining that in that time (late 60's/70's) it was not possible to treat the genetic condition Elvis had as it would be with today's advanced medical knowledge, and Elvis, fearful that he would *be inundated by worried*



*fans*, and not be able to continue working as a result, *did not want the public to know*. He also found Elvis to be “stubborn and bull headed”--and I agree that sometimes he could be just that... Like many men and some women, he didn't like being told what he “had to do, or else” even when it came to his own well being; he was typical, a normal guy who had been born in the 1930's.

He relates that Elvis had several things to deal with, Type II diabetes being just one. He also had what is called “mega-colon” which is an enlarging of that organ, and is often a result of a birth defect, sometimes as in Elvis' case, the nerves that control the function of the colon did not work well, did not receive the “signal” to empty its self and when he began having more serious issues he didn't know what was wrong with him and neither did anyone else. He had “drank liquid chalk” in order to let x-rays be taken but they only showed a “clogged gut” which was determined to be constipation etc. His colon did not show up as “abnormal” back then and doctors treated him for colon irritation, giving him steroids which did not help his condition, and side affects to their treatment made it and him feel worse. (The condition he had is called *Hirschsprung disease*, it is a birth defect and it is incurable though today some 30 years later, it can be better treated.) He saw many doctors, most treated him for his symptoms and severe pain, not the cause, and some offered explority surgery. Elvis did not want that and said that living with a colostomy's (in his case total removal of the colon) after affects he might not be able to continue working as he wished to do. As he grew older, continuing to work at a stress filled job, the several health conditions he had caused severe retention of fluids, bloating of the body and severe pain. Medications given in those days had severe side effects, worsening the fluid retention. Several times his feet and legs would swell up, and a few times he could not zip up the boots he wore on stage; there wasn't time to find any others, so he had to go on with his boots unzipped. He often had severe migraine headaches, and medications given for that didn't work well and also caused further complications and stress to his already compromised colon and digestive tract. Elvis had glaucoma that caused fluid, and pressure buildup inside his eyes, his heart was enlarged, he had high blood pressure and liver enlargement as a result of his colon problems and he suffered constant constipation most of his life. The stress of being “**Elvis**” didn't help and things just became more complicated and debilitating as time passed and he grew older.

Dr. Nick addresses the “drug use” and explains that Elvis was trying his best to keep working and that all of his meds were prepackaged and brought to him as required by the prescription instructions so that he would NOT take the wrong dose or something he shouldn't. The doctor says, *Elvis just wanted to feel good so he would be able to do his job* and have a life free of dependency on drugs; however Elvis felt (as people tend to do) that if one pill helped, then two would help even more; it was always; “make me feel better so I can do my job”.

The problems presented at times were because Elvis had more than one doctor treating *several problems*; sometimes those doctors did not notice that what they prescribed might interfere with what he had to take for other conditions (this was “normal” practicing then and still happens in some of today’s medical offices). A few times he was put in the hospital in order to “switch him from one type drug to another one”; switching medications can be dangerous to those persons with serious health issues, and Elvis had a few of those. (The term “de-tox” is the *correct and standard medical terminology* and is still used today for such a procedure and does NOT in many cases mean the person is a “druggie”; *it does mean their medications need to be changed because they no longer work and cannot be increased in order to be effective, so another type of medication is gradually administrated to replace the old one that is slowly discontinued; hospitalization insures there is no “bad reaction” to the change over.*) Elvis had in the past, “bad reactions” with some types of medication, and so he was hospitalized for his safety. Thus the “addicted to drugs” statements made by the press and others who sought “headline information” became the “norm” as **they were not** privy to the truth of Elvis' health issues and so tended to believe the worst. Or as Elvis said, “Make up somethin' to cover their ass”. All of the suppositions were “out there” because most of the people working for him did not know how serious his health problems were becoming; Elvis knew his “men” were using prescription medications and some tended to over indulge in alcoholic beverages, but he let them think what they might about his “use” rather than have them worrying about “their jobs” if he was in ill health. The guys thought he was just “using too much” and “getting hung over on drugs” after all *they were*---and today the more “reasonable and thinking ones” say, “We were so strung out and high ourselves, how the hell would we know if he was or not?” The press who were not told the truth, believed the worst- after all he was a “rock star with lots of money and women”--. Of course “dirt” sells better. And when it is the “King of Rock ‘n Roll”-well, anything goes – and did!

Dr. Nick plainly states the many physical conditions, ailments that afflicted Elvis throughout his life, the colon one probably was a result of being a twin birth, one did survive but with inner unseen deformities that would become more damaging to him physically as he became older, especially since he chose a very high pressured, stressful career. In Elvis day there were no MRI’s, or tiny cameras to insert and use in order to get a better look at organs and their conditions; after his death the autopsy revealed just how serious his colon condition had become...grossly enlarged, impacted due to *paralyzed* nerves that would not function, nor open because no “electric signal” from the brain reached those nerves that controlled his colon. Elvis was doomed from early life to have problems, he was exhibiting all the symptoms of “*autonomic neuropathy*”: profuse sweating, weakness, migraine headaches, rapid weight changes, slow intestinal transit, toxic mega colon, abdominal pain, midsection distension and bloating, fluid retention

throughout his body, and was as Dr. Nick states, *by the time he hit 42 years old, “a walking time bomb”*. And all he wanted to do was be able to perform for his fans, to do his job to the best of his ability...and he was willing to try whatever a *medical doctor* suggested...if it would help him feel better. **His life was a miracle...**

**ELVIS:** *“Just because someone looks good, doesn’t mean they feel good.”*

**My comments are based on excerpts from: “The King & Dr. Nick. What Really Happened to Elvis & Me”, Nelson books, 2010, Amazon)**

**(Author’s commentary)**

I have read the book and heard some of the interviews given by Dr. Nick; it appears that he offers a straight forward look at what he can remember in trying to treat Elvis Presley--a daunting challenge to be sure. He also admits he did not keep “good records” regarding those hectic days; reasonable considering the turmoil of touring with such a star and his huge group of co-workers whose health was also part of “taking care of Elvis”. Dr. Nick ended up being the “doctor known as Elvis’ doctor”, so he received all the “blame” for Elvis’ problems. I think of this book as one that fans should want to read, *however* each person should read it for themselves before forming an opinion. I find it strange that with the release of the book written by the doctor in charge of treating the ‘King of Rock ‘n Roll” right up to the day he died, there has not been one word mentioned on television, radio or in newspapers concerning the “revelation” of Elvis’ HUGE HEALTH SECRETS kept for all those years from the gossip mongers! Considering that he was the highest paid, best selling, largest arena sell out and now the highest money maker of any “dead entertainer” and many living ones in today’s market, it is amazing – where are the “gossip heads and sensation seeking doo-doo birds”? Where are those reporters and journalists who have “yelled and hollered” all the salacious things since he died---why are they not astonished, shouting to the world, with open mouths since finding out he *was* human and as a normal human being, died because of organ failure...and drugs did not save him – nor did they kill him. Maybe it is too scary for them to speak of because “as sure as baby rabbits” it *could* happen to them. And then too, one has to be able to actually be able to comprehend the written word, or have experienced ill health themselves...right? (Grandma Suzy says: “They were born with a heart so small -no room for sympathy or understanding.” Could be so...)

***Private lines—***

Over the years several other sources who were working for Elvis, his friends or visitors to his homes have said that they knew Elvis had private phone lines in his bedrooms, one

having been installed for Priscilla's use as confirmed by Jeanne LeMay who worked for him and was a personal friend of Linda Thompson his girlfriend of many years. Kathy Westmoreland his high voice singer in Las Vegas wrote on her website that he had private lines for his own use and no one but Elvis knew the number, or answered it. And one of his housekeepers/ cooks who traveled between houses as needed, also mentioned his having personal phone lines; calls made from those phones would not be going through the downstairs at Graceland phone center or answered by anyone but him, nor would there be any one “listening” in on those lines. During the years I was fortunate enough to be trusted with his private number; he changed numbers several times for various reasons, mainly those numbers would “get out” some way or another and to prevent constantly having to answer the “fxxxing phone” he said they changed the numbers and just gave a few people who “needed them” the new one. I feel so lucky; I “needed them” - if he had not given them to me there would have been no other way would I have *ever* had his personal phone numbers! However, he had ours early in the friendship; he wanted to be able to call when he wanted to and when we moved and had no phone and he couldn't “find us” he wasn't happy about it. He tracked us down- he called our neighbor whom we had not yet met, had her come get me and told me to be home the next morning. That morning a telephone man showed up at day break to put in a phone- *a red one*. I wanted black but he said, “Lady you better keep this one.” Elvis prepaid for that phone service for one year- he also charged some long distance calls on to it- and paid them too. We still have that red phone. In 2007 while watching a special on television from Graceland, Priscilla spoke to **Larry King** and the world through *Larry King's CNN Television Show*, about Elvis, saying all of the red phones were “his”. I was surprised to hear that because long after he gave us a red phone, he said that he got *a red phone* but never said he *had several of them* at Graceland- so like him to have never said a word to us about having more than one red phone.

[I wish there had been computers and the “net” when Elvis was here-how wonderful it would have been for him-he could have talked with and reached out to millions! He would have chosen a great “cyber name” and been able to do whatever he wanted, the way he wanted to do it. And he could be Elvis Presley too, and not have to fear being “mobbed” physically-but you bet, he would have been “mobbed” on line! *Facebook* for instance would probably have been swamped by the “overload”!]

Elvis would have been a wonderful teacher, delighting in passing on knowledge and understanding to his students. In fact, he was so quick to grab any opportunity you would think he was starved for conversation with other people and apparently, he was. I learned early on that Elvis liked teaching me, and I enjoyed learning from him. He gave me several books, among them were: *“The Life of Jesus Christ”*, *“The Greatest Book Ever Written”*, *“Wind From the Carolinas”*, *“The Impersonal Life”*, *“The Lost Love”* about *Napoleon*, and *“The Philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, Vol. I.”* The latter was

“borrowed” by an acquaintance who never returned it-but I learned that “in the Elvis world” one must be diligent and never let things out of sight-or they’ll be “gone like the wind”, especially so if he actually had his hands upon whatever it might be at some point in time. I loved getting his books, they were filled with his notes, underlined passages and little surprises at times, such as something he wrote or was thinking about at the time. He also gave *Bibles* to people-usually one he had been using and a couple of times there were “special book markers” he had been using; a few times we found his thoughts jotted down on a pieces of paper, sometimes written down in poem fashion. Treasures from Elvis, we call them, they are very dear to us-we could never sell them...but we have included them in our books because Elvis belonged to the whole world of people-and that’s us too-just people who cared for, loved Elvis and still do, 33 years later.

He gave so many books away, yet he still had a huge selection some of which he had hauled around with him in a suitcase or two, nearly the size of trunks, on tours and wherever he might be going, much to the dismay of those men who had to carry the things around for him. I realize now that he took books with him for a couple of reasons; he liked having them handy to read and if they were with him, they wouldn’t be getting “burned” or “thrown away” in his absence. People who were allowed in his bedrooms often mentioned there would be books everywhere, lying open; being studied and sometimes they had to walk carefully to avoid stepping on them. Elvis liked to sit on the floor and have them spread around him, handy should he want to find something. He did the same on his king-sized beds -half the bed would be his books, if he didn’t have company and he’d be sleeping on the other half, often as not with a book clutched in his hands. He said he liked reading books; they let you get away to other places when you couldn’t get out and going yourself.

He would say to anyone he thought might be interested, “Read this,” and give you a book, usually metaphysical, spiritual in nature and not only would he give you a book, he would question you later to see if you had read it and if you had learned anything or needed it explained. Then he would say, “Oh, let me explain that to you!” and eagerly began, first in its more difficult wording; then he would look into the eyes of the listener, if they appeared confused, he would explain in more simple terms as if he had intended to do so all along. Elvis was tactful, careful of other people’s feelings, trying never to hurt or make one feel stupid, if he could help it.

Although, among his close friends and family, he could be abrupt and sharp tongued, expecting them to understand his moods; many of those close friends and some family members can’t remember Elvis being angry, shouting or being loudly upset at anyone. Most say he didn’t raise his voice, he just turned away rather than argue or fight and stayed in his room rather than cause “ripples in his pond”. Elvis believed in “turning the other cheek” and only one time do I recall him saying something like, he had “turned

both cheeks” so long they were getting raw so he was just going to let them “kick my ass” awhile to give the cheeks a rest. He was referring to the Hilton Hotel and management, though he didn’t say specifically what was going on.

For some reason Elvis was not fond of **Baron Hilton**, who ran the hotel, and told Elvis what he could and could not do on stage. Elvis said, “Like the fxxx bastard thinks ‘um gonna go out there an’ do some thin’ vulgar!” And he was pretty hot when he was told he couldn’t do gospel songs in Las Vegas. Well, Baron Hilton didn’t know Elvis very well - that was obvious; it was just a matter of a few weeks and Elvis was doing gospel on stage - IN Las Vegas! Those gospel songs became the main stay of his performances with people from all over praising his beautiful, heartfelt gospel songs.

During a stay in Vegas while in line for seating, we met a young lady named **Sharon** who was the girlfriend of one of Elvis’ orchestra members, she mentioned having been back stage and got a glimpse of how much Elvis hated working at the Hilton. She thought it was because he got so much “flack” from the Hilton’s management. She said **Baron Hilton** gave Elvis a gold mantel clock that had “chubby baby angels on it” as a gift to show his appreciation of Elvis’ talent and ability to fill that big showroom night after night-twice a night! Elvis hated the clock and gripped that if he felt that way, “Why’d he not just say so an’ shake hands on it--stead of givin’ me a fxxxin’ ugly clock!” He said, “My life’s tickin’ away here- don’t need that sum-bitch tellin’ me!” Later, when Elvis was having bouts of the flu and had to miss some shows, Baron wasn’t very pleased and wanted “proof that bastard’s really sick”. That garnered some choice words from Elvis’ lips to say the least, including that he had the “urge to go down there an’ cram the fxxxing clock up his--” and so on-- He certainly did not appreciate him telling him what he could say or do on stage either- and was especially irate when he began hearing and reading that he was “fxxxed up” etc. because of a couple canceled due to illness shows, known as “**The Desert Storm**” period when he finally had enough and stood on stage letting the “world” know what he thought---he had turned the “other cheek” so many times, I was proud of him for speaking out, being the man he truly was--letting whomever was causing the rumors to know they would catch hell from him if it didn’t stop. Of course there are always those who were “horrificed” etc. - but so what. He had *every right to defend his honor* and protect his family from such trash.

### ***Spiritual Education ---***

Elvis had all he could take during this time frame, his health was becoming serious, he felt bad, was depressed with his life and inability to change directions. His eyes were failing, he was struggling to do his job, to keep functioning and in a good mood; sometimes he failed and that just made him feel worse. He said, “I just can’t get it

together...why is this happenin' now!" I thought he might be getting a "handle on it" when he stood up for himself in the face of all odds against him having an "opinion" or a mind of his own.

He began to spend more time with his beloved books, researching ancient texts, and looking for ways to speak with authors of these type books, some he did reach and said he learned from them, things that would help him understand what was meant even though the text might be written in old style text and languages. And he enjoyed learning, it took his mind off his worries, and as he liked to say, "let's me fly...n get away from all this..."

Elvis said he graduated high school by "the skin of my teeth" (he spent most of his "spare time" as a youth working- sometimes before and after school, a few times he worked an all night job, and fell asleep in class. His teacher didn't wake him up; she knew he worked to help his family. School records show that he made "average" grades, a few "A's and B's, some C's but he regretted he didn't have a college education. He was highly intelligent, self-educated and very "polished" mentally though he tended to come across very simple and down-home. He had a photographic memory-could remember conversations and things read months ago, so that would have helped him make passing grades. And he could recall word for word long passages, including prose and poetry that he had read; he would say, "Yes-I have a photographic memory---undeveloped though."

After getting to know Elvis it was obvious that he was shy and insecure when speaking with people he didn't know, but he would talk if given the chance. The big problem he had trying to have a conversation with anyone was that the person or persons, in their excitement at getting to talk with him, would tend to interrupt him. Sometimes to the point that he would just give up and let them talk to him. If he did get some space in which to say something, he was apt to go on and on about whatever the subject might be if he was interested in it himself. His drawn out detailing of events or cause and affects and his tendency to shut out anything else, tended to inspire one or the other of his men to try to change the subject and direct him away from whatever he had been "in to" and especially so, if it had anything to do with spiritual subjects and or Biblical information. They especially fretted if he brought out a *Bible* to back up his statements and stories. Sometimes it seemed that one of their "duties" was to keep Elvis off such subjects altogether and steer him away from anyone who might contribute to his getting started on any subject of that nature. And most often it seemed their choice of subjects for him had to do with ways to get him talking about his female "conquests"- always good for laughs among the male species. And Elvis loved laughter, so he spun some pretty good yarns at times and he often said in relating he had spent time hanging out with his buddies, that "Man, they'd *believe* anything!"

**Elvis:** “The gift of life is time; we can use it wisely or abuse it unwisely; freedom to choose is ours. Better to give it some thought an' try to find the best way to use the time we have.”

[This next segment is material taken by permission from Maia Nartoomid's manuscript for her book: *Blue Star Love- From One Gracefilled Heart to Yours*. At the end of this book you will find her address and website information.]

### ***Speaking on auras, to a group of girls--'60's***

“There is all around us a kind of curtain made up of our personal vibrations; each of us entirely different in this respect. We have a vibration like no other. It is called an aura--this vibration can tell us many things. As when someone walks up quietly behind us, we sense it. It can tell us when someone is talking or thinking about us too. It can be very sensitive and again if we have not become aware of it- can be very un-sensitive. Most people will admit to knowing that they, for some reason, are aware at times of things they cannot explain”. [This correlates with Elvis' presence being felt when he walked into a room, many people have expressed this effect and some have written of it in books. This effect is due to the very large aura he had, which is always present around highly evolved spiritual souls.] “To some people this is scary-- A person with a narrow unseeing understanding is to be pitied for they go through life missing most of life's joys and blessings-- God provided us with a brain, with a soul and a Spirit-being and the ability to tie them all together and tune into His manifest power in Light and Wisdom. And that ability is in our aura which is us, the Light-being within which is our Spirit body, made in God's image. God is ethereal, God is Light, and so as such is a part of us. We are one with Him, encased in a body of human flesh to live out the karma of our souls, many souls, for we are many bodies with one Spirit and one soul. Our soul has come in many human flesh bodies, usually connected in some way with each coming to Earth. But that's off the subject – now I'm talking about our auras, our Light body which surrounds us, comes from within us and is our protection system if used wisely. We ought to be careful when we meet someone (something) that sets wrong with us, that we feel uneasy with, as they do not correspond with our vibrations – (they) in some way distort it, and if two magnets with opposite ends – (are) trying to force together, they do not vibrate evenly and will cause strife, discord and probably get us in trouble if we don't leave them alone. This is the warning system built into us, in our aura. Use it, listen to it, and be wise.”



“Our human will is also a gift tied into our aura and can be used for a direct source of strength. God intended for us to have a will or He would not have given it to us. We ought to be strong, but tender – powerful - (yet) able to sense a need for gentleness, and unbending except in love. If you allow your will to weaken then you open the door for evil and evil waits like a hungry jackal to leap upon the weak. Positive thought is strength to the will; use it. Never be negative unless it is not wise to be positive. The need for the will goes further than being able to say “no” and mean it. It goes further than refusing to do a wrong thing to another. It means that you are able to judge when to be strong and when to be tender – that you are wise in your character, steadfast in your heart and determined to be true to your principals. Don't give in just because someone wants you to and feel you have to in order to keep their friendship when they ask you to do something you feel is not quite right. For if you do that, it weakens your will and the next time wrong is so much easier, until at last you have no will but that of a physical sense. Your spiritual will, your Light-being, will weaken and be of no use to you, or to anyone you care for.”

“To strengthen the aura Light around you do this: Pray fervently and honestly by asking for strength, understanding of our fellow men, and for courage to live on the Earth's plane among the confusion and discord of so many Spirits all trying to fit into this unbalanced vibration. For only those with open chakras, with Ki (pronounced chee), and with balance, can truly know the Key of Wisdom and help others find it too.”

“Meditate, practice peace and quiet when you can during the hours of your day. Take the time daily to be quiet, to look deep inside and listen to the being within you, the most holy being living inside who guides you if you will listen to Him. Let that Light glow, let it fill you and hide it not.”

“The Key to having confidence is first to know yourself. Have high ideals, store them on your mental shelf and hold fast to faith and principles. Listen to your heart, it knows. It is the Key to your aura, your Light-being, your ageless Self that lives forever from ether to ether and plane to plane in human and spiritual forms, eon after eon, forever.”

***Elvis on the Bible--*** “Read Roman Mythology and Greek Mythology and compare this history to that of the Bible, you will find it corresponds. Read all religions, compare – for only then can you have true knowledge and understanding. It is wrong to go through life being empty, believing that only one way is the way – for each book is history – our history, God's history of Earth, written in different styles, by different races of mankind, but all telling the same story based on that race's life style, yet saying virtually the same thing. Don't be so foolish as to say 'no, that can't be right,' when you don't know, do not have knowledge but accept what someone else believes without

question. That is to let in a foolishness that can damn you to the fires of regret, the hell of knowing you had a chance and blew it. Hell is of the mind – the mind brings physical hell. Nothing is as painful as the seed of regret growing into a vine of remorse and heartfelt sorrow. The thought of knowing I could have and did not. Oh, that I had more time! That I was wiser, more able to say what I feel, but I am only me, a man with a humble soul, a heart full of need and only silence upon which to lament my inability to put into your minds and hearts the wisdom you need – must have, in order to survive.”

### **Jesus, the Christ--1974, as told by Elvis—“southern style” as told by Elvis-**

“People think Jesus was runnin' around with 12 poor bastards, wearin' rags and eatin' grasshoppers, ya know, what 'cha call 'em, eh...locusts, yah. But they were a kind of grasshopper really--'n they didn't have nothin' to eat but them. They (people) say well, now He said a rich man can't get into Heaven 'cause a camel can't get through a hole in a needle! But what- what He really said was a rich man has to struggle jus' as hard maybe as a poor one, to be Christian--to practice love, care and honor in their lives. We all supposed to love one another, to care about what happens to us all and to honor ourselves by havin' a code of ethics to live by--includin' honorin' one's parents--not to say all parents are worth that privilege of bein' honored by anybody. Like they sayin' Jesus was poor--he was the son of a carpenter an' back then they were in big demand an' got good wages for it, makin' chariots an' so forth too. An' Jesus went to the best schools, was smart enough to talk to the elders in the Temple an' be noted for havin' good sense. He wasn't a little bitty guy either 'cause people could see him above crowds when he was walkin' in among them. An' he had good clothes 'cause the soldiers who were guardin' the cross where Jesus was hangin' cast lots over his robes on account of they were well made and good material. Didn't have any seams neither to tear it evenly – Ya know, I asked a tailor one time if he could make me a coat with no seams in it an' he said it can't be done!

But Jesus had one an' it had no seams! The soldiers didn't want to rip it up or nothing so they drew lots seein' who got it. Ya know the guy who did went an' killed his self a few hours later on account of the deep feelings he was gettin' off that robe! See, when you take off somethin' you been wearin' a lot, some of your vibration stays with it a time an' that's what was happenin' back then. Jesus had a powerful aura an' it was there in his robes.

Now Jesus was a Magi--a magician filled with the Holy Spirit 'cause he took a few loaves of bread and some fish and made enough out of that to feed a multitude of people who come to see his show--eh--to hear him talk. Then he turned water into wine--a never endin' flow for people to drink. An' he could tell what was gonna happen on

account of havin' highly developed senses, bein' tuned in to what is out there in the ethers. He knew he'd be killed before he came, but he came anyway-he had a purpose and he had to fulfill it as it played out. That was the plan. So he was tall and he had money, people noticed him in a crowd and he was a good looking guy on account of women flocked to him, wantin' to follow him and he had a woman friend named **Mary Magdalene** who used to be a-a- woman of – of- poor reputation but Jesus told her, come with me an' don't do that shit anymore! An' she washed and dried his feet with her hair to let him know she was grateful--an' he let her do it be-because she needed to do somethin' for him to let him know how she felt. Here she was about to get stoned an' he saved her an' took her with him so she'd be safe. ‘n when he was killed, she stayed with his mother and they comforted each other--it all worked out. Jesus was a forgivin' man; his guys the disciples let him down, didn't protect him or nothin' an' then couldn't stop 'em from takin' him to the cross. An' when he came back after 3 days – went an' found them, came in so they could see him and let them know it was him and he forgave them but they had to go do what they were supposed to do which was take the gospel into all the lands. That's why we have different religions too, ‘cause they were all of different backgrounds, so they each wrote things how they saw them--similar but different. Over time the Bible has been formed the same way, had lots of writers doin' it and it got turned the way each of 'em think. But it all says the same thing--so we can figure it out if we study it some. So really, Jesus was a good lookin' wealthy, educated guy an' so people paid attention and listened to him- an' that's what happens today as well--except Jesus was an honorable, loving man and stood out for his feelings and his beliefs on account of his good heart. An he was despised and talked about by the jealous and the ugly natured of the human race. Still goin' on--we haven't learned nothin' yet, seems like. When I'm gone from this body 'um gonna be with Jesus an' have the full armor of God surrounding' me. Lord-Lord-Gawd, oh “Happy Day”!”

*(Taken from a tape recorded meeting with Elvis, recorded in 1974 by one of his guests, and who gave Wanda June Hill permission to use it here.)*

*[Elvis would be pleased to know that **the Catholic Church has “admitted that in the past they changed Mary Magdalene’s history; they feared her “followers” would increase, that she would cause “trouble” for the Church because she came from a respected family, stood up for women and the under privileged and followed Jesus’ teachings, she was one of three women who discovered the stone blocking the entrance to the tomb where Jesus had been placed was moved, and the tomb was empty; and she was told by an Angel to go and tell his followers he was “risen from death”. These things the Church felt gave her as a woman, too much “power”, and so the Church made her a “fallen woman” whom Jesus “forgave” and took with him. They have officially corrected the misinformation in their archives.]***

**Elvis:** (I asked him about his having been called the “handsomest man in Hollywood” in a movie magazine.) *“Man, they got to be silly in the head! I dunno where they’re lookin’! Maybe it’s jus’ cause I got this old face...I mean, not in age but you know, I have a – a sort of statue looking face and bein’ used to seein’ that in books and such, maybe that’s just what they got used to so...I fit in their memory or something like that. It sure isn’t because I’m better lookin’ than...than any one else in this business! Gawd, all they got to do is take a look at...eh...**Paul Newman!** Now that is good lookin’!”*

He added: *“Un his eyes are bluer’n mine...you ever see those eyes on screen?”*

### ***“The Bible says: God's rule has 3 categories”—according to Elvis-***

*Elvis is reading some biblical commentary and disagreeing by going to his Bible and telling “it like it is”.*

“The Bible says God's Rule has three categories: Commandments, Judgments and Statutes. 1. Commandments reflect rules of PERSONAL conduct. 2. Judgments relate to the conduct of GOVERNMENT, State or SOCIAL LAW--which is considered to be paramount when there is no other law present at the time. 3. Statutes relate to the laws regarding worship, reverence and the Word of God as stated in the Bible by Jesus and recorded for all time by the disciples who were present at the time of Jesus' life, death and rising from the crypt to Spiritual and physical form. We won't get into that; don't have the time now-- Now there are chapters following that which contain the Ten Commandments and it opens thus: 'Now these are the judgments which you, (Moses) shall set before them (the people). Then in Verse 12: He who strikes a man (or woman) so that he dies shall surely be put to death. Now, THAT is the death penalty, and could it be clearer?”

Elvis was upset that Governor Brown had not held up for the death penalty in California. Elvis believed that in those cases where another person caused death, especially in cases of torture and painful prolonged death, brought about for the asinine” (his word) “and perverse pleasure of some half human, half demon being” there ought to be an immediate trial, sentencing and the death penalty which ought to be carried out within three months, especially in cases where the person admits to the crime and it was hideously (his word) planned and carried out in merciless killings of the innocent in this world. And if it were not the first of such, the person ought to be hung by the neck until dead, and “to hell with bein' kind and gentle to such people, puttin' them to sleep! Gas 'em, hang 'em or string 'em up by the hands an' slit 'em open from neck to pelvis an' let 'em hang there ‘un die! They deserve equal misery for what they did!” He added that every person has the right to fair hearings and evidence should be conclusive beyond a shadow of doubt. He'd had enough of this “give'n chances over 'n over again to demonic monsters runnin ' around”. When he was saying these things it was in response to the

Charles Manson and his groupies killing spree, with the death of Sharon Tate and her unborn child upper most in Elvis' mind. That trial was just pending.

He also believed that anybody who'd hurt a child, beat them to cause pain and injury or sexually abuse them ought to have their arms cut off at the elbow! Then they'd remember what they did the rest of their lives. He definitely had some harsh ideas for punishment and he would have carried them out just as coldly as he sounded relating his views, and yet he might cry watching a movie, holding a little crippled child, and even cry when a baby bird he tried to save didn't make it. Even though, "Gawd, I found a little worm an' he ate it for me-chirped 'an ever thing--un then he just lay down an' died all by his self in the little box--" That was one of the first times I ever heard him use that so tender and hurt voice, like talking to a little child about something like that happening. He did it a time or two on stage, once when he found a little lizard that had come indoors and didn't make it. Here Elvis was, in full regalia up there doing his thing, he walks over and says in that personal soft voice, "Oh, a little lizard, he's dead, bless his poor little heart". Then he went on with the show.

His Aunt Lorene recalled that he used "to pick "lady bugs" out of water" so they wouldn't drown when he came across them at the barn or other places. This was a man who had a unique way of seeing things-usually very clearly and precisely, cut and dried, black and white when it came to what he thought the Bible meant. "Social Law", he said, " is what applies within groups of people of like minds and circumstances: such as in America we practice the laws of our country in regard to what the people have chosen to be the law. In other countries their laws differ in many ways, some drastically and others more lenient, but according to God's word, these are to be obeyed by those who live within those countries; that's Social Law."

And this is the same man who asked the lady who had agreed to "stay with me, nothing will happen to you, etc." to pray with him and both got on their knees; he thanked God for her and asked forgiveness for himself because he wanted her there. This young woman was astounded to say the least, but she stayed nearly 2 weeks with him and said, as far as she was concerned, "he didn't need to be forgiven". And he once related that his "weakness, sin-some might think, is I like to have women around--I need them." (His words) "I need them to help me in so many ways, I can't say them all, and it'd take too long." And he said God made him, He'd understand and look the other way if he made mistakes. And he was not joking around when he made these statements; Elvis did not like to be alone when he slept and he had felt that way most of his life. Perhaps due to losing his twin or having his daddy taken away before he was 4 years old?

There are countless people around the world, from all walks of life, young and old, many who don't speak English but *who learn the language just to understand Elvis'*

*lyrics* because they “feel his love, his spirituality coming through his music” especially the gospels. They want to know why they feel so much listening to his vocals. Many say they have experienced a new spiritual awakening, have learned what he stood for was “love thy neighbor as thy self, “do good to all those you meet” and “trust in god who lives within you”. They want to know why he felt so loyal to his fans, why he loved them so much. Many say they have joined with him on that “spiritual road searching for their own meanings to life, love and liberty. Elvis would be very pleased to know how much his life has come to mean to so many people; he would also be very shy and humble because he always felt that he wasn't “worth much”.

A side note: Gov. Brown Sr. had a radio show on air when Elvis died; I received a letter of invitation to be a guest on it before our first book was released; I drove up for the show only to be told that they had other guests “closer to Elvis” and I was not “needed”. It was Sonny West and Dave Hebler. I tuned in the station and listened to them spewing forth their “dribble” on my way back home. Such was the way of the “talk shows, journalists and “garbage grinders” for months and months-until the air waves, printed pages and filmed footage were filled with scurrilous comments –and sadly, it’s still out there tainting the minds and hearts of many....especially those who “enjoy it” because it makes “them look better in their minds”...and those who easily “believe because “they” were there and “should know”. Elvis was right...”it’s hard to see a tree when one is surrounded by a forrest.” (Still makes me want to get a chain saw...”)

### ***A Spiritual Journey-- by Laurie, United States***

While I was in the middle of watching a made-for-TV Elvis movie, May of 2005, there was a part where Elvis is shown having a spiritual search and then ends in a forced book burning. (Keep in mind I knew almost nothing about Elvis at this time except the common knowledge stuff; I was not an Elvis fan then.) So during the book burning scene I asked God why He did not send someone to help Elvis. The instant I asked God this question, it was like a finger from heaven zapped me with such intense emotional pain, pain like I have never felt. I cried straight, for hours and could sleep no more than two hours. When I woke up the next morning, the crying started again. But it is so hard to describe because there was such a sharp pain, like nothing I have ever felt. That same morning, I could feel the heavy presence of God upon me and what was imparted to me was that Elvis had a heart like King David in the Bible. Prior to this I knew nothing of Elvis' spiritual nature except what little there was in the movie.

For the next week and a half, I cried half of the waking hours, even during work, so there I was crying silently, hoping no one would notice. I kept asking God why are you putting me through this, it hurt so badly. Finally, I was shown in the Spirit a rose

with thorns. This rose represented love, and in order to grow I had to have this rose of love implanted into my heart, but I had to take the thorns as well. And the thorns would hurt.

Over the next two and one half months, this pain gradually subsided, but I had many relapses along the way. Don't know how I kept it together actually. During this time I felt compelled to read up on anything about Elvis that I could get my hands on, especially spiritually related which wasn't much, but I read the secular stuff as well. Even if what I read was not flattering. I knew by then that Elvis had a beautiful soul. Later, I found out a lot of the negative stuff was just trash, thanks especially for the ELC website, and then the forum.

The kind of intense sorrow I went through was not due to feeling sad over the awful stuff done to Elvis. There was some of that mixed in, but mostly the pain I went through was placed upon me. It was not depression. So who placed it upon me – God/Jesus, an angel, Elvis????? To this day, I'm not sure. Maybe all three had something to do with it.

What happened to me spiritually due to this experience was that the importance of love was imparted to me. This doesn't mean I turned into Mother Theresa. It means that I have an awareness I didn't have before. Some of the old self died. I was 42 at the time; no coincidence I think, as that is the age of Elvis' death. I also came to understand the importance of unity among all people. Years ago I had a spiritual encounter with Jesus, which dramatically affected me for the better, yet with the above Elvis-related experience somehow my world vision broadened such that I now see that Jesus came to bring love and enlightenment for all, regardless of one's beliefs. I now interpret the Bible differently than I used to. Just because someone believes differently than me does not mean they are going to Hell. And this brings me back to Elvis who was such a force for unity. He tried to reach out in love to people all across the world. It is no wonder, whether directly, or indirectly, he played a part in my spiritual journey.

Thank you---

*Laurie*

***Elvis: “The Human Heart is like a radio--***

**but very few people tune it in – and they let other stuff interfere so they lose track of their heart frequency and can't hear it so good”. That's why he liked to meditate – he listened to his heart instead of “so much of what was told into” his brain by so many. He liked to be alone, to think and listen to his heart. He said, “It knows what you need – and the heart doesn't lie. Ya know evil lurks around us, in some people we meet, in invitations from others, in the lust for money, the glory of fame, the thrill an'**

lustfulness of our natures, doin' things for money, things or attention, in the written words casually left layin' about, in solitude and silence, and in the hearts of every human being that has left the door ajar – it will come in. It's there, ready to step up an' whisper sweet nothings into one's ear, enticing us to lie, cheat n' do evil to our fellows, and we listen because we lose track of the frequency to God, and that opens the door to anything that comes in to the heart. **The heart is like a radio, God talks to you through the heart, but you let other things change the station until finally there is so much static and raucous noise you can't find the God station easily, and give up.** It pays to work at it, find that station and keep it tuned in; life is so much better then, peaceful and filled with joy and knowing we are loved.”

***Our realization of Elvis Presley beyond the star and into his heart---  
Marjorie & Walter***

My husband, Walter and I, always enjoyed the music that Elvis sang with such passion and with his loving heart coming through as he sang each word. We never were fortunate enough to meet him but we feel like we know him now like we know any friend through the words of people who did love him for him, and not because he was Elvis Presley. Writing a book is a very hard task but Wanda Hill and Larry Geller have managed to write with feelings of love and bright light coming through on each page.

They knew Elvis as a friend, as a man and as a person with the most generous heart of anyone I have ever “known”. Elvis was always there to give a hand up to help another and to us a man is never better than when helping another person along the way.

Looking at the stars on a clear Michigan summer night make us wonder which are his stars glistening in the dark sky as we believe there would need to be many shining stars to hold the love that Elvis always had for his fellow man.

I know that a family called ELC has helped us through a great deal and being directed there was done by Elvis. Of this there is not one doubt. The people at ELC are real and their hearts are filled with the same joyous beauty and love that Elvis carried in his heart.

There are too many ifs but if history could be changed we would wish, selfishly because he was so very tired, that he could be at his beloved Graceland rocking in a comfortable chair and telling stories about the days gone by. I know we would be sitting there and listening until we were told to leave.

Elvis was lent to us here on earth and when he could go not one more step he surrendered to the beckoning candle lighting the way out of the darkness and into eternal light.  
Always with Love,



**Marjorie and Walter Radike China Township, Michigan. (6/23/2008**

## **Thrill Seeker---**

Elvis had a speed boat that he wanted to take back to Memphis and donate to one of his favorite charities (he was going to buy a larger one), so they could auction it off but later he gave it to a boy's home instead. First though, he wanted to take it for one last spin in the ocean. He had a friend who lived in Newport Beach on the bay and arranged to meet some friends there. Several girls began hitting on him for boat rides but he put them off with his "Later, baby's" and went out with the guys first. After a while he returned, stood scanning the covey of "chicks" and their expectant faces and then nodded for me to follow him. I didn't want to ride, was staying well behind the others and since I can't swim, going on ocean water wasn't anything I ever wanted to do. That boat was small, very shallow with the engine inboard in the rear and the entire thing only inches from the water.

Elvis dragged me to the dock, put me in the craft and off we went at demonic speed. He stood up, bouncing it across the waves as they came in, yelling and loving every wild moment, while I slid down in my seat, held on for dear life and thought we'd capsize and drown! My knees became bruised and my wrists felt sprained from holding on. When he realized I was really afraid, he slowed down, pulled me back into my seat, fastened the seat belt and with amusement dancing in his eyes asked, "Wasn't it exciting! Isn't it fun? Is your heart racin'?" And he reached a hand out, taking hold of my neck, checking my pulse and asked, "Not gonna faint on me- are you darlin'?"

By the time we returned to the dock, my hair was a frizzy mess of curls from the salt water. Elvis reached over and ruffled it, calling me "*Little Orphan Annie*" as he helped me from the boat. He took several girls out, then two at a time with one sitting on his lap. He stayed out extra long with a very lovely young woman and when he returned he spoke with one of his men saying for him not to worry-he would give her the money. The man thanked him; Elvis patted his shoulder saying, "Don't let it happen again."

A bit later Elvis was with a young blond woman, asking her to "hang around a while if you don't have anything else to do." He nuzzled her hair and then nibbled her neck, but when he saw me and other's looking, he winked and took her in the house. I went home and decided never to be anywhere there would be boats, motorcycles or any other "wild ride" machines again.

Several female friends of his have told stories about those wild, speeding rides out into the desert outside of Las Vegas in the wee hours of the morning, saying that Elvis loved to drive as fast as possible, enjoyed it more if they were frightened and a bit ticked off if they weren't. One of them said when they got back to the hotel he pulled out his gun and shot the expensive sports car right in the dashboard! That didn't scare her either!

In 1977 when interviewing Elvis, we spoke about celebrities he'd met and he told me that the house with the boat dock on the bay where we did that wild speedboat ride belonged to **John Wayne** and that his wife **Pilar**, had given Elvis and Priscilla a painting, I don't know if it were one she had done or one perhaps, John Wayne had painted.

While in Las Vegas to see Elvis' show in 1972, I "ran into" the young woman Elvis had taken inside the beach front home; she remembered me -otherwise I wouldn't have recognized her as the same person. She told me that Elvis had taken her to a "library" inside the house and pulled out some books, talked about them and then read several passages from them to her. She said he told her to come by his house in Bel Air and he would give her a couple of the same books as he had them "at home". She did, he did and she "found God" because Elvis talked to her about what it meant to believe in the hereafter; "I'm a better person" she said, "because Elvis taught me that life is good, and should be filled with love for all people, no matter their station in life." She said he "came along when I needed a friend". She had been living with a girl friend, and was "between jobs", met Elvis when a friend took her to a party that turned out to be at Elvis' home. Elvis invited her to stay "a while" since she didn't have a place of her own and so she spent several days (and nights) at his home. They shared his bed, but not their bodies and she said, he read to her, she read to him, they talked for hours and he was "wonderful to me, I felt safe and comfortable with him around." She got a job and he "helped her with deposit money so she could get a small apartment"; things went well for her and she "lost touch with Elvis" when he got married.

She gave me her telephone number and asked for mine; we kept in touch for a while. I hadn't heard from her for quite some time and Elvis had died. She came to the Roosevelt Hotel in Los Angeles when our first book came out, the publisher held a reception at that hotel, quite a few people showed up and she stood in line to speak with me. I asked her if she could wait a while since my time was about up, she did and we talked for a while. She had become a social worker in order to help those in need; she felt that was a good way to help people and in doing so, love her fellow human beings. She asked me, "Do you think it is possible for Elvis to know that he gave me very good advice?" I said, "Yes, positively he knows," and her eyes lit up; she nodded and said, "I dreamed about him – he was smiling at me as if he knew." I asked what he was wearing; she said, "Oh, he had on a white shirt, with the sleeves rolled up. He looked so young-- he was happy."

## ***Stormy Days With Elvis---***

One of the most intense moments with Elvis happened in the early fall of 1966 at Balboa Island and I realized just how much he trusted me. He phoned early one morning and asked me to meet him at the beach. It was pouring rain, wind blowing and though I didn't want to drive in that weather, the desperation in his voice convinced me to go. As I waited, the wind gusted so hard it rocked my car, the rain hitting the top was deafening and I could barely tell ocean from sky. Elvis arrived in a black car-his driver waited. I could barely see through the downpour of rain as he got out.

We had a 58 *Lincoln Premier*, the kind you could "hold a dance" in the space between front and back seats, with electric windows, seats and door locks-I slid over to let Elvis behind the wheel and the door was locked. Frantically, I pushed the passenger side panel but it didn't unlock his door. He stood there yanking on the handle, becoming soaked. I got the door open but the seat was too far forward for him to get in-he had to wait while it ran back. His white shirt was plastered to his body, his pants were wet, his hair blown forward and stuck to his face. He growled an "I'll dry," to my feeble "I'm sorry."

He started the engine to run the heater and I pulled out a handful of paper fast food napkins and he patted the water off his face, neck, slicked his hair back with his fingers and then he began to talk. As he spoke the air felt as if charged with electricity and I had to open a window to breathe. He began speaking of his career saying he was "unhappy", he was not doing anything he felt worthwhile and he wanted "down from the teeny-bop-er" image, wanted something more meaningful and more from life, but he did not know how to get it. He went on about being "tied into" the movie contracts, that he had no control over them, had no say over what the film would be and his contract was "so involved I cannot break it". When he tried to discuss it with his manager he was told that with all the money the films made how could he risk losing everything by changing? He went on to say he wasn't very "bright" and that without the Colonel's help he could not have done so well. He would not have known how to go about it, but somehow it was not making him happy.

"Maybe it's just me? Maybe I should be happy, I've got everything a man could ask for an' if there is something I want, it's easy to get." And he added, "I guess that I have become like they say...a Hollywood type with too much of everything to feel anything." He gripped the steering wheel so tightly, twisting the leather cover until the thongs broke, but so intense was he, so frustrated with his lot, he didn't notice.

Elvis said when he was first starting his career, he sure didn't think it would end up making him miserable-he thought that money, fame and all that went with it would be everything he ever wanted, but without someone to share it with, a person whom he knew loved him, it meant so little, almost nothing at all. "Maybe" he said, "if I had a wife, a family to work for, someone of my own, it would be different."

He related being tired of playing games, he was sick of one-night stands, of fending off women. Words poured out of him like water off a ducks back before he took a breath and said he wanted to walk in the rain - it had slowed to a drizzle by then.

We walked about half a mile, me in my waterproof windbreaker; he in a jacket that was not waterproof. I was glad to get out of the car-he was too intense, too emotionally distressed, he felt so alone in his situation and my inclination was to hold him and tell him it would be alright, just as I would have done had he been my child or other member of my family. He was "Elvis", but that day, he was like a young kid, his spirit broken, near tears and needed someone to understand. Though we had conversed a few times by telephone, it was completely different "face to face" where one could see and feel the intensity coming from the angry frustration and despair he felt concerning his "lot in life" and the intense pressure from "havin' my hands tied up with contracts."

As we walked he began telling me of his childhood, how he had felt so lonely all of his life, and had not seemed to "fit in" any place. Since his mother died he felt that no one understood him and that now with his image and all of the "hullabaloo" that went with it, it was more difficult to understand him, he realized that and he wondered if he would ever find someone who could understand why he thought and felt as he did about his life. "Will there ever be some-someone for me" he said, "Just me-an' not-not because of what I do?"

He said there had been some "strife" in his family, and when he was small his father had not "liked me much" and he thought it was because his mother gave him all of her attention. Elvis understood that sometimes new fathers have a hard time coping with their wife's devotion to the new person in her life-that he had been a male child only added to that kind of jealousy. He added it had worked out, his father loved him and when he was a little older things changed, his father was there for him- but he mentioned his new step-mother, saying she kept his father pretty busy and he didn't get to talk with him much anymore and he missed that closeness. He felt that he had spent his life trying to please people, first with his parents and since, his fans. "I feel like a puppet dancing to the strings" he said, "always doing what everyone else wants and trying to please everyone I am with." He admitted he wanted someone to take care of him, to love him for himself and not the image, but he wasn't sure that there would ever be someone out there for him-"Just me" he said, "not Elvis Presley." He expressed doubts of ever

knowing for sure if any woman could love him, just the man and not be really in love with the idea of who the man was, that image and all that went with it.

He didn't think he could stand the loneliness of his life much longer and he began to cry, trying to hold it in, cursing himself, wiping tears and the rain off with balled fists like a child. I had to hold him then, he sank to his knees on the wet sand and let me hug him as I told him that in time he'd have everything he wanted, not to give up and that I thought Priscilla must love him dearly, she had been with him long enough to know him and to give her a chance. Didn't he know by now if she truly loved him?

He trembled, shivering from the cold as much as nerves, choking back sobs as we held hands and sat on the wet sand while he talked about Priscilla saying he thought she was the one, but she was still so young-he wanted her to grow up, to find out her place in life and to know who she was before devoting herself to him. He told me, he had not "taken her" and that he would not until they married, if they did. He said she thought he was "crazy for waiting" but he added, he wanted their wedding night to be special for her, something precious between them and that their wedding should not be "tarnished with lust". "I want her memories of our love, our wedding vows and first night together as man and wife to be beautiful" he said, with sincerity ringing on every word though he spoke so softly I had to strain to hear over the ocean noises. He grinned slightly saying, that she had done everything she can "to make me change my mind" but he went on, "its one battle I'm not gonna lose." He thought her "efforts to seduce" him cute and adorable and he "just loved her" caring so much about him. He loved it that she was jealous and said that "means she really cares about me, doesn't it?"

I asked if it wasn't true that she lived with him, shared the same bedroom. He silently nodded his head "yes" then said, "It's not like you think-I am not doin' nothing to hurt her, she's happy stayin' with me. I can't stand seein' her crying and unhappy when she's not with me. I just can't say no to her and mean it-except about sex. I am not goin' to do it; she'll just have to wait. Besides, she is just a baby...she don't know who she is-not yet." His eyes lit up as he spoke of her and I believed him, though I marveled at his consideration for her.

He said that he had thought he was in love "before" that he had strong and deep feelings for another woman, but that wasn't going to work out because he couldn't change his life nor would she change hers and he had personal commitments to resolve. "I don't know; wanted a wife to be at home, to have children and be a homemaker---I-I don't think I could accept havin' a workin' one, least not yet," he said sorrowfully. The truth was, Elvis was raised up in the South-women were to be at home, minding the kids and be there, waiting for their men. Any woman of his would want to be where he was and take care of him, not off running around the country etc-- And be willing to let him

make decisions or at least be able to “let me think they are” as he jokingly put it. He didn't think women should tell their men what to do, but should be able to quietly convince them into thinking that whatever it was had been the man's idea in the first place. From what little he said of his mother, she must have been an expert at convincing; he held her in high esteem, on a pedestal, and he was looking for a woman with those qualities. Late in the '70's he finally admitted that it seemed that “time had changed how females think about what they want in life, and he said, “Most of 'em don't know what they want, except money to get things--” He added that it seemed that way to him because those were the type women who would jump at a chance to spend time with him. He didn't think it was sexual interest--it was his fame and what it could get them.

Perhaps his experiences with those who were of that mind set was why he tended to get along better with younger ladies because they were not so set in their ways and he could “train them”. And yes, that is a comment he made a few times in conversations with me “--training 'em to understand what my life is like, you know. I don't have a lot of time an' when I do, sometimes I like bein' alone an' sometimes not--if they know their place, then I don't have to spend time explaining why they can't go an' come anytime they want. An' if I say no, it's for a good reason. Hell, I'm easy, all they got to do is pay attention an' understand they are there because I invited them; that ought to be good enough.” There were quite a few women who understood, and those who didn't came and went pretty quickly-- It was rare for him to even hint that there was a woman he cared for enough to consider a long term arrangement-such as marriage. He was looking for the “right one”, a companion who would not look at him as “Elvis”, but would appreciate what he did to earn a living without complaining about the “reversal of night and day” living that came with earning that living. He wanted one who was spiritually inclined, who had a similar inner desire to learn and who also practiced what they “preached” as he tried to do in dealing with people he met and worked with...but she also had to have a sense of humor, and be patient with his many moods. He didn't think it was too much to ask, but as time passed and he wasn't able to find many women of that mind set, and then even they chose to “leave him”, he was about to give up the hope he had hung on to for so long. He said, “There has to be someone out there for me...doesn't there? Am I just foolin' myself...or just bein' a darn fool to think any woman would want this life...just because of me?”

I didn't ask who that “other” woman might have been but I believe it was **Ann-Margret Olsen**, the co-star of “*Viva Las Vegas*”. He was head over heels for her after getting to know her but I don't think he knew what to do about it. He apparently liked her very much according to some who were “around” to witness their relationship; they called each other nick names with his being “Thumper” and her, “Bunny”. She wasn't someone he talked about; another sign of how much he liked her. However they parted company kind of in a way that ticked Elvis off for a while. He never spoke of her and for

a while she was a “forbidden topic” so say his friends/employees. He and Ann did get together and talk and he said, “Straightened things out” however, Elvis had always “pictured” a wife who kept the home fires burning and took care of the children; AnnMargret had a “hot at the time” career, was under contract and loved acting, traveling and wasn’t ready to give it up.

I thought they would have been perfect for each other before I even knew there was a movie to be made with her, and said so after watching her on a black and white television with *no sound*! I told him he ought to meet her; he said “Really?” Much later I found out he had *already met her* and had recorded the songs for “*Viva Las Vegas*” with her and was on the way to being totally smitten by the Olsen “kitten” when I first mentioned her name! I learned then just how reserved and quiet he *could be about things closest to his heart*.

He didn't talk much about young Priscilla either, but I knew she was important to him, that he cherished her, worried about her. And equally obvious that she wanted him and was fearful that some other female would “catch his eye and his heart” while he was “allowing her to grow up first”. Ann-Margret was a “real worry” apparently; Priscilla dyed her hair coppery red to match Ann-Margret's beautiful hair in “*Viva Las Vegas*”. That didn't go over well with Elvis- her hair quickly returned to its “regular color” black-(medium auburn when he first met her).

Elvis married Priscilla, after her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and **Roger Smith** married **Ann-Margret** the *very next* weekend. Some years later, Elvis asked us to pray for her when she took a serious fall on stage but he never spoke of her to me again until a few weeks before his death, he was looking back over his life, picking things here and there that were important moments and he mentioned there had been 3 women whom he thought were special, one being Ann-Margret, but he didn't say the other two's names. It was long after his passing that I read about **June Juanico**'s relationship with Elvis and recalled his mentioning he “used to know a girl named June” when he learned that my name was Wanda June. He didn't speak of June specifically but said he knew what heartbreak was, and that he had thought he was in love a “couple of times” but “they couldn't wait” for him and married somebody else. He excused them by saying that “young girls can't wait around for a guy that's on the road all the time, they got lives, wants and needs and have to get on with livin’.”

After his death it came out that **Ann-Margret** had received a guitar shaped flower arrangement from him on every opening day, everywhere she performed and it so happened she was opening in a new show the day he died. When she didn't see his guitar arrangement, she knew something bad had happened and when she learned how desolate and ill he had been, she said she felt badly that she had not called him, gone to see him

and that maybe she might have been some help in some way. After his death she hosted a tribute show featuring the **“1968 Singer Come-back Special”** and his live performance done in Hawaii **“Kui Lee Cancer Benefit Show”** which had been broadcast via satellite worldwide in 1973, making it the largest audience to view any televised show ever broadcast at that time. She walked out on stage wearing one of his favorite colors for redheads, emerald green. Later on she wrote about him warmly, and with dignity in her own biography.

*Elvis was very proud and pleased to be doing that satellite show, thrilled and yes, even scared a bit at the thought of such a huge audience as “the world”. He got in shape for it, he looked fantastic, he was a nervous wreck but that emotional charge lit him up on stage. Later, when news began to come out about the facts of that show, he was disappointed, and angry that the show was not shown world wide as he had been told, that many countries were not able or not allowed access for one reason or another, some because they chose not to let their people see it. What angered Elvis was he felt it was all a “lie, told to make money” because he thought that the money didn’t go where it should have, and what did manage to get there, wasn’t enough, he said. He donated his time, took no money and even contributed from his own funds; but I guess he was not told that usually “costs” come off the top and when it’s a charity function, sometimes after expenses there isn’t much actual “donation” left. It’s a hard lesson; Starla and her band learned this after spending an entire day waiting for their turn to appear on stage at a benefit held for a young boy needing a liver transplant...when all was said and done, the “check shown on stage” was fake...there was no money left after paying the “booze and banquet” for those Hollywood celebrities who “donated” their time. Starla said there were boxes of champagne and liquor stacked everywhere-and the banquet was “outlandishly ornate”! She was angry, so was “Uncle” Elvis...8 years earlier; he was hurt, he tried to do something to help, and it was turned into “nothing at all, just lies, an’ people believed it... gawd, is there no shame anymore?” I think what hurt him deeply was that he was lied to, lead to believe he did something of value, and then found out it had no “worth” after all, the pride and pleasure he felt for being able to do something and the chance to be the first entertainer to “be viewed around the world via satellite” was not quite true either...it was the highest rated of any television show of it’s time but was not seen **“all at once by the entire world”** as **he was lead to believe**. His feelings were hurt and he felt “stupid” for believing. He did however, feel special and accepted **that it was a great honor to be the first one** who was “seen by so many folks around the world! “Lord-lord, who’d of thought it! I’m jus’ a country boy from Memphis...’n we did it first! Lordy, who’d of thought it!”*

That day at the beach, Elvis said he felt that time “was running out”, that he “had to do everything fast”. He added, “I don’t have time...there’s not much time left” and he put his head in his hands, “If it doesn’t change...if something doesn’t happen soon...I’m



goin' to-to-" he didn't finish the statement, but stood up, stuck his hands into his pockets and head down said that he wanted to be alone for a few minutes.

I left him and returned to my car. There was nothing anyone could say or do-he had to do it alone. After a few minutes he returned, sat with me and said, "This means so much to me today---you're comin' here. I---I---just needed..." he stammered, and then softly said, "Thank you honey."

It was hard for Elvis to express his real feelings, as if he had and somebody stomped upon them causing him to say what he thought *Elvis Presley* was thought to feel, what was wanted. He had been Elvis Presley for so long, he seldom allowed the real Elvis to show and when he did, he appeared to be very childlike in faith and deed. In fact many people who got to know the Elvis off stage, being himself have remarked about his child-like qualities, saying he was very much like a little boy and was very vulnerable, trying to live in a very highly pressured adult world. I think he was one of those special ones who come here for a purpose to do good and who are very spiritual and tender hearted; to good for the harshness of our world here on Earth.

He glanced my way, eyes filled with unshed tears and to change the mood, I joked that he would catch his death over this-he was shivering in the wet clothing. He grinned a little, took a deep breath and kissed my left hand saying, "If you weren't married, I'd take you home with me." I laughed, saying something like, "You *think* I would go!" in mock disgust. He smiled, opened the car door and said, "Bye-bye, my little red hen" and got out.

I felt so sorry for him, he *really didn't know* if people cared for him or his image and he *had to be* that image-most of the time, even somewhat with his pals who lived with him but were his employees. It was taking a toll on him-especially on his heart. He was burdened with his friends' problems-had the power to solve most of them with his money or fame, and they all expected him to always be there, strong and steady, to have no cares of his own-after all he "had it all, and more". He WAS Elvis Presley, the top drawing entertainer of his time and very alone on top of that mountain of fame.

*(The comment about "taking me home" with him was his way of letting me know how much he appreciated my coming out in that storm because he asked me to do so, and for no other reason. I mention this because some people might be inclined to think otherwise; especially if they merely "scan through" this book, looking for something to prove whatever misinformed theory they might have regarding his "image persona" that often is mostly derived from misconceptions and dribble coming from "faucet mouths" as he called certain people who tended to run off at the mouth quite often then...and now.)*

## **The Life---**

I often heard comments to the effect that Elvis had it made. What could he want that he could not get? And his men implied that he had it “so easy”, after all, they did all the “dirty work” for him, ran errands, did the manual labor or other jobs and all he had to do was “look good”. Anyone who ever had to put together an event, charity or otherwise, or had to prepare to entertain someone they wished to impress or please, can only have the tiniest inkling of the pressure Elvis lived with day and night, that began from the time he was 18 years old. He constantly had to prove himself, to please others, to win praise and be accepted. Not to mention his revelation of doing so with his parents.

He said that for a time in those early years, things happened so fast, so many things changing around him and his family, having money and having to make decisions that were not like anything he or his parents had ever even thought about, was hard on everyone and his head was “spinning from it all”. He was scared sometimes, afraid he was losing his mind so many things were coming at him so fast. He felt that the Colonel was the only person who could handle it all, because he (Elvis) sure couldn’t have. So he just let him make the decisions and handle the details and all Elvis had to do was show up, look good and please the crowd. He laughingly added, “An’ run like hell when I got done!”

What isn’t spoken of often, though there are a few who do acknowledge the facts, Elvis was the one who from early days in his career made decisions regarding his recordings, he was his own “producer” though there were others present who were supposed to be making the decisions. It was Elvis though, who asked to redo takes, to change musical arrangements, and he liked to have his band around him when recording, he knew what he wanted to hear, and he kept at it until he got it. He planned his performances, he made the decisions what went where, and he brought in more instruments, even a harp. He selected the songs, sometimes not doing what was originally planned because he “felt it should be changed” to fit the feelings he picked up from his audience, etc. He decided who would be at his recording sessions; he liked a certain sound, and preferred to work in smaller studios because they had a certain sound, different from RCA. He made the choices of doing what and when and though he would let others have an opinion, it was he who made the finale choice. His methods were not due to his ego, they were for perfection of his “product” and talent; he wanted to give the best he had to his audiences, live and on recordings. He said, “Music is part of me; I have to do the best I can with what I’ve been given to do it with.” And he always tried to do that. He grew tired of being “told” he had to follow the “new” system of recording, hated having to listen and sing with the music pre-recorded without his guidance, and finally, refused to record at RCA...so the “studio” came to him and set up at Graceland.

It has often been said, well he chose to be a star, famous and before the public. That is true-but we- the ones who made him the biggest name in show business, the first one to change teenagers from “be seen and not heard” to controlling the “market place” in the music industry and the movies, enough to place him at the very top of the heap made him insecure by our very fickleness. All one need do is look at the long list of the once famous to know how very quickly, almost overnight, they can be forgotten and replaced by new names, new faces. In Elvis’ mind was that fear, if he did not please, did not live up to our ideal of him, and then he too, would be forgotten. He could go on for hours relating the names and brief careers of those whom he had met on his climb to fame-people he thought were “better’n me any day” and who were now just treasured old records in his collection.

Further threatening to him was the fear of returning (with family and friends depending on him for their livelihood, his men, their families and all those working on his show, plus many more persons) to the poverty that had overwhelmed him and his parents when he was growing up. His fame was a heavy burden, as well as a huge high for him; we his fans expected him to be “perfect” and to be “Elvis” and he tried so hard to please. Before every live performance Elvis would fight the fears that he might be unable to give us our desires and sometimes he had anxiety attacks and he threw up; as he grew older, was ill, suffering health problems that caused his body to bloat and his ankles to puff up until his show boots would not zip up, still he went out there knowing he looked “fat and puffy faced” and he was all the more nervous, hoping his fans would not be disappointed because he couldn’t “look like Elvis oughta look any more”. In fact, he told me that he was having recurring nightmares about walking out and no one was there. He said that it “tore the heart right out of me.” I told him his fans would realize he felt bad, they would understand and love him anyway-and you did.

Just before his death, when he had done the concerts that were filmed for his last TV special shown in October of 1977, Elvis confided that the worst part of it all was that to film the shows the lights had to be on and he could see the people, see their faces and eyes as they looked at him. Normally, he would have enjoyed watching their reactions, but he said this time, he did not want to see them, to see the shock they expressed at his appearance and he said, it took all of his courage to go out there, knowing that he would have to face them. But with the cameras rolling, it had to be that way and he accepted it. If you reader, think that he didn’t care, did not notice, look again at the tears he shed while singing “*Are You Lonesome Tonight*” on that special. Elvis is laughing-but his heart is breaking, those are real tears running down his face...and notice also, he *is* “goofing” the song up but he *doesn’t miss a beat and picks up lines right on cue*. Listen to him talking to you, he’s not faking---that’s the *real man* up there, *letting you see how much he cares, giving all he had to give, while he still could*.

Elvis went on vacation during the month of June and as usual took friends with him; Ginger and her sister went along. He liked going to Hawaii because no one bothered him, he could just be a vacationer and go about the beach like any “normal person” as he often put it. Those few weeks were good for him, photos taken of him on that vacation show a man who looked in good shape, his body wasn't fat other than a bit of a bulge on his right side running to the left, just below his rib cage and where his colon problem and liver were involved. He had a little color, and in close up photos his face was a bit puffy but when compared to the October Television show of those last concerts, he looked good just having fun those few weeks after those performances on that tour. It appeared that working made him “puff up with fluids” and his kidneys and liver were struggling to handle the over load from all the stress working put on his body, and the medications he had to take in order to be able to perform didn't help.

I'm glad those photos were taken, it shows that Elvis was able to get out and play, to have fun and that he was still active and interested in living. He was not the “drugged up, down and out sluggard” that he was being portrayed to be by the media and some of his “friends”. Pictures can say a thousand words and these photos of Elvis enjoying the fresh Hawaiian air prove that!

He came home and spent quality time with his little girl, playing with her, going to the ride the Pippin and trying to be a good father to his darling. In photos that show them together, she adores him and it's obvious that he is totally in love with his little girl. Those who say he was “jealous” of her, saying she “stole the show” from him and that he had “lost interest” in her have to be either nuts or miss understood totally that any comments he made along that line were those made by a proud daddy, who *loved* it that his little girl was “stealing the show”! And it was not said because HE was not the center of attention- she was his darling, he happily introduced her, showed her off because he was so proud of her himself. This is a man who cried when his little girl had to go home- who wished he could keep her with him all the time, but realized that with his life style and career demands, that would not be good for her. This was a man who loved his child, *reasonably* and with *great patience* and with *understanding of her needs*.

Those who say otherwise, have no sense of what caring for another, be it a child or an adult, means. Obviously, they had no sense of what their long time friend, and boss was all about. They just didn't get it--- But Elvis certainly did; he was a man who followed his heart. And his heart was filled with love and compassion.

Thank you Elvis for being a wonderful example of what a father can do and be even under trying times. And for giving so much of yourself to your friends, family and your little girl who today loves you unconditionally, with understanding and forgiveness for those who still don't understand. She is like you in so many ways, but knows a poisonous “snake” when she sees one-- She also knows that “daddy was no saint” and that he was a “wild and silly guy” at times; she loves him, and knows beyond a doubt that he loved her, and that he loved her mother.

I spoke with Elvis a couple of times right after Lisa was out for summer break; he was excited to have her there, but was concerned that his back was bothering him, so much that it “hurt to laugh”. The doctor told him he thought he had sprained or pulled a muscle and it would go away with rest. Elvis didn't think it was better, I asked him to see an orthopedic doctor and get a second opinion. He laughed about getting a “new skeleton” and then said he could “just bring this old one out at Halloween!” He assured me he would call for an appointment as soon as the offices opened.

I don't think he made that appointment. After his death it was discovered that he had 3 fractured vertebra of his lower back, “exactly where he said “it hurts like a gawd damn s.o.b. whacked the sh-- outta me!” (His bones were all becoming fragile due to steroids doctors had given him and his impending liver failure didn't help.)

He told me that he didn't want to take medication that would cause him to be lethargic and listless when his little girl was visiting, he wanted to take her places, play and have fun with her while he could; probably Elvis must have taken milder pain medication, perhaps pain tablets though they affected his colon more than shots would, I say this because he took her to ride the Pippin – it certainly could have been a “painful” experience to take nothing; he said they had “a lot of fun”, rode the thing several times and were trying to “out scream” one another. He said she was “too small” to ride with “no hands”; he sounded happy, very glad to be with his “precious little one” who was not looking forward to going back to Los Angeles – she wanted to go on tour with him again, because she said he needed her. Elvis softly said, “She's right, I do...”

### **Speaking of his little girl...**

**Elvis:** “I guess that's why God gives us children---an example of the total trust and faith we ought to have in God our father, right there before us in our children's eyes as they look up at us... Only hope 'n pray, somehow I can live up to – to- her expectations of what a daddy ought to be...Lord, it's not gonna be a-a- an easy thing to do! Hell, I'm

not- not so sure I am a – a grown up or ready to be one, ma- self! Lord- Lord...”  
(Laughs)

One of his most endearing traits was his ability to be what everyone he met wanted to see, and if a small child was there, he was always warm, loving and gentle. He told all the little girls how pretty they were, and some said he told them that they were beautiful as princesses and one day they would meet their prince and live happily ever after. And he told at least one young man that he was some beautiful girl’s prince...and she would find him when it was time for them to meet. He touched blind children, hugged them and often let them touch them in any way they wished, kissing the girls and always taking hold of the boys, by the hand or with an arm around their shoulders. He was one who felt a report with those he met of any age; any race and any ideology. Universal empathy was his and he used it to inspire and uplift those he met everywhere he went. He said that it was impossible not care for other people if you followed God’s wishes; that you couldn’t treat anyone badly if you loved them as you loved yourself. On stage he said that if you had not walked in that man’s shoes, you couldn’t know him or his heart aches. Judge not, he often said, or else you will be judged as well.

**Elvis, what really happened---was it as you said, “I don’t think I’ll make it to fifty---I’m burnin’ up inside.”**

He said he was always hot, his temperature tended to run higher than most people, and he kept his rooms “ice cold” according to those who had spent time in them- at his homes and in Las Vegas and on tours in hotels. It was a “given” that he needed good air conditioning where ever he went- and once, when the hotel’s system was not working and he was unable to get cool or sleep- he got up and was “high tailing it down the street in his pajamas” said one of his men, to find a hotel with working air conditioning! That must have been a real sight to see with his guys rushing out to “take care of him”! His many physical ailments were the reason for his being “hot” and sweating more than most people might. And too, he was full of nervous energy all of his life...his career choice just increased the “heat” – in more ways than one!

The next few pages are from various sources and deal with what was thought to be health problems Elvis suffered from over his life span. Some of them are true ailments and they those have various symptoms, often of several different types of difficulty. Elvis was born with a serious deformity of the nervous system that controlled his intestines and how they performed their duties. He suffered other problems due to this deformity and malfunctioning intestines and as he grew older, the symptoms became overwhelming, especially since he chose a stressful and emotionally draining career that was either up or down depending on the opinions of his fans and journalists of the time. You will read through these pages and be overwhelmed by wonder that this man, who looked, sang and performed as he did for half of his lifetime, managed to “pull it off so well” with so many health issues “popping up” depending on the amount of stress and turmoil going on around him. And yet he did it; and did so with grace, patience, and understanding and above all, the love for his fans, the people who “never let me down”.

“Thank you, thank you very much...”

**A Compilation of medical “facts” and “suppositions” and the “truth” as is available and known today. 2006 – 2010 -2011 -2012**

## *Elvis' Ailments*

By Maia Christianne

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“When Elvis died, they said he had drugs in him. He should have had more, the way he suffered in his last few months. With his condition, he was courageous beyond reason if that's all he had in him.” –a friend of Elvis'- Dr. Harry Rosenberg. Chicago,

**In an NB C network television report the evening of August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1997, that was just a few days prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Elvis' death, it was stated publicly that Elvis did not die of a drug overdose, but of a massive heart attack brought on by a possible blockage of his main aorta that was compromised by the swollen, inflamed and totally blocked transverse colon in his body.**

This report also admitted that he had serious physical conditions for which he was forced to take addictive doses of medication, although the program did not go into details as to the many serious ailments Elvis had at the time of his death. They did say however, that the steroids he was taking for his enlarged colon had caused him to have three compression fractures in his spine, and also at the time of his death he had the arteries of an 80-year-old man. One of **his doctors stated that before he died Elvis had worked with the doctors in changing his medication to the point he was no longer addicted to the prescribed drugs.** {Unfortunately, it was more “newsworthy”, “attention getting” and “sold more magazines, newspapers, etc. to continue the earlier broadcasts that said he was more or less a “drug addict who died from his addiction” and the truth was not scandalous enough to warrant correcting the misstated cause of his death. **NBC followed a more honorable journalistic path.**) They were the only news facility that did.

The following list of Elvis' ailments have been spoken and/or written about by Elvis' friends: Ed Parker, Charlie Hodge, Kathy Westmoreland, Larry Geller, Wanda June Hill, Dick Grobe, John Wilkinson and several others, who have either written about some of these ailments in published books on Elvis, or have given me (Maia) this information personally. I was present at 36 Elvis concerts and knew several people around him who kept me informed of his severe health problems.

Despite his condition, it should be noted that from March, 1976 through June of 1977 (Two months before his death) Elvis gave a total 149 stage performances necessitating that he engage in grueling travel schedules taking him all across the United States.

**HEART DISEASE** - The autopsy revealed Elvis *may* have suffered at **least three heart attacks** before the final one, **though he had not been treated for heart failure.** (Dr. Nick says in his book that his heart did not show any signs of previous damage.) His heart was found to be nearly twice the size of a normal heart: Charlie Hodge said Elvis' heart was enlarged more on one side than the other which would stress the heart valves. Enlarged hearts are often hereditary and many people are not aware they have one until they either die or another illness brings it to light. **Many very young people suddenly and unexpectedly die from this condition when the heart begins to beat erratically and cannot pump blood. Elvis' heart began to do that very thing,** causing him to suddenly and unexpectedly die (according to everyone around him) though he must have



known or sensed that the end was near because of things he did, and that he said to other people in his last few months of life. (Statements made in 2010 by his personal physician, Dr. Nick, said Elvis died when his heart reacted to “lack of oxygen” and he suffered a seizure as a result of a loss of blood flow to his brain. Elvis’ heart had no “recent” signs of heart attack in its musculature, said Dr. Nick, although his enlarged heart was under stress and unable to pump blood to his brain and that ***did cause his death.***)

THREE COMPRESSION FRACTURES of the spine and painful because the spine is moving constantly, that were contributed to the steroid medication for inflammation that was given to him for his intestinal problems, and for allergies -those type drugs tend to thin the bones making them brittle and easier to fracture. Elvis had been complaining of back pain during the last concert tours he performed, including the ones filmed for his last TV special. He was told he had “pulled muscles” and the pain would go away soon. One of the men on the last tour with Elvis said that a doctor was injecting a painkiller “like Novocain” into Elvis’ back, in several locations along his spine because he was having such pain he could barely move without the medication. Elvis did not want to take anything by mouth that would “fuzz up” his memory on stage though in order to be able to sleep without hurting, he did take medication prescribed by the doctor after performances. Often he could only sleep 3 or 4 hours even with medication and the human body cannot repair and heal itself if the human cannot get proper sleep.

CANCER LIKE CONDITION OF THE LIVER AND BONE – Elvis believed he had a cancer like condition and at least one of his doctors (according to Elvis) diagnosed it. This condition could be caused by PERNICIOUS ANEMIA, coming from Genetic Liver Disease. As a youngster Elvis said he had to eat liver due to this condition-as an adult he couldn’t stand to smell it much less try to eat it. *In 1974 it was discovered that **he had Hepatitis C**, an infection of the liver that is incurable, though today it is “manageable”.*

ERYTHEMATOUS LUPUS - This is a painful and sometimes deadly disease. There is both an outer epidermal form of it and a type that affects the internal organs. Elvis had both, although for him it was mostly an internal malady.

HYPERTENSION & HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE – He knew this, gave up some foods and salt though he was like most people, he sometimes “cheated” and ate the wrong things. (It was later determined that food was not the problem-it was the inability of his colon to do its job.)

DIABETES – diagnosed in his early 30’s Elvis was put on a restricted diet to control this condition though he sometimes did not follow it entirely and occasionally used insulin.

INSOMNIA – a chronic, hereditary clinical disorder.

CLOSED ANGLE GLAUCOMA – This is an extremely painful eye condition that is the third leading cause of blindness in the United States. He had drops for his eyes and had undergone treatment for relieving pressure from his eyes.

CLUSTER/MIGRAINE HEADACHES – An ongoing condition affecting millions of people, triggered by stress, bright light, loud noises and numerous other activities. Elvis worked most of his life performing under brightly lit conditions and performed with such lighting directed upon his person while on stage, and where he was surrounded by loud music and drums. **Migraine sufferers often exhibit symptoms such as slurred speech, speech impediments, and inability to keep their balance, drowsy appearance due to a lack of sleep and as a result, sometimes have moments of losing control of their temper.** Constant pain in the head and eyes debilitates the entire body and mind-some sufferers have reoccurring migraines on regular basis, others may have one or two a month or not at all for several months then be struck down with one that incapacitates them to the point of making them unable to do their normal duties and function normally. **Elvis exhibited all of the above symptoms, and was on strong medication prescribed at that time for such headaches, none of which worked very well if at all, and their side affects often resulted in more discomfort.**

ENLARGED AND OBSTRUCTED COLON; “Mega-colon” is a condition that causes severe pain and constipation; it often is genetic and in his case, the probable result of being an identical twin; he was weak, could not eat and only the diligence of his loving mother kept him alive. Elvis’ colon was partially obstructed he said, adding that he almost had to have surgery but it “straightened out”. Another time he said “they” (doctors) feared his big gut would “telescope and that could be real serious”. He said as a child he had to deal with intestinal problems, what is now known as IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome). As a young teen he was very slender due to nervousness and the inability of his intestines to properly perform digestion and/or empty its self as a normal colon. **This is a secret that he kept from the public and hidden from the world;** only a *very few* trusted friends knew the details of his health or how serious it could become -and did.

[A PARTIAL COLON-BYPASS - This is said to be a well kept secret; *if it had been done* and no one has come forward to verify it was; it would have been to try and extend his life and **would have been against his will.** And most likely would have been a temporary procedure to give the gut time to heal and it would require a second surgery to reconnect the gut; it has been said that Elvis’ colon was so enlarged this might not have worked for him. Elvis did not want the public to know about his health conditions for fear he would not be allowed to perform as he wished to do. He feared people would overwhelm any place he went to perform and perhaps, be so avid about seeing him while they could, he would be forced to hide the rest of his life. *This surgery has never been confirmed* though several people who were with him saw and heard things that caused speculation and concern when Elvis needed assistance, and that was given under the strictest privacy, and required bandages and medical supervision, and for which he was kept sedated and in bed several days necessitating the large towels that were placed

diaper like upon him while he was kept unconscious for healing and rest. During this time, he was staying at home, not leaving his room for days. Certain people were told he was “dieting while sleeping” and thus word was spread that he was “soiling himself” and “not bathing”. Dr. Nick mentions that Elvis tried a “new diet” consisting of sleep and liquid “foods” that actually put more weight on Elvis and that Elvis was “angry”. It should be noted that Elvis was back on stage in Las Vegas just 9 weeks after the procedure *purported to have been done* and people seated close to the stage made mention that he was wearing something wrapped about his midsection; some thought it might be a girdle though Elvis was quite thin at that time; he was extremely pale of skin, sitting down on a stool during his performance and not being as active as he normally would have been.]

Seated across from us were a physician and his wife. He said, “He’s wearing a support bandage- he’s had surgery- abdominal! Explains why he’s so damn pale -recent probably. What’s he doing up there working?” Elvis was wearing the Rainbow suit, he *was* thin, and the suit that had fit him weeks earlier now hung loosely, the sleeves too big and the seat baggy. According to the autopsy he had three compression fractures– A painful condition that limited the ability of one to move freely. And that night in Vegas he was choosing to move very carefully, sitting down several times and favoring his right side. *Speculation* arising from those who could have more information having worked at or knew those who did work at the coroner’s where the autopsy was performed on Elvis, adds to *the supposition that the “body was not Elvis”* because there was a “a scar running from mid right side to lower abdomen”, this from a surgical procedure and where colon surgery could have been performed although *usually it would be done on the left side*. But there was no public statement concerning his *ever having had such surgery though doctors did state there was a need for it and he had spoken of not wanting that done*. Speculation about his death (or not) *will continue* due to the many such “theories and suppositions”. The court sealed those autopsy records for 50 years, probably because of Elvis' popularity, the media frenzy and the fact Elvis had a nine year old daughter. Had the judge not sealed those records, no one could be sure there wouldn't be someone getting “rich” selling a video of “the king” lying on the autopsy table. At least they'll have to wait another 20 years--

SEVERE ARTERY DETERIORATION – years of diet pills, trying to stay slim for films, doing without food many times, sleeping pills, and a family history of artery disease.

A SUPPRESSED IMMUNE SYSTEM - aggravated by the enlarged colon condition and liver infection. This explains the many bouts of flu, lung congestion, pneumonia, fever blisters, sore throats and infections.

WANDA JUNE HILL – Who knew and spoke with Elvis by telephone and in person over a period of nearly 15 years. “In the mid sixty’s he (Elvis) was speaking of “bone

marrow” and the (blood disorder pernicious anemia similar to a form of leukemia, a cancer of the blood cells) at the time and said “they” wanted to transfuse him as he had many white cells and few red ones. He mentioned they wanted to remove his spleen as it contained too many white cells and said it was a “family thing” but he refused to do that. He was very pale at this time, was weak, running a fever, complaining of no strength and severe pain in his bones, especially his legs when he lay down to rest. As time passed, the headaches he had and the pain he felt in so much of his body kept him worn out. He also had the severe mid-body pain that doubled him over and at those times, he said he’d just as soon “die” as continue living a life of pain. In 1974 he said he had a liver biopsy that showed he had two types of tumor none of which were operable (fatty liver); he was told it likely would eventually kill him. He said in 1976 he had several medical specialists, at two large medical centers in the United States who had suggested that he have surgery to help correct his colon problems; he declined, saying the “odds were not good” that it would really help- he might live a little longer, but his life would be over either way and he wanted to continue working as long as possible. He told another confidant that he thought he would die from heart failure since so many of his family members had in the past, including his mother. He told me he did not think he would live to be 50 years old; he refused to explain why and changed the subject.

**The autopsy reports initially stated that Elvis died from an “unexpected” massive heart attack brought on by the severe conditions of his health. He was taking medication because of extreme pain in his body. He was under a great deal of stress trying to perform, and emotional stress due to the released book written by his disgruntled employees saying things that were distorted, their view of situations that were not explained to them and so they were telling of extensive drug use. Their stories were colorful and degrading to Elvis who didn't understand why they believed the worst of him, but he forgave them, and went on with his life. Still, he had to do his job, *he needed the money and had a huge payroll to meet*; he had to keep commitments and it was going to be filmed for television and to do that the house lighting had to be up. His biggest fear and worry he said was seeing the surprise and disappointment in those faces and eyes as they looked at his bloated body, puffy face and the weakness he couldn't hide. And now the book was out, saying he was a “drug addict” and when on tour he would have to face his audience; he remarked, “It’s all I can do not to bust every -f-----n’ mirror in the damn house.” It became too much for him; he cried, “Help Me, Lord” and God heard his cry, released him...and took him home.**

***The three highly respected, independent laboratories* assigned to study the results and findings of the autopsy all stated that though there were drugs in his system, they were all within the range prescribed. And several of those drugs were normally prescribed for migraine sufferers in the 1970’s; one of them tested**

similar to LSD as it contained compounds that were also used in making LSD; Elvis had NOT been using LSD.

There was a small amount of Codeine in his system, more than should have been as he was sensitive to that chemical, though he had seen a dentist the day before and Codeine is commonly prescribed by dentists, but not for Elvis. The Codeine they determined was a residue from his prescribed medications. His medications were prepared by someone else (a trained nurse who lived in a trailer on Graceland property) and brought to him in packets of just the required drugs as he needed them in those last months of his life. Only those medications were found in his body. There were small amounts of stimulants that were side effects of other prescribed drugs and *not* stimulants taken by Elvis.. It also states very clearly that: the amount of drugs in his system were not enough to end his life or cause a heart attack. His colon was **completely blocked and had been for days**; he said earlier in the week that he was worried about “being able to hit some of those notes” because of the pressure from the swollen colon pushing into his chest cavity. One of the last things he said was “my heart’s just not in it...much - but whatever happens, it’ll be all right.” He told grandma Suzy that they had told him he could not have his colon flushed out as it was so “fragile it might rupture” and create an even more serious state of affairs-he could die from infection etc. She told him to seek help before he went out again. I believe Elvis knew he was not going to “go out again”, he had not packed his books---

For whatever reason, his heart began to fail, flutter and misfire and so was unable to pump blood into his brain; he was aware for brief moments but would have lost consciousness quickly though the body always struggles to maintain its life regardless of what is “killing” it.... And he was at home, reading a beloved book about the man at whose feet he wished to sit in order to learn the wonders of the world, Jesus, the Christ, Elvis’ Savior.

[People say laughingly or in disbelief, he “died in the bathroom, on the toilet!” The fact is, *more people die in that position, sitting on the toilet, or falling off of it*, probably straining to defecate and in doing so, triggering a seizure from lack of oxygen to the brain, than in any other location in their home, including being in bed or anywhere else they might have gone from their home, and is second only to dying of some fatal disease or because of an accident involving a vehicle. Elvis was a human being - like you--- or me.]

**Post script:** In the last few years, it has been determined that some eye drop medications given for glaucoma can contribute to erratic heartbeats, and occasionally in rare circumstances, a heart attack. Elvis was using eye drops for glaucoma - he most likely would have used the drops at some point either before or during the time he planned to

“read for a while”. We may never know all of the facts nor exactly “what caused his death”. He would say, ***“It was my time, you can't alter that fact--when your number comes up- that's it. Death is a quick one; jus' have to be ready, get right with your Lord an' keep the faith light on!”***

\* New revelations have emerged via Dr. Nick's book released 2010. Each person can read his account for themselves; I recommend it. “The King & Dr. Nick, What Really Happened” by Dr. Nichpoupolos. (Amazon books)

**No one knew while he was here that Elvis suffered from a condition known as Hirschsprung's Disease which is a deformity of the colon; *the end result of having this disease is a short life span*. There was little known about this condition in Elvis' time; after his death the autopsy revealed how serious it had become, and great wonder was expressed then at how he had managed to do all he had done in his last years of life. His life indeed, was a miracle as he had said several times when alive.**

The official autopsy reports in its entirety will not be released by Order of the Court for approximately 18 more years – I only hope that when that day comes and those records are released, there will be an end to the suppositions, myths and confusion concerning his health conditions, his final moments and what the autopsy actually found to be the cause of death, **if that is possible to know** for certain. Whatever is, Elvis will be shaking his head, marveling and saying, *“Man, never ceases to amaze me!”*

**(In December 2010 “People” magazine, “Best of 2010” there was a small photo of Elvis with this short “blurb” – “His doctor divulged that the singer's death in 1977 was actually caused by severe constipation – not heart failure.”** So far, this statement is the only one to be revealed other than the jumble of “facts” regarding ‘what was wrong with Elvis’. So far, there has not been one other statement regarding the true events behind Elvis Presley's death, and the statement above hardly explains what “happened”. It is inconceivable to me and many other people who do understand most of the reasons he died, why there has not been any journalist from any media source bringing the conclusions and facts to the public. Is it not worth the effort? Is it “better” to let the world at large continue believing he was “a drug addict and it killed him” even though there were legitimate reasons why he took a lot of medication most of his life? That is not our belief, and the people who contributed to this manuscript have the same belief as we do; it is our hope that people will read this work and have a more complete understanding of the facts, the heartbreak and the absolutely amazing strength of will,

heart and spirit Elvis gave during his life, to bring happiness, laughter and a time of peace and comfort to his fans worldwide. He did his best, for family, friends and his beloved fans that never let him down. Thank God many of his friends are telling their stories and *are not letting him down!*

### ***Musing---***

There were several people who knew Elvis well working in security and other jobs and were present at those last concert tours Elvis performed, some of which were filmed for the television special that was shown in October of 1977 after Elvis' death. These persons have expressed wonder and questions concerning the sections of film performances that were used in that television special. Mainly they say "he was on fire several nights", gave outstanding performances and yet, those concerts were "ignored" and instead, "they chose to use sections where he wasn't feeling well, was struggling to get his breath". Why they wonder, "Was it important to portray him as weak and floundering"? He was obviously ill, and should not have been on stage in such a weakened condition, yet he *had to do those shows* because they were "set up" to be filmed. The Col. knew Elvis would begin to bloat up and feel awful after working several shows so why were the filming dates so late in the tour schedule and not at the beginning when he was feeling better? Why did his manager schedule afternoon shows when he knew Elvis was struggling with health issues...and was running out of "steam" just doing the evening shows? Why didn't he listen to the doctor who said "Elvis is working too hard...he needs to rest as much as he can..." Those who were closer to Elvis said that Elvis was "begging" his manager to cancel shows...saying he would not be able to perform and he was having trouble breathing. (The swollen, blocked colon was pressing up into his chest cavity and hindering his ability to breathe and his abdomen was swelling from fluid buildup and was causing congestion in his lungs. His liver was infected with and damaged from Hepatitis C for who knows how long as it had never been tested until he was too sick for any real treatment, his kidneys were struggling to handle the toxic buildup in his system brought on by the non functioning colon. Elvis was weak, and could barely get around and "nobody noticed"? Why was there no one around who *could see and understand what was really happening to Elvis?* Was "just the money" the reason? So many questions...)

Some say that Elvis appeared to know he wasn't going to be doing much better and that he really did not want to "go back out on the road" however, "he was set to hit the road when he died". It has been said that Elvis told some of his friends he was "looking forward to going"; other friends were told that he "didn't want to go, wasn't feeling good" and "didn't want to die on stage and scare people". One "friend" he had known for years said, "He was always melodramatic about everything". But was he?

Dr. Nick relates how close Elvis came to dying on tour in those last few months, was nearly comatose and barely breathing, the **Col. Tom said Elvis had to be on that stage** and so they “worked on him” and “got him back and able to suit up” and go to work. His cousin Billy says Elvis commented that “he’d look good in his coffin” and told a relative the day before his death, “You won’t see me tomorrow, not like this.” In his last weeks he phoned just about everyone we knew that he had spoken to more than once; later each one realized his last call was to say “goodbye” and let them know he appreciated their friendship. He told Ed Parker who was telling him he was not going to be able to go out with him on the next tour, “Don’t worry about me; I’m going to look good in a few days.” Less than a week later, he died.

**Note: In the last pages of this book is a piece written by a doctor called: “Demystifying the Death of Elvis Presley”...he explains in detail the internal conditions Elvis was born with and how he did not know what was wrong with him because in those years medical science was not what it is today-they didn’t have MRI’s to see inside a human body clearly. Every person should read the article; it is the absolute truth of his demise. And he knew his days were to be short so he did the best he could “with what God gave me”, and he did it with dignity and a loving, forgiving heart.**

I sincerely hope you will carefully read his thoughts, research and think about what has been said of Elvis in his last few years of life. The doctor puts his views and knowledge in simple words, and explains what Elvis lived with throughout his life, from birth to death. I believe that you will find understanding and sympathy as well as amazement in finally being able to “see through and around” the hype, gossip, stupidity and total lack of any understanding or sympathy many journalists, reporters and people thought and felt for Elvis in his finale days. The facts are as Elvis said many times, his life and career was indeed “a miracle”; a less gifted human being would not have managed to do the things this man did in his short 42 ½ years of life. And he accomplished it all without revealing publicly the handicaps he



personally suffered on a daily basis during that short life time. Instead, he chose to be “our Elvis”, the amazing entertainer, super star who lit up our world on stages across the United States. He meant what he said, “My petty problems are but thorns on the rose” and he put them behind him.

Post script: His family didn’t know the extent of his many physical internal problems; his doctors were not positive either, and wanted to operate to get a more clear idea of what was wrong. Of course, Elvis said no and that left everyone in the “dark” except for what was carefully released to the public and what was known by others was very carefully “guarded” from the press who searched for any clue,” suppositioning and mocking the image etc. Sadly, as he said many times, “Dirt, scandal and human weakness sells; that’s the way it is when money is involved.” It didn’t help that some of his “friends” tended to point the finger at him in the hope that would keep their own flaws out of sight; they especially did so after his death, and the press jumped to exploit anything they could get, even if they had to pay for it.

His immediate family was not talking; Lisa was too young at 9 years old and Priscilla didn’t appear to know exactly why he died either. We can only guess even today why it has not been made positively clear to the public what happened to Elvis.

Thankfully, we can read what has been proven and is known about the autopsy finding; it could be when the court’s time limit is up, more will be verified and it may be more horrible than what we know now.

As he said, “My life is a miracle.” And so it was.

**To Elvis---2006**

**When your love touched my heart – {I felt a joy beyond compare--}**

**There was a lot in me that changed – I understand more of myself,  
And others, And the world around me.**

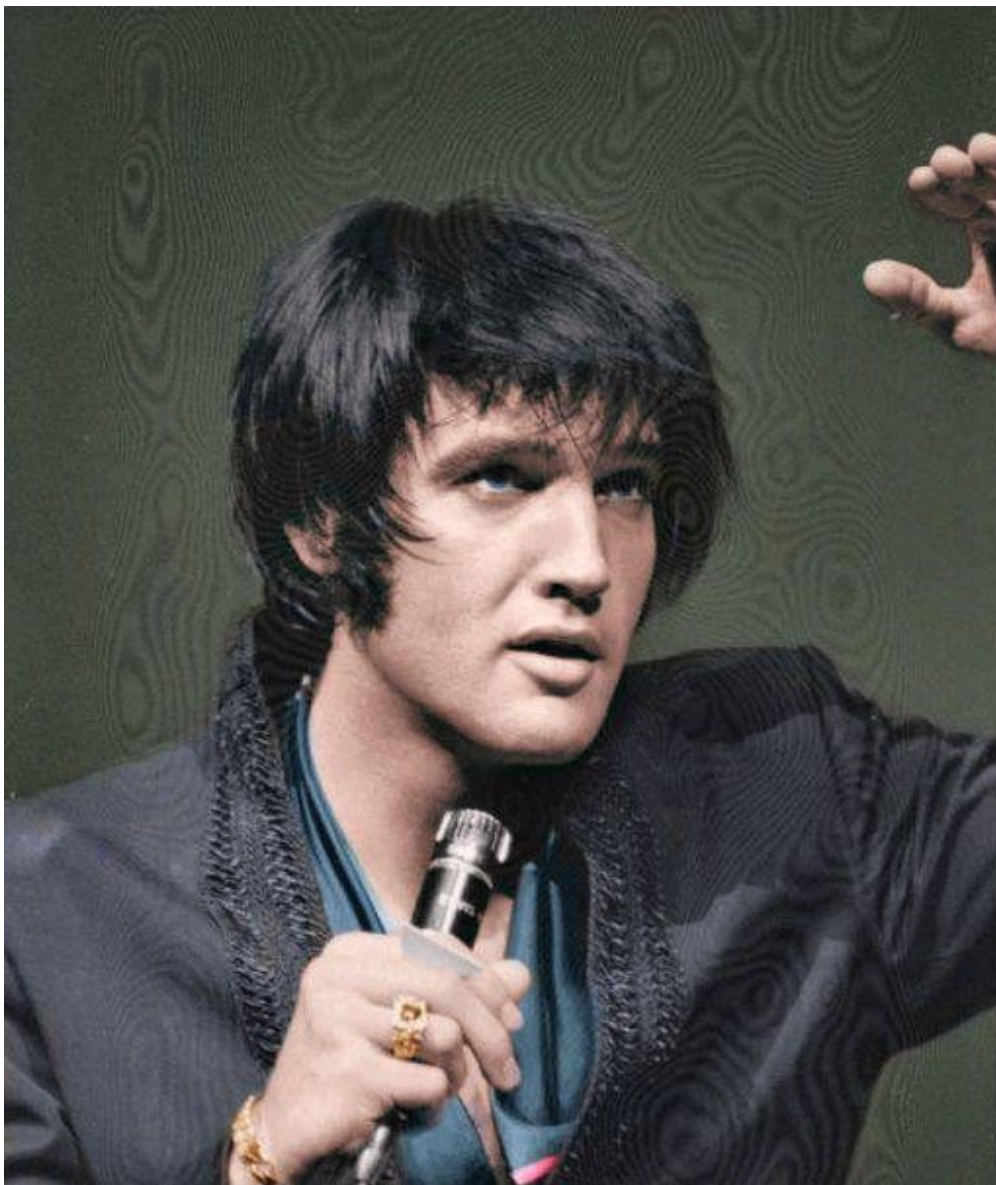
**I know a stronger faith and--. A greater belief ---in love and life--  
I grew when your love touched my heart.**

**I love and miss you so very much!  
Love, Fran**

**{Excerpt previously published on the Internet. And on ELC Web Site as above.}**

Las Vegas, first engagement; note the black silk karate style outfit- he looked wonderful!

He sounded great, was thrilled, happy and a “nervous wreck” at least a week!



This next photo is from Las Vegas, 1976-

He received a standing ovation here. He was pale, thinner and his suit was too big for him. He sat down twice, doing a song while sitting, and then sitting while his background singers did a song. He featured Sean Neilson, a tenor singing behind Elvis' narration of a man who was dying in the hospital while his tired and worried wife was napping. The audience became so quiet, he said later he thought everyone had "got up and left". As he stood still singing another song, one arm was hanging at his side; sweat was dripping off his fingers and there was a pool of it on the floor when he finished. He sat on a stool at stage edge, his face was very pale, grayish in color, his eyes were dim; they had always been very alive, sparkling and clear- but not that night. His hands trembled holding the microphone; he tried to steady them to no avail. He moved carefully when he got up; Charlie came right over as if to steady him should he need help. Elvis asked him to leave the stool close; it was placed near the drum platform. Elvis put his hand on it from time to time as if to steady himself and he leaned against it. He asked J.D. to sing with his group and he sat on the stool out of the spotlight. Charlie gave him a towel and he wiped his face and hands on it.

We were seated right at the stage, everything was obviously not "alright" with Elvis; but he went on working, and said he was recovering "from the flu" and asked the audience to "bear with me – I'll get it going in a minute". He didn't do "Polk Salad Annie" that night, but he did do "Burning Love" but without some of the moves he had used. We knew it would be the last time we saw him perform; those who saw his last performance said he knew it also, and I truly do believe he knew because he told his employee-friends that he would never play Vegas again, he'd had enough!

Later we learned he had been in the hospital, his colon was on the verge of kinking and he was not very strong. He told Grandma Suzy that he was "tossin' ma cookies" so often and he wasn't eating much solid food because he didn't want to mess up his vocal cords vomiting because solids were more apt to cause it. He did not say a word to me or anyone else apparently, because some of his guys were saying he had the "flu" and was taking a lot of "what he called his "medications". And yet their friend and boss was in the hospital because he could have died had his colon kinked up in a way that it could not be unkinked! Were they merely blind and deaf, or just too willing to think the worst of his character --based on their own?

After the fact, his colon didn't kink that time and he was able to continue working as usual. Later, in other appearances he had to cancel quite a few shows due to the awful condition of his colon- all caused by the birth defect he was born with and the stress he was under.



Las Vegas 76 Photo by Sean Shaver



## **Remembering---the early times...**

### **Aloha--1966-67**

Priscilla and Elvis were married not long after Elvis caught cold over the rainy day meeting and had to stay in bed and developed swollen glands. But before that marriage, when he was sick, one of his neighbors, a blond actress had also been a nurse and she often came by to check on him when he was ill. He told me he got acquainted with her when his men found out she sunbathed nude beside her pool and he had gone over to “borrow a cup of sugar”. He said she told him she didn’t use processed sugar so he said, “I’ll just have a cup of whatever you got...” and she got up and went inside her house to get him a packet of “raw brown cane sugar” that came from Hawaii. I asked, was she sunbathing nude; he flashed that grin, saying, “That sugar was really good--’n she made sure I had all I wanted...” I could almost see that “little red devil”, pitchfork and all, dancing in those sparkling blue eyes. (People ask me how often I “saw him at home”; it was very little, just brief stops and a couple of times for over an hour, once while he “lectured in his bedroom” and at a party that wasn’t much more than sitting around talking and watching Elvis talking to other people, and demonstrating Karate as he talked about its “benefits”. I think I went by without his requesting I come about 3 times- one of those was at the Palm Springs home. Fourteen years and seven months – so little for so long a time. But – he would always be here, right? Elvis said, “we don’t know the number of our days, so best make good use of ‘em while they are here; life’s too short for regrets.”

Elvis liked to phone early in the morning when he wasn’t working and usually he’d be just going to bed for his night as he liked staying up all night and sleeping days. (And at no time when he called me, was there a “woman in bed with him” as has been told that he would do.) Sometimes he would hear his back gate open (he had a buzzer on it- he said) and he would either hang up or get up and dress fast before the neighbor arrived. It seemed she liked to join him in bed-and he was resisting.

One day she came in the front door and surprised him. He threw down the phone and sprinted for the bathroom where he locked the door. She picked up the phone, said hello and we chatted a few minutes. She decided I was “safe” and began teasing him with me, talking loudly so he could hear, telling me about his “birthmark”, “sweet loving

ways” and how much she enjoyed him in bed etc. He was angry, yelling at her to “shut up” and for me to hang up. I was laughing so much at him, I was about to become sick. He came out, demanded the phone and I heard him swearing as it was noisily hung up.

Days later he told me to “forget” what I had heard-I didn’t need to know *those things* about him. I was curious about his “avoidance” of her and he said that he liked her, but did not want to take advantage of her or “hurt her” feelings. He felt guilty about it “because I don’t feel that way about her” and he did “not love her in that way”, he explained. I said, “So, what’s this about a birthmark? He cut loose a string of swear words and said, “That’s none of your business -forget what she said, damn it!”

Later, when he began having anxiety attacks his neighbor tried to help him, she understood it was frustration over his inability to control his life, his career, and the fact he was earning such large sums of money for what he “termed” trite and stupid films “good for nothin’ but baby-sitters”, while all about him people struggled to make ends meet. The resulting pressure, the stress brought to him caused him to wake up unable to breathe. He would run outside and gasp for air, then throw up violently at times. He developed ulcers, and became more unable to sleep. During this time Elvis saw doctors; it didn’t help. He was 27 years old and had been taking prescribed tranquilizers normally given mental patients and the elderly (to keep them calm) for several years, and told to relax more often. But no one appeared to try and reach the cause of his distress - Elvis wanted change, needed it. Better films-something! Maybe having a family, someone to work for, would help - it did for a little while.

### ***The Wedding, the Colonel and Delusions---***

Within a year or so “the wedding” was planned by the Colonel with Priscilla, according to Elvis’ memory without any input or consideration as to what Elvis might have wanted for his wedding day. Elvis wasn’t happy about it but he couldn’t disappoint Priscilla by saying no-it wasn’t that he didn’t want to marry her “really”, he just wanted to have a private Christmas wedding at Graceland with family and friends around but instead he got a “little bitty room, a stranger marrying them” who was a Justice of the Peace and not a preacher at all and too, many of his friends were not there. And immediately after the ceremony, a press conference where he and his new bride showed off their rings and kissed for the cameras. The reception was held at the hotel also, some of the guests Elvis and Priscilla didn’t even know! Elvis said, it “didn’t feel like getting married...just another faked movie scene...God! Took me a while to even feel like we got married! Wasn’t she beautiful in that dress-man, liked to died lookin’ at her –that’s only thing that made it...it...special...” He wasn’t happy that they were set to stay in the Honeymoon Suite at the hotel either- saying, “God only knows how many people been

fxxxx that bed up!” He was a bit old fashioned in that he said the “marriage bed was scared and nobody else should be usin’ it but the married couple”--he wouldn’t give his bed up for anyone else, or so he said. And he did bring his new wife back to Palm Springs for a brief honeymoon but he said it was “noisy there” so he wanted to go to Big Bear for a couple of days and stay in a rented cabin where it was quiet and peaceful. He liked going to the mountains where he could get out and about, less people and he could go to some of the shops, like “*The Gray Squirrel*” that was located “ in the village down town”.

(There are some who say that Elvis and Priscilla were to be married at the Palm Springs home, but the news got out and spoiled that plan, so a “rushed up” plan was made and they flew to Las Vegas where the Col. had made hasty arrangements with a “friend of his” at the Aladdin Hotel. Elvis never mentioned to me they had planned to marry at Palm Springs, he spoke only of wanting to be married at home (Graceland) with a “real man of God pastor”) to marry them. It is possible he was more willing to get married in Palm Springs since he loved that area and it was more reclusive than Beverly Hills would be, and he did say that **Rona Barret** who lived nearby “ruined” their plans. However, since Elvis tended to be “old fashioned” toward such things, I do not think he would have wanted a “Las Vegas wedding” unless it was out of his “hands”, nor would he want to be subjected to a “publicity event”).

Soon after their wedding she was expecting, between film schedules Elvis took her on a short “belated honeymoon” to the Bahamas and Hawaii where they could get away alone now and then, though there were a “few others along to look after things” since he was “Elvis” and fans were everywhere it seemed. (Priscilla did not mention that “short, belated honeymoon” trip in her book “*Elvis and Me*” perhaps because she didn’t consider it a “real” honeymoon but just another trip taken with his friends, including Sonny West who mentions the trip in one of his writings.)

Rumor and speculation abounded then and still shows its “ugly head” occasionally, that Priscilla’s parents somehow “forced” Elvis to marry their daughter-that Colonel Tom was “afraid” they might create some kind of “trouble” but that is kind of silly thinking since Priscilla was 21 years old and was legally an adult female since age 18 years old. Elvis had thought of marrying her for some time but he wanted her to “grow up and know who she was” saying, “Maybe she won’t want to marry me; she sees how things are with my life and career”. He was trying to do the best he could for her, and he always had done that but he was not in a rush. Her parents wanted them to get married certainly, but only if both of them were happy about it. When their marriage began to fail, her parents were devastated, especially her mother who truly loved her son-in-law whom she said was “the kindest, most gentle and loving man toward” her daughter and their little baby girl; she was so “sorry they separated because they loved each other so much”.



After a very brief “honeymoon” Elvis and his beautiful wife went back to Graceland and donned their wedding clothes again so those friends and family, who had not been at the actual wedding, could see them and pictures could be taken together. He didn’t say, but most likely he had Priscilla come down the staircase in her wedding gown, as he had pictured her doing many times when speaking about when they got married. He was proud of her wedding ring set, saying that it had 21 diamonds in it and it fit “together so it was easy on her slender little fingers”. I thought him to be very sweet in thinking of how it would feel for her since it was a large set with all of those stones and the large center stone in the engagement ring. He had a simple wedding ring with a row of small stones and he said she “got it for me”; he lost that one at the “Circle G” ranch in Mississippi and it was never located. He was upset but trying to be a man about it and that he was “glad she didn’t get mad at me” and yet he said he “hoped it’s not some kind of omen or something”. And he was so relieved when she “didn’t yell at me or nothing” (for losing it). They picked out another and he was wearing it on stage in Las Vegas when he opened in 1969 and he wore it the following year as well – in fact that ring showed up on his hand several times after they separated – usually when he had been seeing his little girl – he said she “liked to see me wear it because “mommy gave it to you”. And that was coming from a man with a few former friends/employees who now say “he lost interest in and didn’t care about his daughter”. Just a few months before his death he gave that wedding ring along with some “advice” based on his own marital circumstances concerning their marriage, to the wife of one of his step-brothers. Later on Elvis’ estate bought the ring back to place it with other personal and meaningful items at Graceland.

(Priscilla now says it was “her ring” that was lost, not his; I believe his version.)

Elvis didn’t have much time between films and since he was working in Los Angeles on movies that were made “back to back” with little time between them, he and his bride lived in Beverly Hills. Priscilla spent time decorating their home and Elvis went to work each morning and came home at night. He sent most of his men to other locals and others had apartments nearby, should Elvis need them. They continued accompanying him to studios and had small roles in several of his movies, but they didn’t live with him and Priscilla though they were there quite often. It was kind of like they were afraid they’d miss something he said laughingly, “like um gonna do somethin’ and some body’s gonna miss it!” And that is the way it appeared, like they one upped each other trying to “be there” just in case-- Elvis didn’t mind but apparently Priscilla preferred having him all to herself, though that was not usually the norm; often she wouldn’t know who might be coming home with him as he tended to invite anyone he liked to come with him. She didn’t like having to arrange a spur of the moment feast for a “crowd” or strangers that showed up unexpectedly and told him this; so he didn’t bring people home all the time but still he did bring a few at times. Priscilla wanted him to start cutting back on employee expenses, save his money, invest it and get out of debt but Elvis wasn’t the

saving kind, he liked to do things, give things and go places and for that he needed people to accompany him and cash to get things etc. so her thrifty ways and his spendthrift ways were butting heads. He never knew how much money they had or didn't have, she had to ask Vernon or the Colonel if she wanted to buy something and that vexed her to no end. (No wife would want that going on!) Elvis just said, "She's got a check book...She can get what she wants!" Later on, credit cards became the norm and there was a "line of credit" at the bank in Memphis...but apparently, often it wasn't "enough". Elvis just laughed off such things... and could smooth her ruffled "feathers" pretty easily for a while...

He was working on "Speedway" when Priscilla learned she was expecting; Elvis went to work at the studio and confided to **Bill Bixby** his fellow co-star and **Nancy Sinatra Jr.** his lady co-star, that Priscilla was pregnant. **Bill Bixby** said he was thrilled for Elvis and that in telling him the news, Elvis' eyes welled up in tears. Nancy says that Elvis was so happy, delighted and anxious for that "beautiful day" to arrive; she also asked him if she could give Priscilla a baby shower-and she did.

Shortly after the marriage, the Colonel and Elvis had a talk, with Elvis doing the listening as usual but he said he told him how he felt about the movies, how unhappy he was because they were becoming all the same just different scenery and co-stars. Tom appeased him, letting Elvis relate his ideas for a movie, a western similar to those coming out of Europe like **Clint Eastwood** made and lo and behold, the Colonel agreed, sort of. Elvis was excited, he had meetings with producers, people involved and spoke about a script that he had been thinking about and he was happy with the co-stars and he liked **Ina Balin**, thought she was "exotic and beautifully different" and the fact he wouldn't be singing though he did do the movie theme song to play behind the introductions and credits. And he wouldn't be "clean" and "pretty" he said, he'd look tough, dirty and there would be some love scenes-which he wanted to direct! I thought it sounded too good to be true-but he said, no, Tom said he could try it, it might just work. I hoped for his sake, the Colonel wasn't just "pulling his leg"; Elvis wanted it so much; he had faith.

He worked hard trying to make it a good film. It was shot out in the desert and it was ungodly hot; he joked about being able to "stand ma pants up 'n jus' jump in 'em in the morning's" they were so stiff with sweat and dirt. And he didn't shave-he kind of enjoyed having that beard but it did itch and he was "breaking out in some kind of rash" all over his body from sweat and dirt, and the "desert sand mites" that he said sounding like it made him shudder at the memory, were like "little bitty chicken mites". And he complained that he rode that horse with "boils on ma ass" for part of the filmed horseback scenes.

He was excited about scenes that were done as he suggested-one was a scene between his character and the leading lady, **Ina Balin** where he comes back after a long absence and she's in the tub, hears him come in, stands and puts a lacy see through robe over her soapy, wet body, but the robe has double layers down the front to cover "some things" as he put it. She comes out, they look at each other, she talks, he's looking for something she had kept for him but the dialog doesn't say what, they stand close, he drops his hat, grabs her and they kiss. Then he goes to one side of the bed, she the other and they look at each other with the bed right there. Elvis said that scene is just as "sexy and intimate as any rollin' around could be." He explained, the human mind could picture things more sexy to each individual looking on than any few sections of film could do because our minds could make it any way we wanted---film couldn't do that.

There was more to the scene and done with Elvis 'input but it was "cut" out in the finished version. In fact, so much was cut out of the whole filmed movie, changing the version Elvis wanted, he became silent before it was finished, didn't want to discuss it anymore and I knew things weren't going well. Apparently the powers that were, had determined it was to be just another Presley flick and some of the best scenes hit the cutting room floor as the "public was not going to buy a new and different Elvis". Again Elvis did not fight back, I wondered at his meekness and he said, "Just a few more films, 'n a few more years an' I'll be free--'n nobody can tell me what I can do or haffta do!"

When we saw the movie "*Charro*", it was nothing like Elvis had described so excitedly, the scene cuts were obvious, some of the sound track didn't seem to "fit together" and even the color of some of the pieced to gather scenes didn't match! It had a pretty good theme going, good versus evil and it had good actors in it. Though he joked about he could "stand ma pants up an' jump into 'em next day" there was one thing he didn't joke about - being stung on the rear by a scorpion-"it was a little bitty one an' kinda like a bee sting" he said, but it "woke him up"! He spent about 20 minutes telling stories of the big gray scorpions running around at night -saying they were big enough to catch small mice- and gave me the "willies" just hearing about them! (And now I live in the desert-thank God for "*Road Runner* birds" that come here everyday...they will eat scorpions.)

Elvis played the part well and looked great though he was lean as a rail, unshaven and dirty and had lost his "fine booty" as fans were prone to say; women everywhere *wanted him* to ride up to *their* corral looking *just that way*. Still, it wasn't anything to "write home" about. Elvis said he didn't see it, he said he "owned" some of it and so far, I don't think it's ever been released on video though his other films have. *National General* has the rights; I guess no doubt, further efforts on the Colonel's part to ensure Elvis wasn't going to "benefit" from trying to "cross hairs *against his* decisions". [I have recently

learned that it finally was released in a boxed set, on DVD; more than thirty years after its first release to the public view.]

Then as if to pacify Elvis' spiritual interests there was a film with a "religious twist" and he got to play doctor with **Mary Tyler Moore**. He looked good, pulled the role off well and so did the other actors. Many fans consider it one of his best films.

And he got to play a photographer and *actually be in bed* with a truly beautiful **Michele Carey** on screen-of course there was a 2-inch by 8-inch wide board divider between them. Elvis liked her and she says he was such a great guy, a southern gentleman with that sweet southern style and he kept her laughing. She played a joke on him, in one scene they argue, she runs up stairs, locks the door and he waits at the bottom of the stairs. She comes downstairs wearing a mink coat, saying he can stay the night but to be sure to feed Albert, her dog. He says where are you going to stay and she says she didn't know. He changes his attitude, says he'd sleep with Albert and she didn't have to leave and he takes hold of her coat lapels and starts removing it from her shoulders. She is nude beneath the coat-the look on his face and fast replacement of the coat is perfect! He says, "That was a dirty trick!" She laughs telling this story because she was supposed to be wearing a bathing suit-they had rehearsed that scene, it was getting dull and not getting the right reaction out of Elvis so she "kicked it up a notch" and the scene was perfect! Exactly what the director wanted from Elvis. I think that film let him show he had a great comic ability; more serious dramatic roles would not have been a problem for him. Why weren't those talents better used---I guess it was easier to "sell" him as a concert singer.

Then there was a film made right around that time, called "*Journey to Shiloh*"; it came out after "*Charro*". It featured several actors who later became stars in their own right. The film was about the war between the North and South and was pretty good actually though it didn't have any big box office success even though it helped to get **James Caan** who had the starring role, **Harrison Ford** and several others noticed. What we noticed were the great number of background actors and actresses in the film who also were in most of Elvis' films, including "*Charro*", "*Live a Little, Love a Little*" and others. Elvis talked about the script for this movie before it was made and mentioned having met some of the people involved in the production and liked the finished product. We often wondered what part he might have had in the script writing etc. as there were several lines used that was common for him in everyday conversation. Of course, he *was* born and raised in the South.

Ironically, when Elvis was working Vegas some years later, **James Caan** came by and Elvis introduced him to his new girl friend **Sheila Ryan** and she ended up marrying **James Caan**---I often wondered if Elvis planned for that to occur or if she got tired of

“waiting on him” and moved on to another guy; he didn’t say much about it, but he didn’t like “his women” taking up with another guy “so soon”. He complained that he “got tired of havin’ to “train ‘em” ; he meant the time it took for them to learn his schedule, what he expected from them and for them to be “patient when I got other things to think about” other than their plans for him etc.. Later, that marriage failed due to Caan’s tendency to be a little rough around the edges. According to Elvis’ earlier comments, Caan had a lot of worries with his career and money going on at the time he met Sheila. Elvis often remarked when people he knew got divorced, “Sometimes those things just happen to good people”.

### **Co-stars ‘n Trailers---**

Some of his male friends tell stories about how Elvis always had to “make it” with his female co-stars, those that were willing of course. However according to the things he told me, (and having overheard some of his fellow actresses’ comments), it didn’t seem that way at all to me. Most of the time he was busy playing with the guys, goofing off and having fun playing tricks on each other and his co-stars all seemed to enjoy the fun of being in an Elvis flick. He did date some of his co-stars but none of them have anything to tell about him other than they loved working with him, he was a gentleman, considerate and helpful and most of them say he was very shy, enjoyed talking and liked to read a lot.

**Donna Douglas** mentions the spiritual discussions they had on the set and in his trailer when making “*Frankie and Johnnie*”: **Juliet Prowse**, his dancer co-star of “*G. I. Blues*” remembers him as being shy, funny and very thoughtful. **Cynthia Pepper** from “*Kissin’ Cousins*” says she had never had so much fun on a film and especially enjoyed “throwing ol Jody” and of course, kissing Elvis was pretty special too. She admitted they flubbed a few just to kiss a little more and that Elvis was wonderful to work with. **Teri Garr**, who danced as a background actress in a few of Elvis’ movies and got to know his “gentlemen friends” who worked for him was invited to one of Elvis’ parties. She says that Elvis was a gentleman, and everyone sat around quietly watching Elvis watch television at that party where there was no “chips, dips or drinks”, just a few “friends”. But the girlfriend she took with her was invited by Elvis to go back to his bedroom and they were there a couple of hours. Teri says her girlfriend swore they “never did it” - they just talked. **Lynn Kellogg** had a wonderful time, enjoyed working with him and said he was such a nice fellow, funny and kind. **Celeste Holmes** tells of holding Elvis while he sobbed on her shoulder when he learned that **Martin Luther, King Jr.** had been shot and killed on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee; he lamented the loss of a good man who was trying to do something right; it would be a bad mark on Memphis and its people. She said Elvis sang “*Amazing Grace*” acapella for her that day. She found him to be tender hearted, good natured and a “southern gentleman”; she loved working with

him and he was “unforgettable”. Singer/actress **Barbara McNair** from “*Change Of Habit*”, spoke of spending time singing all the old familiar Southern gospels with Elvis in his dressing room, saying he loved black spirituals and knew the names of so many early groups, some he had taken the time to go see and meet personally and she was impressed with the sincerity, respect and passion he felt for those early day black gospel artists, who were to him, his musical “teachers”.

**Hope Lang**, who co-starred in “*Wild in the Country*” told of a shy, young man who amazed her because he blushed when rehearsing for the romantic scene with her that in the movie, took place in a motel room setting. They practiced the scenes over and over, with the director giving directions, and Elvis was nervous and trembling to the point it would have shown on film. The director kept saying, “Elvis, get it together-we haven’t all day here!” Elvis replied, “Yes sir, but this isn’t easy as it looks-she’s a beautiful woman!” So she took him back to her dressing room, gave him some pointers, made him blush several times and then they filmed the scene in several takes and he was perfect. She did laughingly say, “He still turned a little pink-he was such a darling young man.” She also revealed that she heard he wasn’t feeling well, had “boils on his behind” during the filming and was lying in bed in his room while on location and she went in to see him. He was lying on his stomach, she pulled up his sheet to look and he grabbed the sheet saying, “Whoa there!” And turned beet red; she didn’t think anything about doing that, she had been in the movie business a long time and nudity wasn’t anything unusual. However Elvis was very shy- and was mortified but they had a good laugh about it later. She too, commented on his patience, kindness to everyone and his ability to make everyone feel at ease with his great sense of humor.

One could fill a very thick book with the kind, loving and sincere stories and comments coming from people who met, got to know and loved Elvis; most of whom would give up a year of their life just to be able to see and speak with him again. The verification of Elvis’ sincerity, gentle and spiritual nature and the kindness of his heart go on and on and it wouldn’t be comments all from women-his male co-stars praise him too! Actor **Richard Eagan**, in 1978 with tears filling his eyes, spoke of working with Elvis saying he was a fine actor, and a gentleman. **Bill Bixby** (*Speedway*) said they (he and Elvis) had a ball working together, that Elvis was fun, kind and his sense of humor was a “little outrageous”. Several directors who worked on his films, all say he was sincere, honest and accepted directing well. **Gene Nelson** said Elvis had great potential as an actor and that he wanted to learn as much as possible about directing films; it proved difficult for Elvis to concentrate on learning filming techniques because he was constantly being enticed by his male companions to join them in pranks and antics around the movie sets. It did appear that the men friends who lived with and surrounded him throughout his lifetime got more of a “rush” out of thinking what he “*might* be doing” in the dressing room than what actually was happening. And too, Elvis enjoyed playing on

their suppositions, sometimes setting it up to look like maybe he had been doing something “in there”. After all, he said a man “ain’t much if he ain’t got a reputation” and he WAS Elvis Presley, sex symbol for millions of women and it was every young man’s wish to be “just like Elvis with the ladies”; some of them wore the hair, sideburns and with a pair of dark glasses-welllll--close enough! Maybe--

One of the last films he made was something else. Elvis didn’t appear on screen for the first 1/3 of the film and when he did he was stunning in a white suit, hat and had his cigar. It was a funny film, with some memorable scenes where Elvis is having fun with his co-star, **Marilyn Mason** who says she had such a good time working with him, found him delightful, funny and very gracious to everyone involved, saying hello and goodbye to everyone by name, including those running the cameras and equipment. She mentioned how happy he was having a daughter, excited to have photos to show her off and that he looked forward to going home to spend time with his family.

The close ups of Elvis were great-he looked super. He had already been having huge success in Las Vegas and was in top shape and he smiled often. . That alone made the film worth watching. (He had a “lucky rabbit’s foot” on a chain in some of the scenes-and his “precious little one” **Lisa Marie** can be seen with probably the same “lucky rabbit’s foot” on a chain about her neck in a photo taken of him with **Linda Thompson** a few years later.

Elvis refused to sign for any more films; Col. Tom and he were at each other’s “throats” or so said rumors but Elvis *was* angry and they apparently had a shouting match with Elvis stomping out and threatening to get another manager. But that only lasted a short time, the Colonel had all those years to stack the deck and he stacked it high, wide and deep. Elvis said that Col. Tom told him when he offered to work for less to get better movie scripts, “Now boy, if you place a small value on your self-the world is not going to raise the price!”

Elvis didn’t have money managers, he spent about as fast as he earned it and his father who had charge of things, couldn’t save much either. Neither of them had accounting experience and Elvis just didn’t want to know about money things. So there wasn’t a way for Elvis to “escape” but he refused to do more films and wanted to work live and that’s what the Colonel lined up- two months a year in Las Vegas and touring the United States.

It was kind of shocking to learn that the Col. wanted to be “paid in cash only” when Elvis worked concerts on the road-that he would carry a suitcase full of cash out the “door” just before Elvis’ closing song, kind of like “the fox escaping with the chickens” said a security guard who had been on duty after a southern California concert...that was

totally sold out for a night show and an afternoon show on the same day. Cash on the line appeared a bit curious to me; I asked Elvis if he was paid with a check; he didn't seem to know anything about it, saying that he thought "they" mailed the checks to the Col.'s offices in Madison, Tennessee. I asked Elvis if he got paid by check-he said it was deposited into the bank that was all taken care of by "ma daddy". Elvis didn't care how he got paid; as long money came in, bills were paid and the payroll met... he didn't want to know more than that. Priscilla on the other hand, questioned the facts, saying he ought to know those things, and he said she told him he ought to be the one handling his finances...however Elvis didn't want to deal with any of that, he had enough to do being "*Elvis*" and everything he had to do to be ready to get on that stage and do his job.

## **What's He Got On You---**

Apparently a new agreement was drawn up regarding the tour schedules and the money with the Colonel getting half of everything Elvis earned-*off the top*, before expenses. And Elvis said he signed it and that "it just was for the tours, so things would be kept separated for taxes and so forth". Elvis kept his word when he gave it, even when sometimes he was furious with the way things were going. Speculation said that the Colonel had "something he held over Elvis' head" and Elvis didn't want whatever it was to be known, but I believe the truth is, the Colonel said Elvis owed him so much money for all those early years and expenses that he didn't get paid for, and Elvis had to pay up, but if he couldn't, then he had to honor his obligations and since the "boy" was getting older, could be he wouldn't be able to continue pulling in the kind of money he was right now. After all, music changes every day-and old singers lose their sex appeal. Just look at the movies, they were barely making enough money to pay their way. If Elvis wanted out, then the Colonel wanted his cut now to ensure he got paid back; that was the agreement and always had been. And Elvis had given his word, shook hands on it, so that was that.

And Elvis listened, the Colonel "fed" him all the old fears he knew that 19 year old boy, now 35 years old, still had deep down inside that were still alive and well; it worked. Elvis signed on the dotted line and he said he didn't get a copy-there was only one made and the Colonel had it in his "locked drawer".

I asked, "Elvis, what else does he have in that "locked drawer"? He was silent then said, "Nothin' that matters any more...really."

I asked, "You?"

And he said, "If I told you it wouldn't make anything better...it was a long time ago and not worth nothin' to any one now...except I got a little girl that's gonna grow up



some day.” He went on to say that Tom knew “no body’d give a cat’s ass” and it wasn’t anything “like that”; that wasn’t why he signed-it was something he wanted to do and if a good movie came along, he could still do it. He thought the new contract nullified the old original one that some say was just a “handshake agreement” and no paper work ever was signed though Elvis referred to there being a *legal contract* that his mom and dad signed when he was still underage. But after his death, the Colonel said no way, the old one was valid too. However Priscilla stood up and she and the estate lawyers fought back, just as Elvis always hoped she would to protect their daughter’s future. The Colonel settled out of court, he asked for and got certain monies but he gave up all rights to Elvis’ career and name and the Estate bought his “collection” of Elvis items etc; from him. It appeared that he “settled” to prevent being further “investigated” and since it *looked like* he “won”, he jumped at the chance to settle things up and step aside. Unfortunately, his efforts to “make a killing” in rock ‘n roll didn’t end up well, with the gambling debts he owed and all the other legal issues, his “fortune” took a down turn after Elvis’ death. I was shocked when he passed away to find that the most “renown manager of the biggest entertainment star in the world” had only a 2 inch write-up, no photo and that was on the 6<sup>th</sup> *inside page* of a major newspaper. I wouldn’t have noticed had a friend not called to tell me.

Rumors pop up now and then about the Colonel having something “bad” on Elvis, something from the very early days, and that was the “hold” he had over his “boy”; it has even been said the Colonel “hypnotized Elvis” and that kept him under control. I think the Colonel *didn’t* have anything on film, though he might have let him think he did; if he had *actually* had anything like that, he would have held it over Elvis’ head like a chain saw and made him sign for more of “those fims” once the contracts expired. I believe it was just the “business end” of things, the money he claimed Elvis owed him from years past “when Elvis was a “nobody” and the Colonel “carried Elvis” until he was earning enough to pay his own way and *Elvis felt obligated* to pay off that debt. Elvis always gave credit to the Colonel for everything he had done for him, taking a “nobody” and making him into *Elvis Presley*, super star. He felt a deep gratitude and he tended to think of him as a father figure in the early days, but as he grew and became more aware he realized the Colonel had not “kept up with the business, the changes and wasn’t able to make the moves that needed done in the changing world of entertainment”. Elvis felt as if the Colonel was choking the life out of him, making him do the same things over and over just like those movies, when he wanted something new, to travel to Europe and perform, good films etc-- and he kept getting the runaround, “promises and lies” he called it.

I think the Colonel laid a load of guilt on Elvis every time he tried to talk about changing things, used his old tactics of fear mongering that he knew would make Elvis back off, he knew Elvis wouldn’t risk hurting his family and friends by having to let them

go because he wasn't making the money. The Colonel counted on those early days of poverty so he brought them back, slamming them into Elvis' face and mind, drumming up the insecurities he knew his "boy" had way down deep. My conclusion is based on the words of people who dealt with him from time to time - that's the kind of "guy" he *was in business*... and he liked chopping people's legs off when he knew he had the upper hand. It had to be a "real high" all those years -he was after all *the* manager of the "*highest paid entertainer in the world*". He knew Elvis very well and he just played on those insecurities and fears he knew his "boy" held so close to the surface, so easy to "cut and let bleed" now and then when the need arose. And too, there's always isolation, tranquilizers and knock out stuff. They worked, especially if "the boy" was struggling with serious physical illnesses also.

(I wonder now, when Elvis went to the Colonel and tried to explain how badly he wanted to do something different, make better movies, go tour overseas etc could it have been that the big "game changer" the Col. held over his head was the facts behind Elvis' health problems, the big secret he'd kept from public view most of his life...the colon deformity that was like a ball and chain, affecting everything he did. Did his manager use that as a way to control him? The Colonel had kept his secret---but if Elvis left someone might tell the press and his humiliating secret would come out. After all, if Elvis found out he could do something else, what would keep him from learning that his manager had been all along the way, setting things up so he would make more money than Elvis, his "boy", the star of the show. Nah...the Colonel wouldn't do that---Really?)

Sorry folks, though I have tried, I can't seem to "drum up" anything pleasant to say regarding the Colonel...from those last years, but Elvis always tried to be respectful – publicly and even privately most of the time - though he did turn loose "*Darth Vader*" over him at times - but not much -when speaking with me. I base my conclusions on what he did say, how many times he wished for better scripts, and got upset over the "silliness" of the songs in most of them, how often he was depressed, didn't want to go to work but professional that he was, he was on time, knew his lines (and everyone else's quite often) and how excited he was when he knew he could draw a crowd again, and got a Las Vegas "deal" to perform again. He "felt a live again" he said. And he loved the first few years – but those month long engagements, two shows a night every night, became too much. Touring was harder, but he loved going to new audiences, though those tours were expensive, and required even more shows. His body began to show the stress and strain, and yet, salaries had to be met, people depended on him for their incomes; Elvis couldn't let them down, they were his friends and he loved them like family. So he kept trying to get himself together and kept doing his job.)

## **How Do You Tell a Duck from a Goose---**

There was another time long before the movie days ended, that I met Elvis at his direction and it was at the duck pond across the street from **Knot's Berry Farm** before Knot's became what it is today. Highway 39 / Beach Boulevard was the route one took to get to the shopping area and the main theme park. At that time, neither required a ticket to get in; one just bought tickets for the rides, the rest was free. On the East side of the Boulevard was a grassy park with a few trees, flowers, a man made pond with an island, and a replica of an old courthouse where the ***Declaration of Independence*** was signed. Nearby there was a large merry-go-round with beautifully carved and painted wooden horses and other animals, and a little way from it was a walk through tunnel under the highway to the main park entrance on the West side of the highway. Knot's has added a lot of new things to do and uses more of the once grassy knoll and duck pond since I was there at Elvis' invitation. And today, people have to buy a ticket to see or ride anything they have.

On Holidays and weekends there usually were a lot of people with children in the main park, and the ***Knot's Family Restaurant*** was packed with long lines waiting to get in at meal times; however on a weekday there usually wasn't anybody around the big pond that featured geese, ducks and swans swimming about. I brought Juliann with me; Elvis gave her change in nickels for duck food and laughed as she got some ducks to come to over quacking and flipping their tails. He settled down for a serious conversation as we sat on the grass while she played with the ducks. He was apologetic for his rainy day behavior and I was surprised, because he had not mentioned that day to me since, but that's how he could be at times. He never seemed to forget things, or a person he might have met, or a conversation and that, sometimes right to the exact words.

He started telling me that he and Priscilla had solved "their problems" and he thought they would be married—he had plans to give her a ring. He didn't know when they'd get married, but it wouldn't be too far down the road because "things just said it was time to settle down or separate all together and let her get on with her life". I got the idea that he was anxious but still a little hesitant because of her youth and lack of experience in life. She had been sheltered, he said, her whole life...hadn't done without anything she really wanted and just had "book" knowledge of life. He revealed he couldn't stand for her to be angry with him, and he wanted to be "with her all of the time". She was a part of him and when she left; that part went with her -he didn't like the feeling of being alone. He took out a picture of her with a little poodle dog and said, "Isn't she cute? Jus' look at that little nose—I just love her nose---precious!" he said, "Just precious!" and he kissed the photo before replacing it in his wallet. I knew at that moment, Elvis Presley was in love...whether he thought so or not.

He expressed his feelings for her in ways that led me to know that he was growing up, becoming a thinking and considerate man instead of that rash, juvenile impulsive he had affected in the past. He began saying that perhaps Priscilla ought to go to college—maybe her love for him was only “infatuation” and that she ought to have a chance “to meet other guys” to be sure of her true feelings. I was surprised—he was so jealous—so possessive of her and now, he was thinking of other men! I believe it was a sign of maturity on his part; he wanted her to have a chance—perhaps thinking, that she was still “blinded” by his image. Yet he said, “I’d have a hell of a time...have to have ma self locked up if she went out with some guy ‘n then get ma gawd damn brain erased or somethin’.” And he laughed, shaking his head side to side saying, “Lordy-lordy, daddy warned me ‘bout things like this...”

He said again he had “not slept with her” and would not until they married. I asked how long he had felt that way and he ducked his head grinning, and then said, “Love...is somethin’ to be treasured, to nurture and make grow into more than a physical need or else it won’t last. I want my marriage to be forever, to last a lifetime—don’t you?” Then he went on telling me about men’s and women’s natures, how men were not inclined to have just one female, were made that way to insure the species and how women needed only one man, should have but one as that was her natural inclination—“to go against those needs is a sure way to cause trouble in paradise”. He said. But since it was the way of our society to be faithful, to “cleave to just one mate” then a man must conform, was trained to conform, or be unhappy. Since that was how it was then he felt it ought to be upper most in a man’s mind and heart to have but one wife, one mate, therefore he intended to make certain before he married that he had picked his marriage partner for a lifetime. “It’s against God and His word to be an adulterer, it surely does cause all kinds of suffering...physically, mentally and emotionally--I’m not gonna be one of those—Priscilla will know she can count on me. I’ll never let her down.”

His voice and eyes were full of sincerity and conviction. I had never known him to be quite so serious and I believed him. I still do. Though Elvis had a great sense of humor, and liked to tease, play jokes and put people on, he had never lied to me, not even when he *should have* to protect himself, he would tell the truth. Only to prevent hurting someone else would he lie and “color” the truth. When I hear stores of his unfaithfulness, lying and cheating from the beginning of their marriage, I don’t believe it. I remember his desire for a happy long marriage; my only thought is, *if he changed, became someone other than the man I knew him to be*, then something must have shattered his ideals and his world had been so torn up, he couldn’t trust again.

He said Priscilla was talented in many ways, expressed pride in her accomplishments saying she liked to cook and take care of him and he “knew” his mother would have liked her. He spoke of how beautiful she was and that she wanted children

and he said, “She’ll be a loving mother”. I know she was trying to please him, was doing things he found likable and that she knew how to stand up to him and expected him to be all things to her, a role Elvis loved to play -for everyone he met.

He looked happy, his eyes danced, though they were blood-shot and his face slightly puffy from lack of sleep. He was on a diet, but felt good and he had gone home to Memphis, had been to a football game where he sat in the announcer’s booth and had the worst scratch on his arm I had ever seen. He said someone tried to grab him and he said, “She didn’t mean to hurt me, she just wanted a kiss.”

We put Juliann on the merry-go-round and Elvis bought a hand full of tickets and handed the ride handler a bunch of them (it was unusual for him to have any money-so he *had* to have planned ahead). Juliann was happily going around and around while we stood by the fence and continued talking.

Elvis had on a regular looking outfit (rather plain for him) and was wearing a felt fedora styled hat with a tiny red feather in the band and sunglasses. He looked “normal” and wasn’t getting any attention from the few people walking by now and then. He’d turn away if anyone was coming toward us, the only one who knew it was him was the young man running the merry-go-round and he just stared at him with a stunned expression. Elvis made some small talk with him, got the young man to laughing, signed an autograph for his mother, and then handed him the tickets for Juliann’s ride.

Elvis told him, “Let her ride on all the horses or whatever she wants, we’ll be right by the fence.” The guy said, “Yes sir, I’ll take good care of her.” And he did, letting her ride on a tiger a few rounds, then in a chariot and on a black steed with fiery eyes and bared white teeth. She was pleased for quite a while, but after about 30 minutes of going around and around, she was getting tired, so I got her off and we went back to the pond and those ducks-that was more fun, she said. Elvis taught her a “joke” about the ducks-saying, “Honey, how do you tell a duck from a goose?” She looked at him like he was nuts but said, “Tell me--” He said, “Well, if it quacks---it’s a duck!” Juliann laughed, but I think Elvis got the bigger kick from that one!

I teased Elvis about having seen teeth prints on his neck in the movie “*Paradise Hawaiian Style*”; he blushed and asked, “Could you really see that?” I said plainly. on that big screen and he ducked his head looking embarrassed saying “Oh no...” then he explained that several hula girls had come to see him, getting autographs and kisses and one of them bit him on the neck. He casually continued saying, “To cure a biting child, you bite them back” so he had seen her while he was there. He had not cured her though, he added, “Some habits you don’t want to break, takes something away when you do.” An ornery little smirk curled that lip before he was ducking his head down again.

He started talking about the outfit he was wearing, saying he had the pants and jacket made up; it was the latest style with a high waist and fitted pants. He opened the jacket to show the fit saying that men couldn't wear much under them without seams showing. Or carry things in their pockets because of the trim fit of the pants.

He looked great in that style and he knew it; as if reading my mind, before I asked, and with a sly grin, he said, "Nothin' baby, these are lined- have 'em made that way; 'n the jacket's cut long so's nothin' shows 'less ya want it to--" He raised one eyebrow and pursed his lips with wickedness dancing in deep blue eyes before breaking into a big grin as he fastened that jacket.

In saying he had to go, he spoke of having stayed in the motel just down and across from Knot's Berry Farm and had been seeing lawyers, taking care of some business. And he was going to buy a new house- in Beverly Hills, he thought. He was going to take a look at some beach homes before heading to Palm Springs. Priscilla was going to fly out and they would look at houses that she might like to live in.

That's when I knew he was really considering getting married -house shopping together! He walked off toward the north side of the park; I saw a pale yellow caddy parked off the side, where whoever was in it could easily have kept an eye on Elvis from their position. He didn't come from that direction so he must have been reading the stone tablet in front of the brick replica of the old courthouse that had a replica of the "*Liberty Bell*" out front so at least he did get to see that. In one of his early movies "*Jail House Rock*", he had filmed a few scenes at Knot's Berry Farm -that was the only time he had been able to come there, he said. And he never went to *Disneyland* though he would have liked to do that-especially with Lisa Marie. She went with friends and her mother I think, but Elvis couldn't - too many people with kids that might be hurt if things got out of hand put the ka-bosh on that idea. Those old fears again...

## **Cars...and Elvis---**

One of the times I was around, Elvis was showing off his black *Rolls Royce* explaining the wood interior of the dash and other fixtures, and telling how only one tree is used to make each model of car, when the wood is gone they don't make any more of that model for that year, thus keeping the value of the *Rolls Royce* high. He asked several young women hanging around if they'd like a ride-of course they would! To my dismay he made me sit on one of the men's lap and then had 6 other people, some doubled up too, in the back seat. It was like he was trying to see how many he could get in that *Rolls Royce*! I think he managed to fit in 9 people -uncomfortably. Years later he donated his *Rolls* to charity and took to driving *Lincoln* automobiles and of course, he bought the FIRST **Stuz**

**Black Hawk** car that looked something like the old *Studebaker* automobiles and he considered it a real thrill to drive. He was especially delighted to have been able to beat **Frank Sinatra** out of getting that first one off the assembly line!

Elvis owned at least two of those *Stutz Black Hawks*, one of them was involved in an accident-it might have been “replaced” by a third *Black Hawk*. One of his employees was driving the car and struck a gardener who was trimming bushes along the winding roads of Bel Air where there were no sidewalks, with most of the properties and yards extending right against the roadway. The man was killed though Elvis’ employee was not cited because he had not been speeding and the gardener had stepped in front of the car. It was reported that Elvis paid all the expenses for the funeral and also gave money to the man’s family, though he did *not have* to do that.

One of those *Black Hawks* came down to check out the news concerning “hundreds of people” waiting for days and a night to get tickets at the **Anaheim Convention Center**. While we were just a few of that “hundreds” of people we were among those who saw the *Black Hawk* enter the parking lot and drive slowly around the entire convention center. Someone said, “It’s Elvis!” And several people rushed off toward the car, which sped up and kept ahead of them as they tried running along to catch a glimpse of the driver and passengers. The driver was a lovely blond woman but her passenger couldn’t be seen-he kept ducking down and so it couldn’t be positively confirmed that Elvis was in the car. However, people began yelling that the license plate said “Elvis” and it was a **Stutz Black Hawk** --and one of his current girlfriend’s was a lovely blond. Elvis would never confess-but he was pretty amazed that people were sleeping on the sidewalks *in California* to get tickets to see HIM! He was even more amazed when people across the United States, in all kinds of weather, began doing the same thing. Now it seems almost as if they had some kind of “premonition of things to come”.

The thing that amazed me about Elvis was his devotion to his “fan dom-e” as he’d joking say, and it never was so obvious that he loved that “fan dom-e” right back when he called a pay phone outside the **Anaheim Convention Center** while several hundred people were waiting and “sleeping over” on the cement to get tickets to see him. Someone answered the phone that kept ringing; it was Elvis who asked them to find out if a certain person was in line (*not* any one of us), they were and he said ask her to “come, talk to me”. The young woman did talk to him, she began “losing it” saying, “Oh my god! It is YOU! Oh my god!” and then she was listening and talking softly into the phone. She hung up, came back to the line with tears in her eyes and with shaking hands. She was immediately “pounced upon” for information and she said, “He said to tell you all thank you and that he would do his very best because we went to so much trouble to see him.” Someone said how do you know it was really him? She said, “His voice, and he asked me about something only I knew, well, me and “Sonny” knew; it was personal.”

She said, “Only Elvis would ask that.” She wiped away tears saying, “He said I could come backstage, he wants to give me something if I give something back to him--- and he’s not angry at me.” She refused to say what that “something” might be that she had to give him but I later heard it was one of the **TCB** necklaces -and Elvis wanted it returned. He had *two reasons* to call, but the main one was just to say thanks and the rest was to “prove” it was him.

### **TRUE BLUE---**

In the early 60’s I heard stories (and got to see for myself a couple of times) that Elvis’ back yard at one of his homes contained several statues of nude women, but Elvis had them spray painted cobalt blue (to the dismay of his landlord I’m sure) and before the paint dried someone had stuck grass on one of them to look like pubic hair.

Apparently Elvis just noticed, he knelt before it, carefully picking the grass off then kissed its belly. Looking up from his kneeling position he said, “Now honey, you just keep on holdin’ ‘em up, ‘cause you’re my inspiration!” It held a breast in each of its marble hands. One of the statues was a *Venus de Milo* and he said it was the best type of woman to have around. A young woman asked, “What about hugs, Elvis, she doesn’t have any arms!” With a snicker and a “naughty boy” grin he replied, “Who needs arms when they got legs?” His men laughed, the girls giggled; his sense of humor was often more silly than funny and often he was totally “off the wall” with that comic sense of his.

I teased him about how he “got his dates” and in a dead serious voice he said it was easy, “If I can’t find anyone to come over, jus’ stop at the local “beer joint” an’ get some numbers off the john wall.” I said, “Oh for Pete sake!” He kind snickered to himself saying, “Well, now you done it, that’s all she wrote!” It always made me laugh, usually silently as I didn’t want him to think I was laughing AT him, how he often tossed in song titles or a lyric line here and there in his conversation, and I’d heard “An’ I thought, that’s all she wrote! My career jus’ died!” When he told me about how he’d “flopped” at some place he was playing in the early days. “They sat there like they was frozen in time or somethin’! One look at the owner’s face an’ man, that was all she wrote!” I miss his humor a lot; thank God for memories and friends telling theirs! When reading **Nick Adam’s** book written when Elvis and he spent a lot of time together, I enjoyed it so much. Nick shows us the young, naïve Elvis, the kind and generous young fellow who truly never changed much; he just “wised up” a little bit and kept on being who he was in spite of the image. And he was saying even then, “That’s all she wrote...” etc!

**Nick Adams as The Rebel** is back on television! 56 shows-try it! You’ll like it!





Nick Adams with Elvis on the set of Elvis' film, "Follow That Dream". They were both fun loving and apt to do anything to get a laugh-note how Nick's "smoke" isn't smoking! Elvis introduced himself to Nick when he was in Hollywood working on his first film, "Love me Tender". They hit it off quickly; Nick helped Elvis "fit in" to Hollywood's younger crowd of "hope to be stars".



Great new version/expanded by Alyson Adams' Nick's daughter who found his writings about the times he spent with Elvis in 1956, when things were getting "hot" in Elvis' career., and got it published. Nick and Elvis remained friends, regardless of the many who attempted to ruin that relationship. Only time and fate brought their friendship to a heart breaking end when Nick was "without warning" found dead under somewhat mysterious circumstances, though it was said to be a "suicide". Elvis never believed that; he knew Nick and said, "He would not have done such a thing! He had family, he loved them." Around those years in Hollywood history, there were several unusual deaths and unanswered questions as to "what happened, really?"

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“ELVIS” draws them “like flies” said the “Colonel.”

There were so many women trying to get a moment alone with Elvis-each one thinking if they just *could*, he’d be smitten. I wondered how he managed to remain calm, detached and aloof during some of their overt displays in his presence. And I heard him scolding girls a couple of times, telling them to “act like ladies instead of whores if you want to keep comin’ in here”. And “Awww ...knock it off”. It was said in a soft voice but one of command.

During the times I was around him back then, other than Diane, I did not meet even one young woman who said that he had taken them to bed-many said they had been with him in his bedroom, alone and he had kissed them but none claimed more than that, although they were eager to change the status-quo. He knew it and kept them in suspense. I know there were women who did share his bed-but they certainly weren’t around much. To hear some of his loyal “friends and employees” tell it, Elvis was, in their minds, *always* “humping” the girls-after all, he took them by twos, threes and more, into his bedroom and shut and locked the door-keeping them there for hours! What else *could* he be doing all of that time? Same thing they’d be doing-what else? In his case-it *never was* “monkey see-monkey do.”

I did meet a couple of young women after he and Priscilla were first separated who told this same story though they didn’t know each other.

Elvis asked each of them individually, at different times and locations, to “stay with me” but he told each young woman not to expect or get their hopes up for any kind of physical involvement-and he told them right up front. He had hopes of getting his marriage back together and said it would not be right for him to be playing around while there was a chance it could work out, though they were separated, they were together for special days to give Lisa Marie a “normal” view of mommy and daddy. Stories of Elvis “sneaking around cheating” in Las Vegas and etc...were true... but it wasn’t to keep Priscilla from “finding out”-she just didn’t want to pick up a newspaper and “read about it” he said, and he didn’t want to read any “trash” about her either., so they tried to keep their private lives as quiet as possible. Elvis especially did not want their little girl to one day “read about mommy and daddy in gossip columns”. However, due to the changing ways of journalism, sleazy stories and photos did “come out” and most of them creatively edited. Fabricated “news” began in the 60’s and grew into today’s “tabloid news broadcasts” until it is almost impossible to discern which are real events from Hollywood-ized fiction.

Both ladies were asked at different times to stay with him, keep him company while he slept but he wore pajamas, was under the covers and both said they had to sleep fully

dressed and though in bed, were not under the same cover as him. They each slept lying in his arms; the one he took on tour for 3 days, said she fell asleep listening to his heart that was “right beneath my ear”. He kissed each goodnight and goodbye, one on the cheek, the other on the forehead but there was nothing else-not even a real kiss. He appreciated their company, talked to them, read to them and each slept cuddled up next to him, but that was all.

In telling their stories, they were both in tears talking about how sweet he was, how much he wanted to be with his little daughter and his wife and both of them thought he was a “fantastic man”. The one who stayed with him 48 hours in Las Vegas, said, “He’s probably the best I’ll ever meet again-but he’s so damned hung up on getting back with her -how could she cheat on him? My God,” she exclaimed, “didn’t she even take a good look at him! He is gorgeous- that smile, those blue eyes and the way he moves...oh gosh! He could say anything-he read the newspaper to me--- his voice is so sexy! And he wants to be faithful! My God- *he wants to be faithful!* His wife is crazy to let him go - that guy she’s with – he’s so ugly- and she left Elvis for him!”

I have to admit-I wondered about that also. Elvis said he was so busy being Elvis Presley, working and enjoying all the attention he had forgotten to be a husband, to consider his “Cilla’s feelings” and that it was his fault she was lonely and felt he didn’t love her any more. He didn’t see it coming and when he finally did, it was too late; they both tried to put it back together, but nothing could wipe out their differences, and so they “stayed together” for Lisa and kept their problems to themselves- and lived separate lives more or less. But then she thought she was in love, had found a man she wanted to spend her life with he said, and so she asked for a divorce. He didn’t want one, didn’t believe in them and admitted he was “insanely jealous”, but he couldn’t keep her a “prisoner” and she deserved happiness so he finally filed at her request. And the rest he said “is history...”

***Elvis on Priscilla--.1967 – 1977*** [Statements made over several years by Elvis to the press and reporters- one being May Mann who was a trusted friend.]

“She is--very important to me-to my happiness in that she provides a place of quiet, peacefulness, something you really begin to miss in this business-or any time where there is much discord, and eh---turmoil. She is good for me, for my ego and for my peace of mind.”

“I was very lucky when I met her---it was-was special, something that I never expected or forgot about. She was very young-15 years old and--yet very mature and confidant and--an’ she walked in an’ my heart went -ZING!!” [Laughs]

“I didn’t expect to have this happen at that time-no. But then as we kept in touch, she wrote to me, an’ I phoned her-and time passed. She came over to visit and we became friends first, an’ then fell in love. That’s the only way it will work, you have to be friends-to like each other, otherwise that attraction, the thing we call love, won’t last. It can’t because as time passes, people change and if there isn’t a feeling of liking, of truly caring and liking that person, then you won’t like the changes, or else they won’t like yours-it’s a tolerance that grows, matures along with liking the individual-love stays then because the foundation is present-that is my belief.”

“She knows me very well-she understands how it is for me in the business-and she supports me in all that I do. I can go to her, tell her something I’m worried about and she’ll give me a different view, yet she doesn’t try to tell me what to do. I couldn’t be happy with a woman who did that -however; gentle coaxing will get me to come around to about any situation. [Laughs] She’s smart enough to know that already -and I appreciate that.”

“She stays home because of the baby, and because I prefer her to be there as I am so busy usually, or I’m too tired out for being much company-my hours are upside down to her routine and the baby’s, so it works out best for her to come over a day or two and then go home. She understands how I am when I’m working and it’s not a problem. I realize she gets lonely, always waiting on me, but that’s my lifestyle-something she has adjusted to and handles well for one so young.”

“She’s beautiful, isn’t she? Man, she always looks great-no matter what time of day it is, or what’s been happening. I can look over at her and she takes my breath away! I’m always thrilled to see her walk into a room-to know that someone that good, that sweet and beautiful as she is, could love me!”

“She is very young, there is a lot she will learn over the years as she grows to maturity and wisdom, and she’ll change, not too much, I hope, but since I love her, I’m sure that I will be able to make the changes necessary to suit her maturity. It will be me who has to make the adjustments as I’m older, my life is formed and hers is still in the budding stage. I’m willing to make the moves, because she is worth it.”

“Priscilla and I will always be friends-we have a baby to raise and because of that fact, and our love for each other, we’ll always make the most of understanding and being there for each other. We’re apart, living separately, but I still care for her and she cares for me. That’ll never change.”

“Priscilla has her own life to live -different from mine and one that she is forming to fill her needs in life. I can only wish her well, and be there if she should need me in some

way -be it advice or help. I'll always care for her -I hope she'll know that she can always come to me for anything."

"I'll always love Priscilla -she is my wife--we're apart--but she's the mother of my baby--I love her, I always will." (12/'77.

### ***Lost loves---***

Elvis didn't talk much about his early girlfriends, generalizing much of it as just being "kid stuff" but there were some interesting recurring events regarding a few more serious lady friends. He spoke of **Dixie Locke** who was his girlfriend at the time his first recording was heard on local radio stations; he said she didn't like waiting on him while he was out working, "having fun etc." so she married somebody else and he had bought an engagement ring too late. He joked that he might have married her but his "first hit saved ma ass!"

He mentioned liking **Anita Wood** and said his mother liked her too but then he went overseas and just before he was sent back to the states, he met Priscilla who became his number one girl shortly afterward. And apparently Anita realized Elvis wasn't ready to make up his mind; so she helped him by leaving. When he learned that my name was Wanda June he mentioned having known a girl named **June (Juanico)** saying, "that was a long while ago" but he didn't say he wanted to marry her or that she "dumped him" and broke his heart. She was his girlfriend during the time he was first making films, but in speaking of those "first girlfriends" he skipped from Dixie to Anita and only later did he comment about knowing a girl named **June**. (I think he was seriously involved with her *because* he did not talk about it, though he did say, "that's someone you never forget". I think losing her trust hurt him deeply; unfortunately it appeared to become the norm in his relationships.)

From what I've learned about his early girl friends, there was a pattern-- he thought he was in love, that they understood his career and its demands, though it seems each young lady had other ideas, and chose someone who wasn't in the public eye or had demanding career interests. I don't think Elvis ever got over feeling as if he would *never be able* to find a woman who would be willing to wait for him, to love him as *he was* and *not because of who he was*--and from the early days to the latter days, he was still hoping to find that one lady who would love him in spite of what he did. I also think he "expected" women to "leave him" since everyone he thought he "loved" had.

A "string" of lovely women came and went after he and Priscilla were separated, then divorced, and continued right up until his death. There were blonds, brunettes, auburn

haired lovelies- he didn't seem to favor any one hair color or style; he was looking for “the right one” who could live his life, and “put up with me ‘n my moods, what ever they might be”. It seemed to be an impossible request though he seemed to “find” women every where who caught his eye or attention. Some have written books, some have not, some have told things that would have made him blush, and probably say a few “choice words”; however they remember Elvis fondly, and with a little regret that it “didn't last”.

**Linda Thompson** came the closest to being his ideal for a while- however I think his health got in the way of that relationship. And though he had not given up hope that maybe, he had found someone in **Ginger Alden** but within a few months he had changed his mind and was looking ahead and at another young lady who shared more of his interests. Her name was **JoAnna**, she was a lovely and intelligent, natural blond with green eyes and she made him laugh. And he said, she gave him hope for a brighter future, something he needed at that time in his life. However his failing health and his manager's desire to keep him in line and on stage put the damper on those ideas pretty fast. Elvis knew he was running out of time, though he still longed for a future, something new and different. And he tried to remain hopeful as he had always appeared to do, though I didn't know him in those tender early years and so base my thoughts from hearing his point of view later on. Of course, he was “*Elvis*” and there were quite a few lovely ladies who had the good fortune of spending time with “*Elvis*”, who was always loving, kind and generous with them all- and many of them did get past that “*Elvis*” label and remained friends- which says a lot about him and how he treated his lady friends.

### **One of Elvis' favorite Bible passages from 1st Corinthians 13.4-7**

“**Love--** is patient, Love is kind. Love does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not self seeking. Love is not easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. Love always protects, it always trusts, and it always hopes. Love always preservers.”

“Never quit hopin’ for better times, no matter what the present is-hope is the future an’ and everyone makes it or breaks it by what you do with it. So keep hopin’, for better things will come if you want to improve things.” Elvis

### ***The Good --of all---***

On my last visit to Elvis' house in Bel Air, before he got married, he gave me more books and talked about his interest in **Self Realization Fellowship**. He had gone to a retreat in the nearby mountains and he was excited to have met people there who thought as he did. He told me he would like to be able to stay there alone for a while, just to think and enjoy the quiet peacefulness; plus he wanted to join in with some of the other

people and talk about “things”. So of course, he gave me one of his *Self Realization* books. I read some of it, then passed it on to another of his friends who was interested in perhaps joining that group. Elvis had lost interest in them, choosing to go with his own beliefs and the teachings he had grown up hearing.

Elvis’ books were often underlined, heavily in some cases, and had notes here and there reminding him of certain things. One of them had “Remember, Charlie’s birthday”, notations about speaking with “Mr. Davis”, and another reminds Elvis to “call Mr. Hookstratten before Friday.” There were a few notes tucked in here and there from women, wanting him to call them. When he was working in Las Vegas he often got such notes, and some later books that he passed on came from those times and had notes that included room numbers...he was using them for book markers and I have no idea if he ever called any of them. But he might have...looking for someone to talk with on a lonely night or day.

Elvis said he tried to live a “clean life” because he realized so many young persons looked up to him, considered him a role model of sorts and he lamented the fact it was so difficult to “live up to that image”. He said, “I’m not as perfect as they think-Lord! You know, if they knew what I am really like, they would be very disappointed “

He also said that sometimes when looking in the mirror he would say, “Who the hell are you?” And he could not see ELVIS PRESLEY looking back at him. Instead, he “saw this guy who grew up poor, worked hard and for some reason found favor in the public eye”, but he added, “I don’t see a Hollywood swinger, or even a sex symbol-that’s not me! You know, I don’t really know what happened-it was so fast and came so strong, guess I just got caught up in it and here I am.”

He felt he was just a “normal guy with a great big phony image stuck on me like a picture that’s been pasted over with somethin’ better.” And it bothered him that so many people appeared to think of him as some kind of “god” when in reality he wasn’t “nothin’ but a normal, guy who cuts and bleeds jus’ like any other one would; haven’t done anything so important to make me special, worthy of this kind of-of adulation. It’s a hard thing to live up to, ya know. Damn difficult at times.” He knew he was good looking, but still didn’t feel he was the only one and even came up with names of other guys whom he thought were better looking, more masculine, football players etc; and bigger guys than he. He just never did understand what it was about his looks that got so many “hot and bothered just lookin’ at me”! He said that in the early years his head had been spinning from so many things he had to do, places to be, people to meet and that he was “shocked at the reaction” from all the fans and then the things that were being said about him and his performances. He said he was “sick about it” and that he went home fell on his bed and just cried like a baby, and for a time he thought he was “losin’ my mind”. He



said the things he saw, heard and was expected to do shocked him and he thought he had “seen it all” until his popularity over passed anything anyone could believe, including himself. He confided that “so much goes on behind the scenes, ‘n it was makin’ me feel like-like-eh-I didn’t belong there or somethin’ an’ got so I couldn’t think, it was too much for-for me to keep it straight an’ it didn’t feel good-or –or right, somehow.”

He admitted that he had considered quitting the business, giving up because it was “more than I could-could handle, mentally and physically.” He said he just wanted to go home, have peace and quiet and nobody telling him what to do, how to do it and when to do it. He felt as if he was being turned into somebody he didn’t want to be and then, it got so big with so many people involved he couldn’t keep up with it all and so much depended on him, on his performing, he had to keep going. He didn’t have a choice anymore, too many people would lose their jobs and it would be his fault. And he said that he was making so much money he couldn’t keep track of it, that it scared him to think about it, so his mother and father took care of things with the help of a few other people who knew a little bit about it. He didn’t want to have outsiders handling the money; too many people lost everything when they did that, so he kept it all in the family and among trusted friends and depended on his local Memphis banker’s help. When things went wrong, I heard it said that Elvis blamed his father, saying he screwed up the finances; Elvis would never have said that about his father. He did say “it was more than daddy could do, bless his heart; he worries ‘bout it all the time, ‘n it’s only money.” Elvis thought he could always do a show and pay the bills; that’s what he would tell his father. “Don’t worry daddy, I got shows lined up, we’ll have the money!”

### ***“What I Am--” Elvis---1973***

*Wanda: 'This may sound like a silly question, maybe even a difficult one- but do you-- or rather, what do you see yourself as being Elvis? Have you thought about it?'*

**Elvis:** “Have I thought about it--(Chuckles softly) Eh--well now, le'me see here; I'm first of all a singer--well, a male singer--who jus' happened--happens to appeal to a big section of people--various ages an' eh--types-- is that what you want?”

*How do you want to answer it?*

**Elvis:** Hummmm--uh-huh, tryin' to trip me up here now, aren't ya? I see myself, my purpose as being one of--an entertainer, bringing moments of happiness, joy and excitement, fun--eh--laughter, to my audiences. Jus' time away from their daily cares-- that's what I am nothin' more really-- And in doing that I feel I am completing my-- purpose for being. Sort of anyway; I like to think I'm--giving them somethin' of benefit to their--spirit--and their hearts.”

*Okay--that's what I wanted – what you think, in private moments.*

**Elvis:** “I want to be a time of happy memories, of relief from care, and if they think enough of me to--come back again, that's great man, and I love 'em for it.!”

It would have been very difficult not to like this open, honest man, who had no big opinion of himself; in fact he appeared to be surprised and disbelieving when people bought tickets within hours of their being released. He was proud of all he had done certainly, but his ego was controlled and limited to his working image. It hurt him to the quick when he felt he failed to live up to someone's image of him, had let them down in some way. He wanted so badly to please, that he would go out and half kill himself in order to do a good job. He was so loyal, so aware of his position that one of his close relatives commented in 1976, if Elvis had been a member of our family (yours reader or mine) we would have hidden his car keys, locked him in the house or done something to keep him from going out to work in such a weakened condition. But there was Elvis, on stage, pouring his heart out because so many people depended on him for their pay checks and so many others had saved up to buy tickets to see him, and he just couldn't let them down *-because he didn't feel well!*

### ***“D.D.T's” - Distortions, Distractions and Tales...***

In 1976, during the last concert tours Elvis made, there were many stories telling many unfavorable and distorted views, often made by people who knew nothing of Elvis' history except what was told through the press, and it was apparent to those of us who knew him, that Elvis would be hurt and he'd hide it for our benefit. And he did, joking about the reviews and saying that if he looked that bad and did such a bad show, why were the places selling out? But it hurt-and sometimes it appeared people wanted to hurt him. At a concert in 1976 in Long Beach, California a lady who was down front handed him the front page of a gossip sheet bearing a very ugly photo of himself-belting out a song. He looked at it and asked, “Do I look like that?” He turned his back and handed it to one of his men. When he faced the audience his eyes were filled with tears, but he went into a fast tune and covered his heartache by clowning around, just as he always had done. Audiences everywhere loved his shows, spoke of how hard he worked and many people noticed, “He's not physically well, something is wrong!”

At one of Elvis' earlier Las Vegas shows a lady who was at the stage edge, held up a *Playgirl Magazine* folded to show him an artist's painting of himself posing nude holding a little *Teddy Bear* over “the” strategic parts of his body.. Elvis looked at it a moment then said, “I didn't pose for this- really, that's not me--the *Teddy Bear's* too little--” and he flashed that ornery grin, asking “May I keep this--” and then strolled over to hand the magazine to Charlie, his rhythm guitarist and “right arm” on stage. Elvis said, “You see this--Cholly?” Charlie nodded “yes” and Elvis shaking his head said, “Gawd--” then mumbled kind of off microphone, “Nobody tells me nothin'--” The funny part about the whole *Playgirl* thing was, they had weeks earlier called him to ask him to do a photo

shoot for them and I had him on the phone. The call came in on another line and he asked me to wait a minute while he took the call - though he did let the young lady calling him tell him what they had in mind -he preferred to be holding a guitar he told her -but they wanted him holding a *Teddy Bear*. He said he “wasn’t no supermodel lookin’ guy” and he had “skinny legs, big knees and didn’t want to be standin’ in no news rack buck naked” no matter how much they’d pay him. So, since they couldn’t actually “get him” they had an artist do “him anyway”. (I’m sorry to say, I didn’t see that magazine- Darn!) He was pleased they had asked, but he didn’t want to do anything “like that”. My impression from his reaction was that he would have been embarrassed!

In 1964 when he told me he was moving from the Perugia Way house, I “took”--- his shirt- a white cotton one; I planned to tell him later – just to make him laugh. He had gone to his room to change shirt saying the white one was “too tight” through the shoulders. When I left, that too tight shirt was laying on the back of a chair. I think he intended to give it to someone but I picked it up and took it with me. I never did get the “perfect chance” to tell him -he would have loved it and I wish that I had. That was the last time I would go to his house in Bel Air, he moved to another place shortly after that day, although he did move back to the Perugia Way house fairly quickly, preferring it to the more Spanish styled one that I was told had at one time belonged to a famous leading man from the 30’s and 40’s. Though I was never there, I heard that the Spanish style house had a guest house with a two way mirror that was part of an adjoining wall of the pool house. Elvis and his friends could stand looking through the mirror at the girls dressing and undressing before and after swimming but of course, the girls could not see them-they just saw a large mirror. From what has been told of those days, it was his guys who did most of the looking--though I’m sure Elvis did “a time er--two--”

And there is a story told by some, that at that house there was a two way mirror built into one wall of Elvis’ bedroom -they could see him in there but he didn’t know about it--when he found out, he put a large book case in front of it and ruined their “view”. It’s funny; most of those kinds of rumors turn up in books written by the male of the human species. Elvis said he moved back to Perugia Way because it was “more comfortable” and he liked the layout of the U shaped house and also “havin’ more’n one way outta there, ya know”. That last fact, regarding the setting was very important to his “sense of security”--he needed *more than one escape route for his peace of mind*.

Some of his men appeared to be nice, normal guys, most were polite and on their best behavior when Elvis was around, but there were a few I couldn’t stand due to the things that occurred when Elvis was not nearby. Perhaps those men thought as one said, “Who that bitch think she is--” and other unprintable comments; maybe they thought I was getting “too close” to their boss and was likely to tell him “things”...whatever, I took their comments seriously, never went back and tried not to ever be near them again.

Though I did have a couple of “run ins” with a few of his guards in Las Vegas, thankfully--they failed miserably at “breaking up” our friendship-- because Elvis kept the lines open to us.

Several weeks passed before Elvis mentioned that he had not seen me and I hadn’t been by the house. I didn’t want to tell him anything, but he insisted on a reason. I gave him a watered down version of my reasons hoping he wouldn’t ask further. His response was no surprise.

Elvis listened, then in a soft conciliatory tone of voice, said I was a beautiful woman even though I “didn’t think so”, and special; I “should be pleased when men noticed” and that he was sure his men were “only trying to compliment me in their tactless way” -I “must have misunderstood”. I almost hung up on him but then I realized he didn’t know the entire story. I was not going to tell him so I let it drop. He suddenly changed his mind, as if he heard my thoughts and told me if I felt that strongly about it, he would make certain I would “never have to deal with them again” but he excused them saying how they were just “country boys” and sometimes lacking in good manners. He thought I was just too sensitive. After all he said, look how we joke about things...that doesn’t bother you, does it? I had to tell him no; I didn’t think or take what he said seriously and he was probably right, I just didn’t know them as I did him. He quickly responded in his macho way, “Good thing too -I’d be jealous!” and I had to laugh; he always could smooth things over with that sense of humor.

I could understand his bodyguard/friends protecting him and trying to keep him clear of unwanted events, especially after the evening I waited for Elvis to get around to whatever it was he asked me to “stop by the house” for; it was well past midnight before I finally was at home in my own bed. While waiting I met a couple of the young women who regularly hung out at Elvis’ front gate hoping to get an invitation to come inside. One of them showed me a highly prized object that she had with Elvis name on it. I was somewhat taken aback when I discovered her prize was an unused, doctor prescribed suppository for colon problems that she said her girlfriends had stolen from one of his cars a few months earlier when he had been moving back to Perugia Way. Apparently there were two packages prescribed for him, the sack from the pharmacy had been on the front seat and someone took the bag and kept the contents as souvenirs. The young woman telling me this was thrilled to have one of them-especially since it had his name on the pharmacy label. She went on to say that Elvis had been “really mad” at whomever were the “thieves” and she said he wouldn’t let them hang around his gate any more if he knew they were the ones who took his medications and they hoped he never found out! There were some articles of clothing taken as well, but their nerve and inconsideration in *taking his prescribed medication* just about floored me! At that time, I was not aware he

had “colon problems”...but reason said, with his lifestyle making films, anyone might have problems, as there was often a lot of stress and waiting around to work.

### ***In Vegas “get’ tin it On...”***

Elvis married Priscilla soon after, moved into a new home and was making movies, she was pregnant and when he finished the last film, they began spending a good deal of time in Memphis and I didn’t have to find excuses for not “dropping by”. They were expecting a baby within weeks of being married and of course, speculation ran high out in “media land” as to whether they were pregnant before the wedding, however when their little girl was born 9 months to the day of their wedding, that shut down that rumor. Though there were a few who said, “They waited a month (or two) to announce the kid’s birth--” which was pretty stupid “journalism” since there were photographers at the hospital the day the baby was born!

Elvis said, “Lord, isn’t there *anything* they won’t do or say to mess with my head! They’re steppin’ close to the line screwin’ with my family ‘n better watch their step. This boy won’t take it so easy anymore!” Always, trying to protect his family, Priscilla and everyone he cared about from the fallout of his fame, he became even more protective now that he had a wife and a baby daughter, both of whom he adored. Priscilla wasn’t “allowed” out the front gate without an escort of bodyguards-he wasn’t taking any chances with his family-period; especially if he wasn’t around to handle things himself.

A friend of ours worked for “*Arrowhead*”, a bottled water delivery company and serviced the area of Beverly Hills, going into lots of celebrity homes as a result. He was a Supervisor, riding along with a customer serviceman when they pulled into an expensive, beautifully laid out property to find there were several cars parked in the large driveway and on the street. A man who was outside said there was a birthday party going on, being given for Elvis Presley’s daughter Lisa Marie who was very young at the time, and Elvis was inside. The home belonged to the director of one of Elvis’ movies, I think it was **Gene Nelson** but I’m not certain of that now -Elvis also went to **Norman Taurog’s** home a time or two, he said. Anyway, our friend threw a jug of bottled water over his shoulder and followed the serviceman inside the side entrance to the kitchen area. They had just got inside and were about to change the water jugs when suddenly standing in the door way, looking about 8 feet tall and ready to kill was Elvis himself. Our friend said he thought his heart stopped for a few seconds because he was sure Elvis was going to kill them both before the lady of the house stepped up and said, “Oh, it’s okay Elvis, it’s just the water boys”. Elvis relaxed, saying he had heard there were strange men in the house and he wanted to be sure nothing was a miss. He said “Hello fellas, sorry to bother you” and went back to the party. Our friend said he was stunned by how handsome Elvis

was, that pictures didn't do the man justice, and how he "loomed over them like a giant standing in the doorway ready to "draw down on us!" He was very impressed with how soft spoken he was after he saw the situation was alright and apologized for bothering them. It was the highlight of our friend's entire experience working for that water company, and of course he's remained a big fan since.

In 1969 Elvis was staying a few floors below the top level of the new **International Hotel**-the hotel's 30<sup>th</sup> floor where a huge penthouse suite was being built for special guest star performers was not yet complete. I heard him telling one couple it was to be the "Presidential Suite"-- but that changed later on. He had asked if we wanted to come by after one of the shows and visit and told me who to come upstairs with, (a person who now says they "never heard of" me and that is fine with me – I do not want to "give them any publicity" anyway). I hadn't seen Elvis since before his wedding though we had conversed by phone a few times. He had his little daughter, was crazy about her and things were going well with his career, especially after the television special. I was anxious to see him- talk to him face to face.

When the guard let us off the elevator, Elvis was standing in the hall behind a roped off section, talking with friends and other lucky people who got up there. He was grinning like a possum, looking beautiful with jet-black hair, sideburns, soft brown jacket with just one button that held it together, matching pants with a wide silver concho belt slung about his hips, and no shirt. He was very thin, almost too much so for his height; he would have made a great clothes model for men's suits that is for certain!

So many people were present that it was very difficult to talk to anyone, much less him, though he was trying to "get to everyone" as one lady said, then fanning herself, she added, "He's *sure* getting to me!" She wasn't the only one-Elvis was "allowing" them to slip their hands and arms beneath his jacket to hug and kiss him, but he was being "careful" not to let it get *too out of hand!* There was quite a bit of giggling and laughter coming out of him- and from the lucky women - lots of squealing!

I was in Vegas with three other women, but Elvis cautioned me on the "dangers for lone women in Vegas!" He asked, "You've never seen my wedding ring, have you?" and proudly held out a hand so warm it felt hot, and then laced his fingers through mine. His little finger was purple, swollen and many scratches were on his hands. He said they were from "reaching out" to the audience and added he was practicing for a Karate degree and would soon compete. He went into a long discussion on what that meant and on the many wonders of Karate on the mind and body.

Just months before his death, Elvis finally gave that wedding ring away -so said one of his stepbrothers. It wasn't the original wedding ring that Priscilla placed on his finger and he lost; this ring was a replacement and had baguettes down the center and round stones mounted along both sides with all set in platinum white gold. He and Priscilla also had matching horseshoe diamond rings mounted in platinum white gold; he was said to have "given his horseshoe ring away" to "just a fan" at one of his last concerts. During his early rise to fame he had worn several horseshoe rings, from simple to elegant and some of those he gave away to fans as well. He had one favorite that he said was purchased from a pawn shop and he wore it often, and even had it repaired by adding a "fence behind the horse head" to strengthen it when the band began to bend easily; it's original "look" before repairs can be seen in those 1956 black and white photos taken by a professional photographer hired by the Colonel to follow Elvis around and take pictures of everything he did. Those were some super nice photos-sometimes it seemed Elvis *never* took a bad picture! **[David Wertheimer, Photography ® 1956-57]** Always generous of heart, Elvis gave that ring away to an old friend from Tupelo after "running into her" on the street in Memphis in the 1970's; probably he "just had to give her something" because she was so happy to see him again. Many times Elvis would go for a drive and "end up in Tupelo just lookin' and remembering" he often said. He was a man who never forgot his "roots".

Several celebrities drifted in and out of the suite of rooms; as they arrived he spoke with them as if holding court, sitting across the room at a table and was cute to observe. Laughing and joking, his eyes danced at everyone and everything, darting around the room, back and forth, never missing a thing going on around him. He mentioned he was dropping 8 to 10 pounds at each performance and had to drink lots of water to replenish the fluids in his body and said that his "sweat wasn't salty anymore"; that comment made one young lady ask, "Elvis, can I taste it?" (his sweat). He looked at her, shook his head and said, "No..." He drank only water with a twist of lemon from a highball glass while I was there.

Elvis was very much like a young star-struck teen talking about all the celebrities who had come over to see him, saying in an awed tone of voice, "They were standing in line--gawd, **Cary Grant** standin' out there waitin' to see me!" He couldn't get over how many of whom he thought were the "real stars" *wanted* to come see *his show*. *And stood in line to do it!* He was totally in a state of "disbelief" –

I was a little awed too, we sat in the show room within "spitin' distance" of **Cary Grant**. **Merv Griffin** and his party were in a booth right in front of us, **Juliet Prowse**, **Rita Moreno**, **Rona Barret**, **Ray Stevens**, **T. G. Shepherd**, **Jerry Lee Lewis**, **Jimmy Dean**, and **Nancy Sinatra Jr.**, **Mac Davis**, **Waylon Jennings** and some other well known musicians. And other celebrities whose names I can't remember now were in the

next booths and several studio heads were seated on the other side. As for **Cary Grant** -it was amazing how he did not look any different than he did on screen! Super handsome! In fact most of them looked just like they did in “the movies and on TV”! It was Rita Moreno who loudly said to an onstage Elvis: “You are soooo sexy! You must have Mexican blood!” Without missing a beat he replied, “I’d love to try some---after the show honey!” The audience laughed!

(I regret that I did not keep a written record of the many celebrities, who were in line to see Elvis and those who were in the back stage area and upstairs areas, but in those days, I had a steel trap memory; it did not enter my mind that I would “forget”! Me-forget? Heck, I had to force unnecessary things from my memory, like old no longer used addresses, phone numbers and etc... Now, I have to make notes from room to room or forget what I’m there for! I do apologize for not keeping a diary or at least better “notes”- as for what was happening around Elvis. Some things I did make a point to remember and even jotted down a few things he said and did as soon as I was out of sight. Thank heaven I did because even with those, I still do rely on friends who were there about some events because I do want to be as factual as possible – this is my last book regarding those days and Elvis; I don’t want to forget anything and also, to give his fans the view we had that was a bit different in that we were not working for him, living around him, indebted to him, wanting anything from him or on the receiving end of anything more expensive than a piece or two of jewelry and a few unasked for “handouts” along the way. It’s the least I can do; he was one of my dearest friends, the brother I never grew up with, the light on a dark, dreary day and the guy who sometimes was a “little boy” who could turn me into a “mother hen” as if he were my child. It was a confusing mix of emotions knowing him, and I’d do it all again in one of **Charlie Hodge’s** “New York” minutes” - if I could. And you can bet thousands of other people would jump on too.)

Once up stairs I listened as several young women were complaining that they had not been able to get upstairs to his floor earlier in the week because his wife and baby had been there. I heard Elvis telling them about his new car, his baby and saw them fondling and kissing him. He was friendly, gracious and warm, but gently removed the more persistent ones. He was not doing the tease and joke routine he was prone to do when he was single. One lovely young woman asked if he was happy---he grinned, gave her a look that said he knew exactly what she meant and replied, “I’m happier than I’ve ever been in my life-why?” She blushed as he bit his lip and winked.

There were several women making plays for him during the time I was there-he fended them off as casually as before. He flirted a little; it was his nature to flirt, and a part of his friendly personality and came as easily as a sunrise to him. I noticed he was making it clear that now he was married -there would be none of that -especially when



one young woman kept pushing for time alone with him. She ended up being quietly escorted from the suite. I've heard and read the stories of him having been cheating on his wife from early in their marriage -but I didn't see any signs of this in his behavior with obviously willing, beautiful young women -in fact, he was politely avoiding them as much as possible.

He sat on the couch, then at the table, several of his men came over, spoke to him and he'd nod yes or no and they would go out and bring in more people to replace some who had left. He signed long scarves; not like those he later used, menus by the dozens and napkins galore as he spoke with people. He posed for a picture or two and I wished for my camera but recalled the time I had asked him to allow me to take candid pictures and how he seemed to resent someone he trusted doing that. When the photo sessions were for business, he was always available and at ease -*outwardly*. He may have been the most photographed person in the history of our time as has been said, but the ironic thing about that is he said he *hated* having his picture taken, but it was "part of this business" and he accepted it, tolerated it and tried always to look his best because of it.

I watched him and the reactions from the people as he walked around, making conversation here and there, relating how nervous he had been, demonstrating physically what he'd felt. (He had been so nervous the first couple of shows, he had stammered, stuttered and made comments about it on stage.) He finally came over to me and I told him I found it difficult to connect the man I had known for so long with the man I had seen on stage, but I thought he was fantastic. He grinned, eyes dancing delightedly and then reached over and pulled me forward by the arms and kissed me hard. I had bruises on my arms from his fingers for days after. He sat down briefly, asking about my family and was holding my hand for several moments, and then got up to greet other friends.

He was special that night, telling us about Lisa Marie his "precious little angel" and how she fell asleep laying in his arms, then he went to sleep and she tried waking him up by peeling his eyelids open "to see if "Alv-us" was in there" and that he missed her and Priscilla so much already -they had been gone one day. "I should have done it sooner..." he said, grinning shyly. Suddenly, he got up and went to his bedroom, returning with a Bible. He read several passages on wives, husbands and love, in a soft but sincere voice, holding all who heard, spellbound. But I overheard one of his men saying, "Shit! Who got him started on that stuff?" They soon began trying to change the subject.

At 3:30 am Elvis said goodnight and graciously said "you all can stay a while if ya want" and went to his room alone. It's a wonder the carpet didn't get sucked off the floor when everyone took a big sighing breath as the door shut behind him. Some people left, but a few stayed around as if he might come back. We decided to wait. He did—in a robe and pajamas and sat on the couch, drank a soupy shake of some kind and took what

looked like vitamins (though I think they were probably for his medical problems that were mostly unspoken of at that time in his life). He began pretending they were drugs of some sort when a girl began warning him about “over dosing”. He cracked up when she finally “caught on”.

I asked him to sign a couple of menus and a set of 3 small photos, he did; signing each a little different; my favorite he signed, “Thanks for everything, love. Elvis Presley and dated it. The photos were taken in 1956, he looked at them for a long moment then added on my favorite one, “To Wanda” before handing them back with a little smile looking at me as if asking “why these?” I said they are some of my favorites; I wasn’t lucky enough to know you then. He said, “Thank you honey.” I told him he had “finally reached too thin” and he threw back his head and laughed. I’ll remember that laugh and those eyes forever. When I think about those photos he signed now, I realized it was one more time that he “appeared to read my thoughts”- he had no way of knowing which photo was my favorite pose, yet after he had signed them all, he looked through them again and chose my favorite one to add “to Wanda”. And the way he handed them to me, looking straight into my eyes--- I wish I could ask him.

He was barefoot, one big toe bandaged and he explained, “Ingrown toenail-hurts like hell...” then grinned saying, “Excuse my bare feet- I’m on my way to bed.”

A young woman asked about his pajamas, he stood up, opened his robe and showed us the dark blue silk Karate styled outfit, with his initials on the pocket. The women around him ohhhed and ahhhed, he had an amused look on his face. One woman said, “Elvis, can I hug you before you fasten that up?” She meant the robe he was just going to tie closed.

He looked surprised, and then grinned and said, “Come here baby!” She all but jumped over the coffee table, leaping on him and he staggered holding his head back to keep her from clunking him with hers. Cute and short **Charlie Hodge**, Elvis’ box guitarist on stage and who also handed him the super cold cups of water, the scarves and was a close personal friend, moved in closer, ready to assist if Elvis got “in trouble” with the lady; he kept a close eye on all the action. Charlie had an apartment in Los Angeles in later days, but he had his own room at Graceland most of the time. Elvis had met him early in his career when Charlie sang in a group that Elvis liked. Then on the way to Germany, both men were in the military but in different groups that were on board ship, Charlie at Elvis’ request bunked with him. Elvis said that Charlie helped him so much by being there; he didn’t know how he would have made it all that time alone. Charlie writes in his book that he “listened to Elvis cry and sob into his pillow night after night”. His mother had just been buried, Elvis had not had a chance to grieve and he had never been alone before, without family or friends. As a result of those long days at sea, Elvis felt a

strong connection with Charlie and wanted him with him, saying he needed to have a friend like him close by, so Charlie was the one who had the pleasure of having a permanent Graceland address through the years; he also had a lot of bad comments made about him brought about by jealousy among the “Memphis Mafia” members over that address! That and the fact that Elvis might sometimes almost “mercilessly” tease Charlie who knew he didn't mean it. Elvis loved Charlie dearly and worried about him almost as much as Charlie worried over Elvis! Off and on several of the “guys” lived or had rooms at Graceland, including **Joe Esposito** for a while.

Now, Charlie watched the woman who was moaning “Ohhh God” as she hugged, writhed and pressed against Elvis and then pulling his shirt open to kiss his chest she was moaning, “Oh Elvis, Oohhh”! Elvis looked over her head and winked at us saying, “Man, never ceases to amaze me! “ Then added, “It’s my cologne...” and gently removed her, kissed her quickly on the lips and sat her down on the couch where she appeared to be slightly in shock-and happy about it! He re-tied his robe as he moved further from her, saying, “I’m not gonna take any more chances!” and rolled his eyes heavenward as he bit his lower lip.

Everyone laughed, Elvis also. He began telling stories about the events happening during the shows, the audiences and how excited he was to be working live and how scared he became each time he went out and related that he had to take stuff to keep his nerves quiet enough to be able to keep food down.

He had someone bring out a new costume, white with nail head studs and a macramé belt he planned to wear with it, that he said a friend had made for him. He was just showing us the intricate knotting of the corded belt when one of his men whispered into his ear. Elvis looked up, nodded then said, “Okay, I’m goin’ now.” He said goodnight, thanked us for coming to see him and made his way to the bedroom.

The woman who’d hugged his pajamas with him in them, was holding on to his arm, appearing to be begging him to take her with him but he removed her hands, handed her over to one of the guys, gave her a quick kiss on the lips and went through those doors; behind them appeared to be a hallway or alcove with two sets of doors that led to double doors and behind that was the bedroom that I think, was part of an adjoining suite.

I was leaving at that time and Elvis saw me before the first doors were closed, he winked and with a grin, held up his hand in an O.K. sign, then blew a kiss and saluted. His smile was dazzling, his eyes glowing. I thought of him that way for a long time, because he was so “alive and happy” to be working at something he truly loved, and because in giving me the “okay to leave now” sign was amusing, especially since “it took

a while to get that right” after getting to know him--and his inclination to be in “control”- he was letting me know he was glad I “remembered’.

(Elvis was said to be a “shy, humble guy” off stage; when he became ELVIS on stage performing, he was anything but shy or humble! He said being ELVIS was something he did, how he made his living and that when he was home, he was “just an average ‘Joe’...uhhuh.... Anyone who saw him “at home” said he was always “dressed to the 9’s” and anything but “average” looking. Even his daughter agreed; that was just him, the little boy who wore hand me down clothes, repaired by his mom so he could wear them to school. He was shy; wearing someone else’s cast off’s repaired or not, made him “different” from his peers. And so, as an adult, he dressed well, and took advantage of being “different”. It worked for him! Oh boy did it ever- and we all loved it!)

### ***Even in the “wild blue yonder”--***

While in Las Vegas, I met a young woman who was an airline hostess and had come from Ohio to catch Elvis’ show. She related that she had met him on a flight from California to Memphis. Elvis and three of his men came aboard the back entrance of the plane, were seated in a curtained area in first class and she was to serve them. He was “so drop dead gorgeous and his mere presence so overwhelming” she said, it made it almost impossible for her to think. “He was wearing a dark blue suit with red and blue trim on the pants and sleeves and looked wonderful” she went on, and not wanting to appear foolish, she adapted a “cold front” and asked if they needed anything. Elvis glanced up, with eyes so “blue they pierced my heart” she related, and he asked if he could have a glass of ice since he had his “own water”. She said she must have been a little icy herself because when she brought it to him she couldn’t bring herself to look him in the face-he was “just too handsome.”

She returned to other duties and presently she entered the service area. Elvis pulled aside the curtain and stepped in with her. She said, “The alcove lit up” as he entered, he was so “uniquely beautiful”. He began apologizing for “bothering her” but said he had a problem. It seemed that his men thought now that he had just recently gotten married and had a little baby, that he had “lost his fatal attraction to women” since she was not the least affected or interested in him. He went on to say that normally he would never do such a thing, but his men had bet him that he could not get her to give him her pantyhose, that she would not do that for him. She said he was so endearingly shy, ducking his head and slightly stammering over saying “pantyhose” she almost had a “heart attack”. He went on saying, that he didn’t want to put her on the spot, he would understand if she refused as it was a ridiculous request, but to save face, he thought he’d try anyway.

He was so sweet, so straightforward about it, she said she turned her back, slid them off and handed them over. She admitted that at that moment, if he'd asked her to strip naked she would have! She said, Elvis' eyes danced, he flashed the cutest grin that turned into the brightest Hollywood smile she'd ever seen as he took them said, thank you honey, and went back to collect his "bet". Every time she passed him after that, he'd grin "just so cute" her heart jumped thinking about it. When she escorted him off the plane, he gave her the most "devastating smile" and a kiss like none she'd ever had. After she recovered she found a \$100 dollar bill- his "winnings" he had left in her hand. "He is just a superman -and God, his show is fantastic!" said the still excited airline hostess.

During those first years in Las Vegas, Elvis appeared at the new **International Hotel** where the show room was the largest in town and he was available to his public much more than in later years-security became tighter as his popularity grew. Stories swept back and forth in the women's restrooms in the hotel, about his coming downstairs, entering through the maid's entrance into the ladies powder rooms and surprising women. There, he signed autographs, hugged and kissed and teased, and in general, had fun, delighting in his role of "naughty little boy" much to the delight of the lucky women. And he sometimes sneaked in to the lounge to watch whoever might be performing there between his early show and late show. He liked to catch **Ike and Tina Turner's** show, mostly to watch Tina dance in her "short, raggedy little dress; oh gawd, 'n workin' them legs!" I recall him joking about all the women lining up to meet him etc. In talking he joked that he didn't know how he would manage to sleep alone in a coffin should he die and then very seriously said, "Gonna have a big one, maybe take two girls with me--" I remember laughing and saying, Oh yeah--only two?" He had just commented about Tina Turner's "raggedy little dress" and so quickly replied, "Aww--they could jus' throw Tina's raggedy dress in there with me--that'd do it!" His sense of humor was "crazy" at times-- I hope as time goes on there will be more "finds" of that humor on tape in all those many recording sessions! And I hope they don't "edit" or "censor" that often naughty humor that only he could toss around so casually.

(Within hours after Elvis' death was made public, the roadside's of the highway in front of Elvis' Graceland was packed, jammed and squished with fans, people from around the world were there to mourn and honor Elvis Presley. On one of those days a man driving a pickup truck while under the influence of alcohol came speeding down that highway and ran into the crowd, killing two young women who where there for Elvis; did he meet them at the moment they crossed from human form to spirit? Did they walk together up to meet Jesus as he so often said he wanted to do? Did he somehow know?)

Priscilla and the baby stayed with him off and on during the first month long engagement, and Elvis never looked happier or more handsome. He was on top of the

world and he had vitality greater than anything coming across in those movies. He took rides into the desert, often picking up a few fans to chat with while out, and he “played” with his audience while on stage, flirting a little bit, kissing women and joking with people at the front tables. Though he appeared to be at ease on stage, he was always nervous, always a bit unsure until he got out there and “felt” the audience’s response, then he relaxed, giving them just what they came for-Elvis, at his best.

The second night after seeing him upstairs, we caught the cocktail show and it was outstanding as he was “warmed up” by the first show. We sat near ringside, he could see us as he paced the stage and he smiled a time or two, winked and then moved to stand before us, looking down he pointed a finger and began doing some moves usually seen at strip shows, causing several women in the area to squeal. The look on his face was that of a “mean little boy” eyes glinting with the devil in them as he rocked his pelvis, bent his knees and wriggled his torso until his belt twisted around in front. He stopped, looked down at it, adjusted it correctly, quickly ran a finger up the zipper of his pants as if making sure it was closed, winked and said something to the ladies staring up at him, getting one to squeal and then began the moves again as the band kept up the music behind him. I always wondered exactly what he said to those women who squealed or nearly swooned-he’d never tell me-but he sure laughed about it. One lady who received his “attention” and who had been dressed in a low cut evening gown said he told her “Honey, from up here I can see--- down to your-- knees!” Yep, she squealed!

He backed up with a swaying knee, toe sliding kind of move, dropped to one knee, shimmed his upper body and finished the song almost on top of our table. He looked up, grinning from ear to ear and his face was filled with joy-he had everything he ever wanted, a wife, a baby and a career-it was written on his face, in that happy smile as he stood and his audience applauded and cheered. He immediately went into “*Can’t Help Falling In Love*” and ended the show to groans and howls of “More-More!”

At 4:00 am the next morning, (I was home by then) he called asking if we “girls” had a good time. Actually, he was just checking to see that we got home safe-something he often did-for many of his friends.

### ***Palm Spring Hideaway...***

It was 1971 before I got to visit with him face to face again and it happened in Palm Springs. He did not know I was coming by and he had just finished a month’s engagement in Las Vegas. Elvis liked to go to Palm Springs to “get away”, to “unwind” he said- before he went home to be “husband and daddy”. He said he had had bought a newer place, **Red Skeleton** was said to live just down the street “a ways”, also **Danny**

**Kaye** who flew Elvis and Priscilla in a small jet airplane said to have belonged to **Frank Sinatra** at one time, to Las Vegas and back to Palm Springs after they got married and several other notables lived in the surrounding area. The family who owned most of the **Circus-Circus Hotel** was also neighbors; one of their daughter's wanted Elvis to come to her birthday "bash" but he politely declined. She never had a good word to say about him for years afterward. He said if he "honored every invitation for such things, I'd never have time for anything else!" That was a true conclusion-he received thousands of invitations and most he didn't even see-his father took care of those type things.

His house was a typical Southern California desert style home, not *that* impressive but it did have a lot of windows for viewing the beautiful desert and mountains, a high cement and block privacy fence with big iron gates and a massive rock fireplace that he said burned wood though he had allergy problems with that, so it was also a gas fireplace. There was lots of mirror and the usual drab-green and gold, airy drapes. Elvis said he liked the privacy of the master suite-he could get away from everything to read or "whatever". And he said his cook liked the kitchen, it was all modern and convenient. Some of his men were there but there were a couple new guys, and the usual bunch of young women waiting around the gate complaining that they had not seen Elvis out yet.

There were some homes that were used by Elvis but were never in his name and were the homes belonging to Col. Parker and one **Jack Warner** owned that Elvis leased as a "hide-away" though it hardly did that since a well known gossip columnist lived very near, and of course, the fans "found him" as usual; however the one he bought after marrying Priscilla he kept and used often when he came into town. It was sold not long after his death and I've heard that it has been turned into a "bed and breakfast" kind of place with people being able to tour the house and sleep in Elvis' bedroom. This house is located on Ladera Circle, I think, in Palm Springs- but not sure about that address after more than 30 years-I have been told one can look it up on line and even view some of it from there; I don't "surf" or do much with computers.

Elvis was not up according to the people hanging around his gate and I was about to leave when word finally came out that he was up, the gates were opened and several cars left. I just walked through and headed toward the back patio where he had told me to go-to the back entrance if I ever "stopped by" saying he would probably be "out there getting some sun". I got there about the time he came out and threw himself into a chair on the patio, leaned on the table and began grumping at those trying to engage him in conversation. Elvis looked thin, nervous and pale and was squinting in the sunlight through puffy eyelids. He looked tired as he slumped in the chair, drank orange juice and held his head as if it ached. Several girls went up to him, one hugged him but he was not responsive, shrugging them off as so much lint from his clothing. He appeared to be waiting for someone, asking if they had arrived or called yet. Then when told yes, he

rushed off into the back area of the house. He returned with a very attractive blond girl in tow and took her outside onto the patio. I went out and around the front planning to go to my car and leave if he were busy. I didn't know there was a seating area behind the large yucca plantings and that's where they were. Elvis' eyes snapped open, he did a sort of double take, then jumped up saying, "what in hell are you doin' here-who brought you?"

Before I could answer, he took my arm, said excuse me to the blond and led me to the side of the house and in a stern voice said, "You shouldn't be here -go home!" I explained I had come over with a friend who had an appointment in town and I just thought I'd see if he was home-and I reminded him he had told me I "could drop by any time".

He relaxed, saying that he was just "unwinding" from being "trapped in that hotel room so much" and that Priscilla "approved" of his "getting away" and that he was going home soon. I asked who the blond was and he looked at me a moment, then said he had met her in Vegas; she was from Palm Springs and was going to go out for the movies-she wanted advice and he was going to "put her onto some people she could trust" in the business. Then he looked me in the eyes and quietly said, "It's not what you might think-I'm not playin' with her."

I believed him. He went on to say his men "did their thing" and he did his; then he laughed saying, "Why am I tellin' you this? An' what are you doin' here-this is no place for you either!"

It was as if he had read my mind; rumors were already flying about trouble in his paradise. And it was not idle gossip-his wife was being seen around Southern California with other men, dancing, having dinner and at Karate matches-without Elvis and the word was-*he didn't know*, though it was known that he and his "Cilla were having "spats." She wasn't happy not having him home at night, as he had been when he made movies. She didn't like his being gone weeks at a time, the fans always around, the women going for him night after night and his playfulness with them on stage-and off, if they managed to get back stage or upstairs. Nor did she approve of his interest in religions, reading so many books that she didn't understand or want to listen to him explain – in fact several people, one being a long time maid for Elvis' family, heard her tell him to "shut up, I'm tired of hearing it!" She didn't understand why he cared so much about his fans, why he let them hang around his gates and take up so much of his time. But Elvis loved his fans, felt he owed them for all the things they had and said, "It's the least I can do, their bein' here, carin' enough to come keeps everything goin' – you'd think she'd see that! I'd be nothin' 'n have nothin' without them!"



And then there was the woman whose last name was Parker who filed an “in your face” paternity against Elvis claiming that he “made” her pregnant as they stood behind a door and his wife was in the next room. Her attorney filed the lawsuit; Elvis denied it, swore to defend himself and passed a lie detector test. However the gossip “rags” and main stream newspapers carried every detail and as he put it, “full of ‘D’, ‘D’, ‘T’s” (distractions, distortions and tales he’d say, then sometimes he didn’t “hold back” saying “damnded dirty turd-eaters”) as it unfolded. Sometimes it seemed as though he was a “permanent part of the checkout line” in every grocery and drug store around. When the baby was born, blood tests determined he was not the father however in that day there was no DNA test to rule out the *remote* possibility. Of course all that “testing” took time; all the legal wrangling and worrying, depositions and more depositions, had to have some “fallout” in Elvis’ home life, especially since these things *continued for years* because the woman kept finding attorney’s *willing* to continue “harassing *Elvis Presley*, the most famous entertainer of that time frame ‘in the belief he would”, said Elvis, “get tired of it all and quietly settle, just lawyers hoping to make big bucks”. He said *he was not the* father and wasn’t going to give those lawyers a nickel-so he continued to fight and pay his own attorneys to handle things. Knowing Elvis and his sense of what was honorable, had he been with the woman and were there a chance he was the baby’s daddy -he would have admitted it and took care of the child for life.

The sad thing about the one law suit was, it appeared to “open the door” for other women to try it...none of them would “stick” either, and it was the lawyers that made the money off their fantasies said Elvis, and of course, he had to pay his lawyers to put an end to those claims also. It became he said, “a never endin’ nightmare...gawd!” Fortunately, those suits were dropped pretty quickly when they discovered Elvis was no “easy mark”.

Elvis and his wife had been arguing about these things for a while according to his “insider friends” and she was “making a life of her own” without him or his advice. He was said to be “chafing at the bit” and they were at odds more often than not. Elvis didn’t say much about it to me, but there was trouble in paradise and both he and his wife had been changing in various ways, she was out and about with new friends, including men and Elvis was quietly seeing other women as well. Rumors began to fly-most of them he didn’t know about. Elvis, always the dreamer wished that his wife had welcomed becoming a part of his lifestyle -mainly; he wanted her to be patient, to keep the home fires burning, take care of their children and be happy when he came home. He thought that was reasonable, but she didn’t want any more children and told him so shortly after their baby was born. He who had said many times he would like to have children, who proudly said his “Cilla” wanted a family also, *was stunned*; it changed his whole outlook. And caused a big ripple in his pond-- A close friend of his said “Priscilla didn’t realize she had cut his heart to the core” or that Elvis took it very “personally” and

the friend thought, “That was the beginning of the end to their relationship--it changed how he saw her forever”. No doubt she felt this change and perhaps that and how lonely she was with nothing to do but wait on him to “send for her” or for him to come home, it became too much for her to deal with. It is said he told her to “find something to do, join clubs, get involved etc.” to help fill her time, and so she “got involved in having fun, meeting new people outside of his “circle of friends” and discovered a life she had not experienced with him, and he didn't notice for a while; too many things were happening regarding his career, and appearances in Las Vegas.

He was said to have yelled after her as she went out the door leaving him alone in the Vegas penthouse suite-at 9:30 am in 1970, “If I wasn’t doin’ this you wouldn’t be able to go shoppin’ ever damn day!” He went to bed around 3:30 am and usually didn’t get up until afternoon. She came over to visit, didn’t always bring their daughter, slept at night while he worked and left for the day while he slept; none of his men wanted the job of “babysitting” him –not when she was there-but had “gone out”. *They* tried to be “out” those times also.

This day in Palm Springs he asked me to sit down, introduced me to the blond who had won a beauty contest thus the movie deal. (I do not recall her name- it was not **Sheila Ryan** or **Susan Henning**) I said I had to go after a couple of minutes of small talk. Elvis walked me around the house toward the street, thanked me for coming by to see him and then suddenly took off the beautiful wide cuff silver and turquoise bracelet he was wearing and put it on my left wrist, squeezing the bracelet on my arm so it wouldn't fall off; in doing so, the bracelet cracked but at that time we neither noticed. I was stunned; he said, “I want you to have this; it is the best turquoise” and he told me never to use any jewelry cleaner or water to clean it and said it was “hand made for him”. I think I thanked him, but he bluntly said, “Please don’t come by unless you call first from now on. It would be better for you, if you didn’t do that. Things are not the same-not as they used to be. There is too much going on that you don’t know anything about. I would rather that you not become involved.”

He was dead serious, his tone of voice one of “don’t question my word” and though I was full of questions, I accepted his command. Later, I was to learn there were indeed things going on with his career, public demand, earning capacity, new “ownership” having to do with his management and unrelated to anything he had control over, and there were death threats. He was worried about his family and his friends. Elvis was a *huge draw*, most transactions were cash or credit card and the money “rolled in” so easily; from all over the United States and overseas as well. There wasn’t another entertainer in the world during those years after 1969 who could command the audience response, with all of its side line activities that surrounded such a big money ticket, other than Elvis Presley. That alone attracted some big interest money and business, one that

Elvis could in no way prevent or escape. Las Vegas was “booming” when he was in town, hotels were booked; sometimes you couldn’t get a decent room anywhere near the **International Hotel** that had become the **Las Vegas Hilton**, unless you paid a high price for it. Every hotel in town did business with Elvis fans that came from all over the world, some staying for days; others weeks and there were quite a few who stayed for the entire engagement!

And of course, the Mafia was alive and well, doing business in Las Vegas. So much “clean” cash came into that town, it was a “mecca” for all sorts of activity, so much so that the FBI took an interest in Elvis and the huge drawing power he had. Elvis didn’t mind, he liked “law enforcement” and agreed to have an “undercover officer” working in his organization. A few years later Elvis confided to me that he had “offers related to using his plane to carry “things around” [he did not say but I thought he meant “some kind of drugs”] but that didn’t happen-no way would he do anything of that nature. Because Elvis didn’t like being pressured, he was more than willing to help the FBI and because he did, several big drug deals were prevented and people involved were caught. In fact, until after his death most of this information was not public; very few of the people around him, in his organization were aware that anything was amiss though I am *sure* those *he trusted* had some inside information from him. He did not tell me any details, just mentioned that there had “been some changes, things you don’t need to know – so please, don’t ask me anything.” There were lots of things I noticed, mostly concerning his attitude, the anger that he didn’t discuss and “new faces” hanging around that didn’t look like anyone he would befriend, but I didn’t question or mention anything we wondered about. It did hurt to see the changes happening to Elvis, the man, and there was nothing we could do about it except listen when or if, he wanted to talk. Mainly, we all tried to boost his spirit, get him to laughing and hopefully, give him “a time of peace, and rest from daily cares” as he did time and again for those (including us) who made the trek to Vegas to see him perform.

After the big criminal investigations of the 80’s many mafia connections were caught/and or disposed of, Vegas began to be a “family vacation site” with hotels trying to out do each other through their “theme” hotels. All of that began with Elvis coming to town from 1969 to 12-76 when he swore he’d never play Vegas again and he didn’t. He showed Las Vegas how to put on a “family” show that people of all ages would flock to see as well as a sometimes “blistering hot” late night adult show; Vegas learned well. And of course, there is the element of “old Vegas” under and behind it all, but their reinvention of Las Vegas has been amazing to say the least; however even with the fantastically beautiful hotels up and down the strip, the excitement Elvis brought to Las Vegas is gone-if you were not there at that time you probably would not realize or understand what that means-but many thousands of people who were there can’t help but remember, and miss him.

[Recently, (10-2009) I watched a Documentary shown on the “*Discovery Channel*” about the investigations that went on through 1960’s- 1985 regarding the Mafia and Las Vegas gaming etc., photos of many men caught up in criminal activities were shown. I was surprised to see some I recognized as being present at times when Elvis was performing. One of them was familiar as he had been around the high roller tables and on one occasion rode up on the elevator to the top floor penthouse the same time as I. His name was Anthony Spilatro but I had heard him called “Tony” by Col. Parker, Elvis’ manager when he was playing cards at the high roller tables, and by other persons. According to the documentary made a few years after Elvis’ death, “Tony” had a brother and both men were in line to be called in to court to testify against those caught in the FBI investigations. Both men were considered potential “tattlers” by the Mafia and both were taken out, beaten severely and buried alive to “shut them up” just days before their court appearance. This was years after Elvis’ death – but “Tony” and his “friends” had been upstairs and “around” with Elvis’ manager at the **Hilton Hotel** during the last 3 years Elvis was performing at the Hilton. Were these the “men who appeared to be holding Elvis against his will” that were written and spoken of by **Ed Parker** and others who were witnesses? Are they somehow connected to the “gambling debts” that Col. Parker owed to the hotel? I do not know nor does it seem that anyone else knows, or else they know but won’t talk about it--]

### ***“Things aren’t like they--used to be---”***

When I left Palm Springs that day, Elvis hugged me, unshed tears in his eyes, hanging on like he didn’t want to let go of the past, or something. It was a sad feeling, one I never quite understood until much later. He gave me a book that day, “*Wind From The Carolinas*” saying he had just read it and would like to do a film of it with him playing the three main roles, the young man, the father and the grandfather. His name was written inside; a note from a girl saying she loved him, would he call her, her name and phone number was being used as a book marker. (After Elvis’ death **Robert Conrad** of “*Black Sheep Squadron*” bought the film rights to that book - he too, wanted to play all three parts. I don’t think that book was ever made into a screenplay.)

I had asked Elvis what he did all day while in Palm Springs as there were fans hanging out at the driveway, calling his name and singing his songs even though he was out of sight. He said, “Oh, jus’ sleep-read-just relax. After bein’ shut up in the damn hotel so long, getting out doing the show an’ being hyped up doin’ that, just goin’ out to sit outside with ma feet on the ground is relaxing.” He added, “Nothin’ really-but I need the time-to calm down.”

The truth was, he and Priscilla were struggling to make their lives together work - she didn't like waiting at home and both of them had been dating other people though they publicly appeared to be a happy couple with a young child and nothing much had come out in print concerning their personal problems. They continued getting together for family events, spending time as a couple with their young child, who related in an interview that growing up she was unaware of their problems, she just thought they had a lot of homes. Elvis didn't want a divorce, though Priscilla, who felt like she was "second best", that he loved his career etc; more than he loved her and who told Elvis to stand on his own feet, and take control of his life, invest his money and stop giving it away as fast as he earned it. She had he said, suggested that divorce would be a better arrangement for both of them, but he thought she would realize for the baby's sake, they ought to continue being a family and keep their personal lives private. He said she didn't "know ever" thing, and I can't tell her." The sadness in his voice and the lost look that came and went through his eyes, told far more than his words many times...Elvis was hurting, he didn't know what to do, how to fix it and blamed himself, but he wouldn't reveal it openly to the world, instead he appeared to enjoy being "free again" and so did Priscilla as she pursued her career ambitions, and was excitedly learning the ways of the "world" outside of Elvis' control and "influence", though she knew fully how valuable that "influence" was to her future, especially since it opened a great many "doors" then, and still does. She quickly found out how difficult it was in "Hollywood-land" to discern who was just "laying it on" and who *actually* did want to be helpful. Sometimes as Elvis said, "It's hard to know which side of their mouth is tellin' the truth." She did learn, and came to realize for herself some of the pressure and stress her ex-husband had to face day and night. She acknowledged, after his death, that had she known back when with Elvis, what she knew after getting into "the business" herself, she might have been more able to understand and help him. Some thirty years later at Graceland, when doing an interview with **Larry King** who asked, "You still love him, don't you?" she answered, "*I still love him; of course, I do!*" and I believe she does...appreciate the things she has because of him. (Elvis was probably up there looking, listening, saying, "Hot damn, I knew it! She still loves me!" Watching and hearing her, I thought maybe he would be right.)

(In 2009 while taking part in hosting a tribute showing of some of Elvis' films on his birthday, when asked by the host what Elvis might be doing where he alive now, Priscilla said, "*Oh, he'd still be singing, probably gospel, and he might be preaching too! He loved his Bible and he loved to teach.*" She was smiling, happily speaking of him and from all appearances shown that day; his ex-wife IS still in love with him. Elvis would be nodding his head, eyes dancing, and saying, "I knew it! Damn, isn't she pretty!")

That day in Palm Springs he said he was going home that night, to Los Angeles where Priscilla and the baby were waiting. There was something about him, different- I asked him how he had been feeling. He stood on one foot, looked at the ground a moment, then

stuck one hand into his pocket and said, “Okay, I feel okay-I’m fine.” He looked up, then out toward the desert, “Just tired now, that’s all.” The sun hit his eyes and for a second they were like blue sapphire fire shooting out of his face; then he smiled, reached out and touched my shoulder, “You all drive careful now,” he said, “watch out for that wind-supposed to come a good one later today.” (Palm Springs is noted for sand storms that take the paint off cars caught in it.)

You do the same, I said and he came to attention and saluted saying, “Yes, Ma’am!” with a quick smile lighting his face before turning toward the back yard area. “I’ll see ya” he said as I headed to my car.

Elvis had worn an unusual outfit that day, olive green pants that looked as though made of velvet, with a white shirt emblazoned with red and green flowers that made him look more pale and drawn. I thought him too thin, his skin stretched over the bones of his face and dark circles under his eyes but then, he had just done 61 knock out shows- in 30 days!

I had the turquoise bracelet repaired; it’s still beautiful but a bit too big and I am afraid to wear it for fear of losing it. I did wear it a few times on the 1978-79 book tour across the United States and was afraid in my nervousness at being questioned by strangers on television and radio; I was going to lose it for sure. It matches the ring that Elvis gave Jimmie. I wore it with tape to keep it in place, on the book tour also, both were from the same piece of turquoise Elvis said, and made the same time as the “naja spirit” necklace that he had purchased in Arizona. I think he was at one of those moments when he “had to give” me something to counter telling me I couldn’t come by to see him anymore, something to “make it up to me” and to ease his own discomfort at having to say it. I wonder who he gave the necklace to- I hope his Lisa Marie has it safe and secure. She will receive the bracelet and ring when this little family is “out of here” and with the Lord and able to watch one of His special members of that group of heavenly vocalists! That’s one “show” I won’t miss – I could never carry a tune...but I always did love to watch and listen to good entertainers and music.

(I would have truly loved “just sitting around listening to those guys and Elvis singing up in the suite- I was never there when that occurred; but I did hear conversation from others who had that prevelige talking among themselves about “hope he will want to sing” and one “regular guest” replying, “He ALWAYS wants to sing; he will later.” And comments abounded concerning the fact that his “group” had not come up yet...they meant J.D. and the Stamps, I surmised...as he didn’t need the musicians up there to sing because there was a nice piano waiting...and often Elvis would play and sing also.I would have loved to have been there at those times---just to listen and watch.)

“Five silver balls and 3 stones- equal his number eight” he said. Very much impressed by the Indian silversmith who with simple tools, made this bracelet for him.



My “forgive me; you can’t drop by unless you call first” bracelet,

In late 1972 I saw Elvis at the hotel in Las Vegas in his dressing room downstairs and in the Imperial Suite of the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, formerly the International Hotel. He had asked us to come, told me the password with instructions regarding his security guys. He added that he “wanted to see some of my friends” and stated he had not in the longest time. He sounded wistful and lonely, as if he was not certain anyone would want to see him.

Jimmie wouldn't take off work, so I went with a couple of friends. I did what Elvis told me. His security man was obnoxious, vulgar and wouldn't let me on the elevator after I had followed Elvis' instructions *and* I was only going to my room that was on the same floor as some of Elvis' band members and backup singers were staying! His security guy implied that he *might* let me go "backstage" if I "took care of" him first! It still amazes me how those scruffy, flat out unappealing guys thought they were "God's gift" or whatever they thought, but there were females who *would* take a chance with one of them! I went to another friend of Elvis' whom I had met before, who went back to talk with **Red West** and this time was told Elvis was "sick and did not" want to see anyone, "especially not a whore"; he wasn't too friendly when she told him a flat "no way" when he told her what she could do for him (the same thing I was told) – and maybe we could "see Elvis later". Between my comments and those of my friend, who in the past had hung out with some of the guys including Red at her apartment and at another young woman's apartment in Las Vegas, there were some choice words with him and then to me -about him. She went off to find another friend with some "pull" to get upstairs. There were several with "some" pull...and all of them had become "unattractive" in actions.

(I have to say now, that after Elvis' death, and though he was one of the three who so deeply hurt and puzzled Elvis over their "tell all book" that was released the same month Elvis died, **Red West** has never participated in "heavy trashing or degrading" Elvis' memory as other "friends" have done in the past 30 some odd years (if he has, I have never seen nor heard it). Elvis said he forgave Red, loved him, and said that "he's like a brother, part of my family". I have an appreciation for **Red West's** integrity; apparently Elvis' faith in him was well grounded.)

Undaunted, and more determined, I located a musician that worked with Elvis' show on stage in Vegas and on tour whom I had met through a mutual friend; he said he would take me backstage even though he didn't usually go up to the suite, hadn't been told he was welcome to come by any of the other "guys" except for a "couple of times". And he had *never* received word from anyone *that he could bring someone* up if he did, though he had been working on Elvis show for 4 years! He added he thought Elvis "*needed* to see some different people". He was a gentleman, he held out his arm, I took it and we marched in behind a couple of celebrities, one being singer **Jimmy Dean**. The door was closed behind us and my sly friend said in a rather pleased voice, "Well, we aced that one!" My girlfriend managed to get upstairs with her friend's help a little later and told me she got some "dirty looks" as they got on the elevator.

There were many people in the dressing room; Elvis looked tired, older and was making an effort to be gracious, hugging and kissing, doing his best to see everyone. **Susan Anton** and **Barbara McNair** had come; **Sammy Davis Jr.** had been there a little



earlier but got a private meeting in the smaller inner room. A fan club had brought Elvis a plaque and he was to receive a gold album award that night. He had just showered, his hair was combed straight back but was falling onto his forehead and he was leaving to go upstairs. We were told to come up in 30 minutes.

Elvis had done a great show, really seeming to enjoy working for the kind of “rowdy” audience, with lots of women carrying on around the front and he was enjoying playing to them. Once he did his routine, leaning over, getting his legs arranged just so, then changing position as if he didn’t do it right, and while he was bent over laughing at the reaction his movements were getting, he looked at the ladies seated right at the edge of the stage, a few feet from him and slowly, teasingly pulled up his pant leg exposing the lace up boots he was wearing—that were a deep candy apple red and one of the women squealed, Elvis dropped the pant leg back and with an amused smile on that face, shook his head as if he couldn’t get over the reaction he got. Then he slammed into a version of “*I Can’t Stop Lovin’ You*” and rocked the house. He seemed to be pushing that show, driving it with all the power he could that night. And his band worked hard keeping it going for him; I think he wasn’t following the “planned” routine as I saw some of them hustling for the music sheets in the orchestra a time or two—but then he wasn’t one to always stick to the schedule-of anything!

We finally got upstairs and into the absolutely gorgeous suite - what I recall most is the fantastic chandeliers and elegance of layout all done in pastels, gold, white, though I can’t recall the furniture layout in detail now. It was like walking into a mansion all right, this time one nearly touching the “stars in the heavens”! People were enjoying the view of Las Vegas, but I don’t like heights--no way did that appeal to me!

Elvis was already mingling; I noticed he looked different, thinner, dressed in black, a long scarf of red and black hung around his neck, his face appeared radiant, skin glowing against the blackness of his clothes and his perfectly coiffed hair. He was more electrifying than ever; maybe it was “jus’ these huge, gorgeous chandeliers lighting the rooms and reflectin’ off the oil I put on my skin when ‘um over here livin’ in all this dry air” he said while lifting his arm toward the ceiling. Everyone looked up at the dazzling fixtures over head while he stood there watching them. It was amazing how he could orchestrate a room full of people-on and off stage.

The room was alive with his presence, people still fell apart at his touch and he appeared not to notice. He was pleased to see every one, he carried a little cigar in his left hand and his right hand trembled as he lifted a frosted glass of cola to his lips. Someone said it was *Dr. Pepper* and he said, “No way man!” (He preferred *Coca Cola* or *Pepsi* and thought *Dr. Pepper* was “too sweet”, usually he drank bottled water and *Gatorade* on stage. He feared becoming dehydrated when working and had told me

about being hospitalized for exhaustion related to that in the early years and didn't want to go through it again, saying his head was spinning for days afterward.

He had an attractive young woman whose name was "said to be **Paige**" there with him; he and Priscilla were spending time apart, separated -though it was passed off as a rumor in gossip papers and hadn't been announced as factual. Elvis had told me on the phone weeks earlier of their problems, saying he did not know what he was going to do; things were "so out of hand, nothin' I do is right". When I suggested they talk it out, he said ruefully, "We never discuss anythin' serious-she doesn't understand." And then he disgustedly said, "What a thing to say! My wife doesn't understand me!"

And he always defended her saying it was his fault-"I'm to blame-not her." He could not figure out what the problem was and said, "She's the only one I care about-her and Lisa. Gawd, I love them." And he did; Priscilla loved him, had grown up around him, but she was not the type of personality to sit at home alone, day after day, night after night waiting on a husband who lived in a totally different, exciting and demanding world that just "happened to be in "sin city" that was full of women...coming to see Elvis.

Rumor had it that she believed he had been cheating on her, and had from the time he had done the "*Singer Special*" in 1968; that rumor had been mentioned in an earlier phone conversation -and I asked him, is that true? There was a long pause and softly he said, "No-not before her...I...no, but she thought I did and it doesn't matter now." Pain made his voice rough as he added; "Gawd, she ought to know, none of 'em would mean anything after her...but I don't know what to do -how to make it better. I can't tell her... really. Gawd, it doesn't matter now--it's too late. She'll never believe me, too many things have happened." She had found the "world" outside his; but he did not speak of that and changed the subject, soon turning to joking around as he always did when he didn't want to talk, or couldn't talk of personal things.

That night in Vegas, Elvis smiled, but he was not happy; he looked older and at times had a lost look in his eyes. He and his men sat at the table, we sat in the living room area. A comic, **Buddy Hackett**, known for his insulting style of humor was there for a while and made Elvis all but roll on the floor in laughter, but when he left, Elvis was quiet.

After a while he started walking around the room, chatting with friends and was standing a little way from where I was seated on a sofa next to the musician friend. Elvis smiled at me and then while listening to his friend speaking into his ear, he slowly let his eyes rove from my curly, half up, and half down 40's style hair to the crushed velvet cranberry colored dress that I had designed and sewn; it had a modest scoop neckline,  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeves, and the skirt was ankle length with a slit to just above the knee on the left side. I

made the sleeves and the skirt so that they had a natural flare at the hemline, it went well with the black shiny leather wedge shoes that looked like those worn in the 1940's which was a style I liked, more than following the latest trends. He had a good view and his eyes took a slow tour from my head to my feet and then back up, pausing at the scooped neckline where from his height, he could just barely see the black lace edging of my bra and then he looked me in the eyes, winked and nodded his head ever so slightly as if giving his approval. I didn't laugh but that "approval survey" *was* amusing.

After a bit he came to us, reached over, touched my face and said, "my little red hen, how have ya' been -I'm glad to see you." He asked about my husband, our child and then sat down on the arm of the sofa a few minutes and held my hand as he spoke with my musician conspirator, asking about some musical arrangements. When he turned my hand loose and stood up to talk to other people, I discovered he had left his white gold curb link chain choker in my hand. He glanced back at me, smiled and softly said, "It'll look good with that dress you're wearin' baby," and winked at me. Odd I think now, because I had a silver necklace and chandelier ear rings to wear with that dress-but didn't put the necklace on...leave it to him to think of something like that! I loved that necklace -bought ear rings to match it and wore it a lot and always thought of him.

Sometime later, I loaned the necklace to a good friend who went with me to Vegas another time -she never returned it -and when I asked for it back, she claimed she had already given it to me -needless to say, though I understand her reasons and have forgiven her; we haven't spoken to each other in years.

Elvis had excellent taste in women's clothing and jewelry I thought, but then he had worked in movies for years and been surrounded by women. He gave me a gold and garnet necklace and bracelet that exactly matched the color I was fond of wearing, so fond of it that I had been wearing something that color nearly every time he saw me -that or emerald green; it was difficult to find colors that went well with my fair skin and copper red hair.

He stood close by, put a foot on the coffee table and as he talked a woman sitting close to him reached toward his groin-he grabbed her hand so fast I didn't see him move and cut her a fiery look. She quavered, "Elvis, you're losing a gold chain..." and looked up at him as if afraid for her life. He released her hand saying, "Ohhh..." felt beneath his jacket, pulled out the chain and handed it to her murmuring, "Thank you, sugar." She appeared about to die on the spot so white was her face.

Elvis moved on, speaking to a few more people, then said goodnight and went to his bedroom. **Paige**, who was very quiet and looked as if she was about to fall asleep, had disappeared; I think she was already in his room. He came back a few minutes later

wearing different clothing that might have been pajamas, though it could have passed for street wear and he stopped to speak with one of his men who took off in a rush. Elvis was talking to some people sitting at the table and drank what looked like a glass of milk though I think it was something for his stomach.

After a few minutes, he strolled back to us, stopped to speak again, smiled at me and said he liked my dress and “that baby-doll hairdo”. He paused a moment then softly said, “Like that necklace you’re wearin’ too darlin’ ” and he winked. (The curb chain he had left in my hand-it did look good with that neckline.) I got up enough nerve to ask him to sign a couple of menus and a napkin from the dinner show and he did, using his friend Charlie’s back for a “table”. Charlie gave him a light for his cigar using a book of matches with the name of the hotel on them and left it on the coffee table. Elvis handed the matchbook to me and I asked “sign it too, please”. He did. I told him I was going to have to leave soon, he kissed my forehead, saying softly, “I have to get to bed too; good-night darlin’, thank you for comin’, it’s good to see you” and he nuzzled my hair adding a softly spoken, “Hot damm, you smell good, honey” in my ear before kissing my neck. (I have always worn *White Shoulders* perfume-after his death I learned that brand had been one of his favorites probably because it has a hint of the Southern Magnolia blossoms and honey suckle fragrance of home.)

He had changed to a Karate styled jacket with a belt holding it closed and black pants-it was probably pajamas but could have passed for street wear. He looked pale in the black outfit, the skin of his face almost transparent stretched over his cheek bones and his eyes were not happy. He had a little cigar in hand though it wasn’t lit, just something to do with his hands he had told me years earlier, though they had become a habit. He looked tired, and it was obvious that Elvis wasn’t happy. He was saying goodnight to his guests, thanking them for coming to the show and up to see him, then said he was heading to bed.

Several of us stood up to leave, including the musician I came in with, who said he was “starving” and wanted to go find something to eat that didn’t cost half a week’s pay”. I asked why he didn’t just order from the kitchen or eat in the coffee shop. He kind of snarled out, “Hell, we don’t get free meals here! At least I sure as hell don’t!” I thought that strange since I knew there were several girls staying with different guys who worked in the group, and *they* all got free meals from the hotel--but I didn’t say anything.

We were moving with Elvis and several other guests, toward the door and his bedroom that was close to the penthouse entrance; we paused, as there were others going out and saying goodbye to Elvis. As he was thanking them I was standing to his left with other people near; Elvis slid his arm around my waist. There were times when he would unexpectedly do or say something “raunchy” that was meant to “shock” or “surprise”

whoever was on the receiving end, nothing more -just his little way of playing off that playboy image, getting a laugh. He lowered his arm ever so slowly, the back of his knuckles sliding gently down over the curve of my fanny until I could feel his fingers gently graze the back of my leg. As he did this move, he leaned into my ear to whisper, “No panties...um mm?”

I glanced into eyes with the devil dancing in them above a mischievous smirk on his lips; I kept a straight face, smiled and said “It’s been great seeing you-get a good rest-we’ll be seeing your show again in a few hours!” I had the “last laugh”. His little stunt didn’t get any reaction and I think HE was surprised! We neither ever mentioned his “revert to juvenile antics and pranks” that night. (Oh, by the way, I *was* wearing pantyhose to *not* have seams showing.)

As we waited for the elevator which took some time going down and then back up several times while we waited our turn, Elvis was outside the penthouse entrance talking with friends when one of his men came up and said something into his ear. Elvis looked upset, said something back and followed the guy back into the suite entrance; the guy came out and instead of waiting for the elevator, went down the stairs. Elvis spoke to another of his guys, and then went out of sight, apparently heading to his room, with one of his men right behind him. That man came out shortly and said, “We can go--- he’ll sleep for hours.” When asked by another man “How long you think?” he answered, “No Sweat- we’ll meetcha there”. He spoke to a couple other friends of Elvis’, one of whom performed as a background singer in Elvis’ show saying “Let’s go!” They all trooped toward the stairs, probably walking down to the floor where they could catch another elevator that went all the way to ground level; we were still trying to get on the one that came up to the top floors; no way would I attempt the stairs wearing “those” shoes.

The conversation I overheard struck me kind of strangely, I had heard those words before in background noise when talking with him via telephone; I asked my musician friend what is going on? He said, “Nothing; he has insomnia when he’s here and they just gave him a sleeping pill or something.” He assured me Elvis was all right, having “some marital problems” but he’d get “over it”. I had a strange, uneasy feeling and *I never got over it.*

*A side note to the evening came from my musician friend who told me that Elvis asked him if “there something goin’ on” between he and I--he was a bit ruffled over that, but then Elvis told him to “look out for me, see nobody bothers her and if they do, tell me; understand?” I told him thanks for thinking of me, and that Elvis had always been like a big brother, looking out for me and my little family. He said, “Yeah, he’s like that-just never did have a reason to notice; never was up here with a woman, didn’t think it was*

*my place.” I remember saying something like “well, now you know, make the most of it!” And we both laughed.*

That next evening Elvis was coughing and sneezing on stage and kept hugging his upper body as if cold. He sneezed and snot flew—he was embarrassed but there was nothing he could do but go on with the show. Finally, he made the coughing a part of the song and the audience applauded. Elvis shrugged and rolled his eyes heavenward.

A waitress said she had talked with his doctor earlier and Elvis ought to have been in bed as he had 102 fevers and the flu. “Poor thing,” she said, “he’s just so sick but he won’t miss a show. You know, he knows his audiences scrimp and save for months to come see him and he just can’t let them down by canceling because he’s sick.” She confided that she and her waiter husband had had a breakfast with Elvis and said, “He’s just the sweetest thing—a livin’ doll!”

She explained that her husband had taken Elvis’ breakfast up and she went along to serve it—Elvis was alone, sitting in bed reading the newspaper (it was around 2 in the afternoon— and he hadn’t slept much). Elvis said, “Gawd, there’s plenty here—why don’t you all have breakfast with me—don’t always like eatin’ alone.” So they stayed and shared the scrambled eggs he wasn’t going to eat while he asked them questions about their lives. She said very seriously, “He wanted to know if we were happily married, and asked how we stayed happy to be together—I feel so sorry for him.” she declared, then said he mentioned having a cook come over since there was a nice kitchen and he wouldn’t have to wait for something to be brought up between shows. “If he does that, we’ll *never* get up there to see him again!” She lamented. Her husband often took meals up for Elvis, sometimes for a friend with him also, and he verified that Elvis was not a big eater...often his dinner plate would barely be touched when picked up later..

(The doctors Elvis consulted with about his physical health problems put him on steroids to “help his intestines”; those type drugs did nothing but make things worse for people with his condition but *at that time doctor’s did not know of the serious side affects, one being they lowered the immune system* and thus Elvis was almost always catching the flu and having it turn into lung congestion especially in his last couple of years.)

While talking with the waitress, I learned a little more about the men Elvis had working for him. He had earned several degrees in Karate and had some emblems and patches that signified those degrees and he wanted them sewn on the black belt of his gi so that he could show them to his audience and tell them about the awards. His men kept putting him off, not wanting to find a tailor and saying he couldn’t or shouldn’t do that on stage—people came to hear and see him sing, not talk about Karate. Well, Elvis waited a while, decided they were not going to get it done so he got the things together, went out

the door and was heading out to find a tailor himself. His surprised “pals” hustled after him; off they went with Elvis in the lead. They say he walked into the shop, told the startled tailor what he wanted done and waited while they did it! That night he wore the gi, took a couple of minutes showing off his emblems, explaining each and then performed a beautifully graceful “kata” as he called it, routine during one of the songs, wowing his audience. I was there for that performance and didn’t hear even one complaint; instead he got a rousing applause for his efforts.

The waitress said his “pals” appeared to treat Elvis like he wasn’t all “there mentally” and she thought it “deplorable” how many times they would “put him off” and “dismiss concerns he might have”. She said, “You would think they were “babysitting a spoiled, scatter brained kid” and she thought it remarkable that he “kept putting up with them”. She firmly stated that Elvis was intelligent, in fact, smarter than his “keepers” ever imagined him to be. She said, “He’s not just an entertainer, he’s spent a lot of time educating himself, reading books most college students would find difficult-but Elvis can explain what he’s read---and make you like it!”

She also told me that he mentioned that his wife wanted a divorce and that he should be the one to do it, so people would think it was what he wanted because he didn’t want her to have problems with his fans reacting badly and he had been talking with lawyers. She said he sounded “so sad, heartbroken”, and as if he was struggling to understand what happened. He also said he didn’t believe in divorces, once a couple married and took vows before God; it was not a thing that could be broken just by signing a paper saying it was... She said he asked them to “pray for us, we need to stay together somehow, for our baby girl.”

Within a few weeks he spoke to me along those same lines of thought; and the papers were being drawn up regarding the finale details of their divorce. **Linda Thompson** was with him, he was happier and he and Priscilla had a “civil relationship” he said, and then kind of laughed and said, “That’s what John (his lawyer) calls it, “civil”! Apparently, she was going to get whatever she had asked for, uncontested. Later, she learned there was more money being earned than Elvis was aware of, and of course, the Col. and the lawyers failed to include anything her lawyer didn’t “dig up”, so back to court she went to get her “share”. Elvis was upset; however he was not aware that he had “that much money or assets either and so it was “settled” once again. Elvis’ main problem with all that money issue was he didn’t like the idea of her “new man” getting a dime worth’s of benefit from money he (Elvis) had worked hard and went “to hell ‘n back” to get for his family, and now his ex-wife was going to be “supportin’ some damn bastard off my sweat ‘n blood!” “*Darth Vader*” was alive -and well for some time...but then even *he* has to go in for some recharging sooner or later. Most men feel the same when their marriage breaks up; Elvis was no different. It took a while, but Elvis finally came to grips

with it all, and he and Priscilla continued to have a “civil” relationship for the benefit of their darling little girl. Especially after **Mike Stone** “left the scene of the crime”; Elvis had felt all along that he had been “takin’ her for what he can get” and he meant financially, since there was talk that Mike was wanting to start a Karate school and needed money to do it...Elvis arranged to pay installments to Priscilla as he didn’t have cash to give her the settlement all at once...I often thought that was the plan in order to stop money going into any project that included Mike, or any other suitor. But then, Elvis wasn’t that smart or conniving, was he? It had to have been the lawyers “looking out for him”....um-huh, surely so.

(Elvis’ willingness to offer excuses for people was strong- though at first, he would have “liked to beat the shit out of the guy” he later on commented that Mike was in a confused state of mind at the time he and Priscilla met, she was also and they were drawn to each other by their emotional state of minds. He said that he had “not been there when she needed me”, so she found someone who would be and he “lost her.” Though he had been “ragingly angry” for a while, he cooled off, thought it over and tried to be “okay” toward Mike later on when he and Priscilla broke up, saying he (Elvis) “understood” that “she was a beautiful young woman, any man would be flattered to have her notice him” and Mike was “no exception”).

Throughout the entire time he and his ‘Cilla were together and after they quietly separated without “fan fare” publicly” other than the “rag sheets’ fabrications”, Elvis remained silent about their problems, saying only that she was unhappy because his career took him away from family life. Not once did he mention details or say a bad word about her. He always said it was his career, his fault, he wasn’t home enough. He said years later that he had to choose, get his career back up to bring in the money that gave them the life they wanted, or quit and risk losing it all. He lamented that he “didn’t know how to do anything else, I’m a singer, that’s my job.” And he thought she understood, it never occurred to him that she would not want to be his wife, the mother of the children he had said they both wanted and keep the “home fires burning”. As he said later, “Some times the cards just don’t line up and you lose...”

The saddest day of his life with her, he said out of the blue one day, was when he realized that they had known each other for all that time...and they “jus’ thought we knew each other well; all that time, ‘n it didn’t really count for much. I have Lisa ‘n that kind of makes it all fine, really. Nothin’ gonna come out of wishfull thinkin’ now; it’s over.” 1977 for Lisa’s birthday; he gave Lisa a mink jacket but Priscilla “put it up” he said, it was not “appropriate for her age group”. Apparently, many gifts he got for Lisa she never saw or knew about until years later-after his death. On Oprah’s television show Lisa said, “I wish I could see them now.” This after her mother smilingly spoke of how Elvis would buy expensive gifts for his little girl, and she (Pris) would put them away to keep



Lisa from being “spoiled”. Mother and daughter sat apart, with daughter appearing to be distant and slightly uncomfortable sitting with her mother. I think it took years for Lisa to reconcile with Priscilla; to learn how to “love her where she is” as her father would and did do after she left him “for another man”.

The dinner napkin he signed for me was something I wanted to keep because he gave it to me from the stage. The night I received it I had a good seat at the stage though it's easier to see him working when seated a bit further back but sitting close had it's advantages also (and yes, he did “spit” on people when he sang, all singers do apparently; in Elvis' case, during some of those physical karate displays he slung sweat around too). Elvis was doing his sing and tease routine, kissing ladies etc. and then he began wiping his sweating face on napkins handed to him. He moved closer to our side doing his “thing” at the table in front of ours-the lady across the table from me handed him her napkin, he wiped his chest with it and then gave me a stern eyed “you better do it” look and held it toward me-I took it and quickly gave him mine-he immediately wiped more of his chest on that one and handed it to her! Well, typical Elvis-he had to be “funny” even with a friend! Anyway, I kept it, hoping to have a chance to get him to sign it-luck was on my side, “fer sure”. He was pretty pleased when days later; I brought it out of my purse and asked him to sign it. I wish I had a photo of his expression, one of such pleased as punch glee-“*almost as good as a squeal*” I'd bet he was thinking! He got a kick out of *any* clue that maybe; just *maybe*, he shook me up “jus’ a little bit”-- So many little things I wish I could have told him in those last month's --such as:

“Elvis, you don't realize it or maybe you do and there are no words to explain; you were my “savior” those years ago, when I was just a kid. From the first time I heard your voice while listening to a “forbidden” radio program, turned on while my parents were at the barn and I was doing the dishes. “**Heartbreak Hotel**”-- I didn't catch your name-- You had, I knew--been *there*, you *would* understand. Eight years later, you did. Thanks Elvis, *really*” “*Berry*”

**Elvis:** “Ours is not to “do or die”, it's we're just to be patient, and try.”

**Elvis'** comments regarding his take on the “emotional” differences in thinking between men and women”. Speaking with some fans outside a hotel in San Diego, 1975- when asked what he thought about the “new sexual mores” and “women's lib” he gave them an “ear full”.

“Letting a physical relationship happen tends to ruin a friendship, makes it impossible to have a relationship where anything can be spoken of without creating problems. Usually, it's the woman who can't separate the two types of “intimacy”...one being a heartfelt

mental closeness without emotionally being entangled. And the other is when the heart and the emotions are so in tune as to being one person intimately and mentally as in love and commitment in marriage or a forever situation. Men tend to be able to separate these feelings better than women – it's our nature to be free to do our own thing as a man, we were designed to be the protector, to go out and handle whatever comes along, whereas a woman is more inclined to establishing a home base, for children and she is usually possessive of her family and mate. That's natural, mother nature at work to keep the species alive, ya know. We men aren't any different than we used to be, just things around us have changed and women have become more like us, than we are like them...see? Look at it that way and it makes more sense, really. Eh, women have had to change, over time with war and strife takin' the men away, women were being forced to take charge at home; 'n it's caused problems between the sexes ever since- it had to be so they stepped up an' did it. But, I'd just like to say though, if you as a man come across a woman you can be friends with, who appreciates you for your mind, (He pauses, looks around, and gets a lot of laughs finishing his sentence) an' not just 'cause you look good in swim trunks...or a suit! Man, hang on to her -they are a rare breed!" (More laughs, one fellow asks if he meets a lot of women.)

"Gawd...yeah; I like women! What guy wouldn't? I'm no different...jus' tryin' to get along like the rest of you fellows...sometimes it isn't easy to do...but I keep tryin'." (Big grin; bites his lower lip and then laughs. The men laugh, one calls out, "Keep on tryin' – you're the man!" They are applauding as he waves good bye.)

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### ***Long daylight nights---***

[Many times Elvis would have trouble getting to sleep, would "run out of anything" to keep busy and if he didn't have someone with him, he'd call at odd hours and talk--and talk about many things, usually spiritual in content, and something he was studying--]

### ***ELVIS ON COLORS---***

**"Color plays an important role in the life spectrum:** We associate **RED** with the devil. Why? It is s color of heat, of strife, of emotional turmoil, of energy- good and bad. It is related to sexual tension and sexual activity. It is the color of erotic passion and dreams. It is the color of blood, the life force, the energy transmitter of animal life and human life. It is the ultimate force color **RED**! Its name radiates energy when spoken or when remembered. It warms; in a room it provides warmth and passion, giving radiance to the setting."

**YELLOW is control.** It is the warmth of the Sun. It is comforting, yielding and encompassing. It is compassion, truth and trust and it is relaxing to the human physic. It

is also the color of integrity and spiritual strength. It has a calming effect and is a family color. Without YELLOW in one's life- life would fade away – thus it is control.

**GREEN is life-- touching** everything. It is comfort, security in the ever going life force. It is relaxing and soothing to the spirit and provides an atmosphere of sleep. It should be used in bedrooms and in places where serenity is desired.

**PINK is compassion**, it soothes. It relaxes the mind and tends to put one in a happy, youthful mood. It is related to females and makes the male more aware of the comfort women can provide. It is also the color of truthfulness and is often used in pictures related to The Christ, Jesus.

**WHITE is pure**. Related to Jesus, The Christ it is capable of pure energy. It is a “cool” color and yields to all others. It is spiritual and is the color of love.

**BROWN is warmth**. The earth and mothering; it is compassionate, soothing, nurturing and enveloping as the mother earth. It works best in cold atmospheres and lends its self readily. It is a female color.

**BLACK is associated with death**. It swallows every color up and is depressing to life. It can also be a strength color as it is the most powerful color of the spectrum. When used with red or with yellow it provides contrast and creates great energy. Its depth bounces off lighter color and can draw magnetic force from them and channel it back. It is ageless and projects male strength and power. It is considered a dangerous color. It is masculine.

**VIOLET is a spiritual color**. It is a blended color and is representative of Jesus, The Christ love color. It should be used in the house of God and whenever one desires the peace and tranquility of spiritual love. It is a meditation color and gives the spirit strength. It should be worn in honor of the departed as a symbol of their spiritual awakening.

**BLUE is the color of the Heavens** though what we see as being “blue” is reflections from various forms of debris in the atmosphere. Blue is a cool color and representative of Godliness, goodness and spiritual strength. Midnight blue of the night sky allows the pure reflection of the stars, giving anyone looking into the night an overwhelming sense of the magnitude of God's Universe. Wearing light blue, various shades of blue gives one a sense of confidence, of being calm, cool and collected because it draws on the heavenly power of God.”

Elvis told me I should wear “warm maroon, blue and purple to respond with my personal magnetic field (aura)” and that it would make me feel “stronger”. A little later he gave me a necklace and bracelet set made of sterling silver tube links with sets of those three colors, and reminded me that those were “my energy colors”. I remember saying I liked wearing certain green colors also, and he said that was alright, green represented all things living, but I should combine green with one of the other colors for best “affect and best effect”.

### ***Letter to Elvis, 2006---***

Dear Elvis,

I never thought that day, when I went to see “**King Creole**”, that you would affect my life so much. It was 1958 and I was only 14 years old.

The strong impact you produced in me, I could not explain. I felt you right into my heart. Something coming from you awakened trembling echoes in me. Something inside me longed to rush to you and embrace your soul with mine. Maybe I did inadvertently.

Nothing would stay the same. I had that secret place where to meet you, so far away from other's eyes, so deep inside. I loved and cried, maybe for you, maybe for me. Maybe for the lost souls that cannot find their place in an uncaring world. I wrote your name one thousand times and more. I heard your voice that bonded me to you, jealous that anybody else could step into this space we shared. This was my true world: you and me, the moon to talk to and the stars. Outside it, I was only a ghost pretending to be someone else. Oh, those searching times, playing to build up a life!

It took many years to get the meaning of it all. Now I know.

Now I know that I “knew” you then, but had no words to tell, even to myself. Just could write down, heartfelt teenager's wisdom: “I love Elvis because I'm in love with love and Elvis is love.”

Your soul was a mirror for mine. Your expression of Love called the expression of mine. The treasure of You Being invited my longing for Being Me.

Now, with a great part of the path traveled, I meet you in my Heart with open Love and Joy. Now, there's no longing, because now I know there is not separation. Somehow, we are together somewhere in the Place of Belonging. It's here where I smile to you and say “Hello”, every sunrise, every sunset, every starred night we share. And under the brightest rainbow designed, you sing new chants of love.

**Amanda, Spain**

### ***So Quickly –Then it's Gone---***

In 1974 we saw Elvis at the **Los Angeles Forum**; he said he had a suit that would light up the design which was an American eagle. We were looking forward to seeing that! When we got tickets to the *Forum* we had no idea the size of the place and when we got there and inside, it was huge! Our seats were supposed to be “pretty good ones” or so we were told-but the stage where Elvis would be looked like a square box at the bottom of a huge pit! Fortunately we did have binoculars and used them! He did a great show though it wasn't the best sound system I ever heard and people were very vocal and noisy around the huge room. Elvis did his dramatic “*Hush Little Baby*” routine, the lights fell

and his suit was supposed to light up-it hardly did anything noticeable but we did get a pretty good picture of him back view! He later said he was sweating and “shorted out the batteries or something”. Ironically, his last costume being made when he died was a suit that would shoot laser lights from points on his body that he could control. He would have *loved that!* Zap! Gotcha!

We always went to Vegas to see his shows and it could be pretty darn cold there in the month of February and the wind blew constantly. We had a motel room not far from the Hilton; I thought the motel would blow away while we were gone-it nearly did; we moved closer in town rather than listen to construction noises while the drive under roof was repaired! The most notable thing that happened on that trip other than the wind, was that Elvis wore leather outfits; he looked great in them except for one small thing-after he had worked the show, sweating and moving about so much, the seat of the pants stretched out and so did the knees. He felt of his butt and said, “Lord, excuse me if I don’t turn around-you don’t want to see what I feel!” People laughed, we’d already seen his baggy pants! He said he gave that suit to **Jackie Wilson** who had come over to see him and admired the outfit-I wonder if it stretched out like that on him! Jackie was one of Elvis’ favorite singers-and one he had “copied” some on stage moves from---most notable was the leg swing thing he did when singing “*Return To Sender*” for the movie “***Girls, Girls, Girls***” -Jackie was in that audience when he did it and both of them got a kick out of it!

We were in Vegas several times over the years- we saw a lot of things that happened. One night Elvis introduced songwriter/singer **Tony Joe White** who wrote quite a few popular songs including “*Rainy Night in Georgia*” and also “*Polk Salad Annie*”- which became Elvis' hottest number on stage. We were just a table away and saw Tony Joe wearing dark leathers stand up and take a bow; he was there with his lovely wife and family. What a “tall, dark and dangerous” kind of a guy who is called “*The Swamp Fox*” and looked it under that spotlight; later he and his lovely wife, **LeAnn** were waiting to meet Elvis and it was interesting that Tony Joe who had the super hit on “*Polk Salad*” himself, was nervous about meeting “the king”. A few years later, Tony Joe was on the “**Tonight Show**” with **Johnny Carson** and related that he had stood up to be introduced by Elvis that night with a broken zipper gapping open in those leather pants- after having a fast run to the john. (There were a lot of drinks sold during those long, long waits for Elvis' appearance on stage!) Elvis told me I ought to get some of Tony Joe's records; he thought we would like them. He was right--we do enjoy them – we even have a few CD's-- Elvis recorded several more of his songs after “*Polk Salad Annie*” and can be seen and heard singing a bit of “*Rainy Night*” while riding in a limo after a performance in the “***On Tour***” documentary. Elvis also recorded Tony Joe’s beautiful love song “*For Old Times’ Sake*”. **Tony Joe White’s** CDs are available via his website and he continues to write songs and perform.

I was in the audience the night Elvis dedicated a song that was his newest recording release to **Priscilla** who was sitting in “his” booth with her blond girl friend and his little girl, **Lisa Marie**. As he began the song, “*It’s Midnight and I Miss You*” he stood before her, looked her way and said in a husky whisper, “Listen Cilla--”

I had heard him sing with his heart and soul many times, but it was the first time I ever heard him pour out his *personal* heartache as emotionally raw as he did that night-his words filled the air, silencing the room. As the lady seated across from me said, “I could feel the heartache coming from him--my god, what *ever* came between them?”

I suppose if one had been around Elvis a long while, they might get used to how easily he could put so much emotion into singing, perhaps that might explain why someone who had spent years listening to him “turn it off and on” vocally, might not take him seriously at times. He said singing let him “say things he couldn’t find words for sometimes” and explained that it was therapeutic for songwriters to put thoughts and feelings into lyrics, those were the kind of songs he liked to perform. He loved ballads for that reason; “they are written by the heart and it’s a singer’s duty to bring the words to life”.

Priscilla and her friend, who was the ex-wife of one of his employees, was smiling and chatting off and on through the song, as if she had not heard Elvis’ plea, and possibly after seeing her apparent lack of interest, he had one of his guys seat his new girl friend **Sheila Ryan** in the same booth as Priscilla and her blond friend, “Joanie”. To me, that said a lot - if she didn’t care – well then, he didn’t either! Fortunately, for both-their little girl was too young to understand – *she obviously loved watching her daddy perform!*

Later in the show, Elvis and Priscilla were exchanging **Monty Python** quips back and forth during a song singer **Peggy Lee** made famous, “*Fever*”. The report between them was evident, even to some comments only they understood, but after the show, we saw Priscilla getting into a car that would take her to the airport- apparently she did not go upstairs after the show to see him; Lisa was not with her. Perhaps Priscilla had been upstairs earlier--that she left so quickly was a bit surprising since they had seemed to be getting along rather well-- even though they were divorced. She had taken him back to court for more money earlier in the year and was living with another man. From Elvis’ behavior toward her from on stage, any ill will over that seemed to have passed from his memory-he was having fun playing with her, just like old times.

There is a lot of speculation about the 1974 shows, the tours and the on stage comments Elvis was making about rumors and his life, in fact it has been called “**The Desert Storm**” period because of the anger and frustration he exposed openly in front of many people. Elvis was not feeling well, he was still hurting over the divorce though he was trying to get on with his life and be a father to his child. He had the shows to do,

there were lots of things going on, his father hadn't been well, was having heart problems and Elvis was worried about him. At the same time, Elvis was not feeling well. He had an eye infection and was having voice problems due to the dry desert air. He had asked for a doctor during the afternoon; one arrived and treated him for the vocal problems. One of the waitresses at the show said he was running a fever earlier in the day and walked out on the rehearsal he had scheduled. It was said he was "taking too many drugs for pain and various other health issues; the truth was, he was experiencing an increase in the problems he had from birth and there wasn't much anyone could do to help him though he continued looking for a doctor, a specialist who could tell him what was wrong, why he was getting worse, at times suffering painful cramping of his intestines that put him on the floor writhing in agony. Those *very few* of his confidants who were trusted with this information did their best for him, and kept his secrets.

Rumors were flying about some of his group members who were drinking heavily, some were on drugs and it was said that Elvis was taking sleeping pills trying to knock him self out so he wouldn't "think so much about things" and that he was "addicted to them", plus he still had terrible cluster type headaches and migraine headaches for which he was given medication. (Odd isn't it – *he stayed up for hours* after midnight shows, singing with his friends but tales said he was "knocked out" on sleeping pills during this same time frame? And some of those accusing him were "staggering" drunks and "users" as said in their own memoirs?) He was upset when he heard rumors that included him using "drugs" as did his guys and because of that he wasn't being "allowed" to perform overseas as he wanted to do, it would be tough to get a "bunch of druggies" into a foreign country! He was having physical issues that stressed him further and though he thought he was being taken care of medically, it at times didn't appear that way. I know Elvis could be hard to deal with at times--still, it seemed like he had never had good medical care -just a lot of prescription drugs that didn't seem to do much other than add to his problems with their many side effects. (Back then doctors did not pay much attention to "side effects" as they were "unknown to have any that mattered".) It is true that Elvis had a tendency to exhibit an addictive personality, that being evident in his choice of foods, buying habits and tendency to think like most guys I have known, "if one pill helps, two would help even more" etc-- And they all think they won't "get hooked". However, sleeping pills and pain pills are easily addictive and it is hard to break the habit sometimes – they *are* the number one addiction for all walks of life today, regardless if one is famous or not. Elvis was no different- as he would say, "I'm just a human being – like you all--" There were hundreds of times he did not take sleeping pills, and was awake for days at a time, doing the shows and singing half the night after the last show. His male companions and fellow performers who were kept up there singing with him, often wished they could be somewhere else-like in bed sleeping- but they had to stay--after all he was "Elvis" - and their boss. Many of them say today, they would give just

about anything to be able to go sing with Elvis again--and some have concluded they didn't "appreciate" those days back then, "just being a friend, hanging out with Elvis".

I thought then, and still think it's likely, that Elvis kept his "men" upstairs singing and talking for hours "after hours" on "purpose" so they would be too tired and sleepy to go out on the town drinking and "an' doin' stuff that makes 'em look bad". His main thought was how it would look for their reputations since some were well known and respected gospel singers, he would not want them to "tarnish their image just because this is Las Vegas -it's a public place". So he devised "a plan" – he wore them out keeping him company into the wee hours of the morning, and then "they haffta get some sleep before I get 'em up to rehearse or somethin'". Devious...yes he could be at times, but then he would invite showgirls over and have them perform for his buddies...sometimes they were on the- shall we say, exotic side of "fun and games"...however never a "public event" and his own father showed up a few times... Elvis did like to have "fun", "shock people" and get laughs doing it.

He hadn't been one to cancel shows, performing even when he was running a fever with the flu, but suddenly there were a few times being too weak and ill, he had to cancel. And rumors began swirling about; he and Priscilla had divorced months earlier but she still received a lot of letters and flack from his fans who thought she was crazy for leaving him. She expressed her feelings and that upset him because he didn't want her to be hurt over people's opinions.

Elvis was very angry with all these things getting back to him and made comments from the stage and he was very blunt in saying if he found out who was saying he did drugs, he'd take care of them in no uncertain terms. He also was making statements about how he and Priscilla were still friends, cared for each other and they were raising their daughter together. He said there wasn't any other woman or man involved, that he was on the road, gone too much and it was just his career etc he was trying to take the blame for their breakup away from her.

His "disobedience" stirred things up pretty good, there were dozens of "stories" that made him appear to be like "an out of control crazy S.O.B." he said, and he was "told to shut his mouth" by his management etc. **Baron Hilton** was not pleased either, but Elvis didn't care-he was angry, doing the best he could and still it wasn't enough. He had all he could take, and he let his feelings show on stage, then he went on with the show. He got lambasted in the press and by people who didn't feel "comfortable" with his style of declaration. He said, "What the hell can I do? Why don't people just shut up and enjoy livin'". Gawd! I'm doin' the best I can--" And he continued his onstage comments there and across the countryside on tour.



The more he tried, the more the rumors changed and spread; he was determined to find out who it was doing the talking- he later said, most of it came from “within” and he had “fixed that”. I took that to mean someone he knew was the source, but as in the past, back then he didn’t fire that person--they had family so he couldn’t take away their income etc. Not Elvis, he just put them somewhere else to “shut them the fxxx up!” This time he said he didn't want to see “that bastard's face” again, including that he “didn't want to breathe the same air” as that person; he was not to be on his airplane or any place Elvis was likely to “see his ugly face etc” or speak to him (Elvis) again. Those rules were in effect for some time, right up to the week Elvis died--though that person was trying to be “around” but not any place Elvis might “run into” them. Once Elvis had “enough” of somebody even if it was an old “friend” - it was over as far as he was concerned--*especially* if that person had breached what Elvis knew as “loyalty”. After Elvis’ death, that person immediately tried to give the impression he was so close and “intimate” with “the boss man” and proved himself to be as “loose lipped” as Elvis ever thought he would, and continues to take “credit” for things Elvis was able to do very well using his own innate talents during his career.

And there were other problems; my lady friend and I found that out the evening we cut through the new construction being done on the Hilton parking garage-it was barricaded and we weren’t supposed to be in there but it was a short cut to our car and we were going elsewhere for a while. It was dark inside, just a few lights hanging from temporary cords here and there; we were hurrying along when we came up on some men who were exchanging paper sacks for envelopes. She and I ducked out of sight and watched as one of the younger men opened the sack and the other was tying off his arm while the younger one used a cigarette lighter to heat something up and filled a syringe. They were beneath the light; we had a good view and knew who the two young guys were. It was hard not to tell Elvis, but I was certain he must have been aware of what they did; after all he knew them very well. That same two were at another hotel where we ate dinner a few nights later, they were “flying”, doing a lot of “talking” and carrying on with some very questionable women friends and trying to be what *they thought* they were, big shots-hooked up with Elvis!

Sometime later on I found out from him (and it had been reported in the Memphis news papers) that they had been caught trying to fill forged or stolen prescriptions (in Elvis’ doctor’s name) and that he knew of their habits and had “worked out a deal” saying they had been released in his care and he hoped that would help them get straightened out. He said, “they need discipline like all young guys, they’ve just been runnin’ wild, getting in with the wrong people and don’t have enough responsibility or anyone looking after them with some authority over them”. He wanted to give them that discipline and teach them to respect themselves, to make something of themselves but guessed his life style wasn’t disciplined enough off stage either and he didn’t have enough time to spend

keeping' up with them. He tried to give them jobs, but was disappointed with their lack of interest. He had too much to take care of himself and he had "let them down" and he was going to have to do something about it.

I don't know what came of it, he didn't talk about them anymore but I guess he made them angry, the oldest one seems to think that Elvis ruined his life, especially after he had the nerve to die and "leave them nothing". I haven't ever known anyone whose life was "ruined" by someone else-people always have control over *their choices* and *they make them* so they have to *accept and deal with the results*. No one does that for us when all is said and done -we have to choose what we want to be and do. Elvis didn't do a thing but give them a chance to do things other young guys would never get to do; perhaps he failed to realize they had not experienced the hardships and trials that he had, and so were not as mature as he at that age. He had been out working, helping to support himself and his beloved "babies" (mom and dad). Elvis always had a "job" even as a young boy mowing lawns, "sweeping up" or whatever a kid his age could manage to squeeze into their schedules. And he held jobs all through high school and after he graduated, he found work that would allow him to learn a "trade" to support his family while playing music on the "side". His mother tells in an early interview about their son - Elvis would "pay the store bill" for them and never say a word about it - he just did it; they'd find out later.

There are hundreds and thousands of other spoiled young persons who are wasting time, carelessly spending their lives today, and one day will point the finger at their parents or whomever they feel "should have helped them" etc;--instead of taking the blame for their own silly mistakes and waste partying and etcetera. Elvis did nothing to deserve such "wrath". He would have paid for their college educations-wanted it for them and they could have gone-and still not missed out on all the "glory trips with Elvis" as he put it, but he "couldn't hold a gun to their head and make 'em go to school"; they had a good example for a role model had they bothered to notice. **Jerry Schilling**, who had no family, who was on his own, met Elvis as a young man; he went to college, worked for Elvis and made his life count for something. It can be done. One just has to *want* to do it.

Today, what do we have? Sleazy books, DVD's and stupid movies that reflect some pretty screwed up minds who find it easier to point the finger at Elvis than accept their own "failures" in life. But as Elvis said, "It's not easy to look yourself in the mirror 'n say, "I screwed up! Sometimes believing it; that is the hardest thing to do." He was referring to his divorce--he said it took a while, but he "realized it was me, 'n I got to live with that."

Elvis spoke briefly of having "finally got rid" of "that fxxxin' woman, (his father's ex-wife) once and for all" and that finally there would be some "peace at home for daddy an' all of us". But he didn't explain further and I didn't ask. I just knew he didn't like "that

woman” and never had from the time his daddy met her. He wanted his father to be happy, but he didn't think “that woman” was the way! Later on he said there had been some kind of “settlement” and “thank God it's done an' over” though within a few months or so, two of her sons were “working for Elvis” and he was trying to help them “make somethin' of themselves”. That didn't work well either; again his “trust” was not enough. Typical of Elvis, he felt that he had “failed” again.

I am well aware that Elvis was “no saint” and there were lots of women coming and going and that lifestyle had to have “gone to his head” when he was young; it must have with those boys also, but he worked his ass off for them, tried to give them a great life, better than he'd had at their ages and he wanted them to have opportunities he didn't have. He so wanted to believe them, did in fact, until it was too late, then his feelings were hurt and he was angry that he had been so gullible - again! He said, “Story of ma life-people I thought were with me ‘n I cared about, turn out to be jus' here for --for *Elvis*! Gawd! Why does that always haffta influence ever' thing an' ever' body?” It always did, beginning with 1956 - and continues to this day.

In all the times I sat in the audience watching him on stage, and the few times I was fortunate to have been able to watch him off stage, in Vegas and at concerts he was always the same, sick or not he would be giving his all for his fans. He was not very different off stage, entertaining his “friends” than he was on stage. He was being “*Elvis*” on stage, macho at times, tender and sweet other times depending on the songs he might be performing or the banter with his audiences, or his band members. At times he was a bit “raunchy”, coming out with Southern slang, colorful but funny, and if angry he as he was during *The Desert Storm days of 1974* in Vegas, he let his temper show, he cursed, pounded his fist on the floor and declared what he would do to whomever was spreading rumors that he was “strung out on stage” etc.. This was a shock to many people... “*Elvis*”---being --human? I was very proud of him; he was standing up for himself, fighting back as *any normal person would do under such circumstances*. He had turned “the other cheek” for so long, he *had earned the right* to “let 'em have it”. Anyone who knew the man behind that image knows he was doing the best he could, and they also know he had the right to show his anger. All the rest of those naysayers and back biters will eat their words and choke on them some day. Whatever goes around-comes around.

### ***Those midnight hours---***

It was nearly three years before I got to see Elvis upstairs again in the beautifully redecorated **Imperial Suite** and the change in him was dramatic. **Linda Thompson** was staying with him and had been for a while and Elvis was very fond of her-- She was good for him, made him laugh and she shared several of his interests, including those of spiritual nature.

This time we went as a group, Jimmie, his older sister Joa and her husband Bob, their grown daughter Karin, two sons Jimmy Ray and Bobby Lee who came with his wife, and myself and Juliann, and two couples of other friends: we were a pretty big group. Elvis knew we were coming and we were seated on the second level at a long center of the room table just behind the last row of booths. He said it offered the best view-it was pretty good-level with the stage and a clear view over the tops of the circular booths on the first level that was lower than the stage. Just in front of the stage were long tables that commanded big tips from those who were seated there, though they weren't the best view-they were *closer* to Elvis, and some got an up front and personal view of him! We were treated very special, a waiter hovered nearby, serving everyone for the entire show but we weren't aware he was "assigned" just to our table until later.

Juliann who had not been to Vegas for a while but was finally old enough to stay up late, was at the front, next to the railing; Elvis came strolling on stage, she spun around and wide eyed, said, "Is THAT "Uncle Elvis"?" Once she got the opera glasses from me, she watched the entire show through them - looking at "Uncle Elvis"! It was funny; I don't think she saw anything else on stage! When the show was over, she turned around and demanded, "Is he coming back?" I had to promise that she could see the midnight show if she could stay awake long enough, and we could get in, though I didn't think that would be the case.

Elvis and I had discussed his upcoming Vegas engagement and I asked him what he was going to wear; he said he had some new suits, it'd be a surprise and said "You gonna love 'em", then said he was gonna wear one of them Wednesday night "jus' for you, baby". Of course we laughed and joked about that but he wouldn't tell me anything. I wanted to see that suit - after all, he was "wearin' it jus' for me"-- Anyway, I can say that when he walked out at that dinner show, wearing a western styled suit the color of milk chocolate under those lights, and that had lime green insets on the shoulders, gold studs swirling down the sleeves and pant legs, with a wide gold belt low on his waist, his hair perfectly coiffed and looking so fine - I couldn't believe he *was that* handsome! Maybe it was just that he "planted the idea" in my mind, but that is my favorite suit - on him. He *knew* he looked good - I've got pictures! Those "*Cisco Kid*" suits didn't get worn much; they were "hot and too dark for the photographers".

After the dinner show, we hung out in the lobby and Jimmie and Bob went to play roulette and toss some dice around. Bob had diabetes and Jimmie ended up taking him to the restrooms where Bob fainted and was laying on the floor. **Jerry Lee Lewis** came in, asked what happened, thought Bob was drunk at first but Jimmie said "No, he has blood sugar problems". Jerry Lee had his body guard call for the doctor and help came immediately. Bob came around with their help and Jimmie took him upstairs. Jimmie did

get to spend a little time talking with Jerry Lee and said he was very gracious, wanted to be helpful and would have taken Bob to the hospital in his car had he needed to go; poor Bob could barely remember even seeing **Jerry Lee Lewis** who was one of his favorites!

Bob wanted to go home and Joa thought he should; Juliann also chose to go home since we were told we could not get midnight show tickets. Jimmie drove them back to Huntington Beach in their car. I stayed another night (our rooms were paid up for 3 days) and our friends wanted to stay since I could drive them home comfortably in our big car.

Several months later I mentioned that Jerry Lee had helped Bob and Jimmie out that night to Elvis who became very quiet a few moments, then asked, “Was he drinkin’?” I said Bob didn't drink - he said, “No -Jerry, was he?” I said well Elvis, everyone who can drinks in Vegas, don't they? Elvis mumbled something under his breath about him (Jerry) “bein' a drunk an' can't tell what he might say or do”. I said, he was very nice and helpful and Jimmie thought he was very gracious. Elvis asked if he said “anythin' about me?” I said I don't think so, if he had Jimmie would have told me; is there bad blood between you guys? He said, “Not on my side but -- he kinda resents -- eh--well, you know, I got it made kind of thing goin' on an' it's hard on him -- guess. We started out same time ya know, 'n he was real hot for 'while there, worried me some but he's good showman, he deserved better 'n he got.” That was all he'd say, I didn't want to pry anything more out of him because he didn't appear to want to discuss it further anyway.

A few years later Jerry Lee apparently was drunk, showed up at Elvis' Graceland gate and waved a gun around. Police were called out and things weren't pleasant after that between Elvis and Jerry Lee, nor did Elvis ever mention that incident to me. Elvis preferred not to be around people who drank a lot and said he didn't like drunks very much, they were too “unreasonable” and “wouldn't remember it later anyway”.

As it turned out after Jimmie and the others left for home, it just so happened there were two seats and standing room in the balcony; my lady friend and I got the seats! Elvis was in fine voice and seemed to be having a good time; the balcony view was entirely different than the lower seating - a real “bird's eye view”. There were several celebrities in the audience, one being **Judy Garland's** daughter **Liza “with a Z”** who had a couple of booths in front for her party. They were a noisy group! Elvis usually introduced guests if he knew they were in the audience but he didn't say a word about her being out there; he might not have known as the show had already started when they were seated.

We waited and caught up with my conspirator musician friend who was glad to see my lady friend; they got along well and he was charming. Later we went up to the Penthouse floor where an already pretty large group of people was waiting for Elvis who was

detained downstairs. We left for a few minutes just to run down to our rooms and on the way back up had the dubious pleasure of riding up with singer **Jimmy Dean** and one of his guards. Mr. Dean was drunk, tried to make passes at me and then was ogling my friend's bosom and practically drooling. He also had an awful case of the flu and coughed on both of us-five days later we both were very ill with chest congestion and high fever courtesy of **Jimmy Dean**, who years later became the "sausage king"!

When Elvis arrived, he was angry, there had been some disturbance which involved another male celebrity (**Robert Conrad**, whom Elvis knew) who had been drinking and from what was being whispered around the room, had made comments in the dressing room downstairs that Elvis felt was disrespectful as Linda was present; he had angrily stated his feelings on the matter while his nervous men stood by. Elvis didn't care much for people who drank and became obnoxious under the influence; Linda tried to calm Elvis but ended up going to their bedroom. Elvis said a few brutally abrupt words to a clump of guests intimidating several of them, although he softened his voice and soothed their feelings as he realized what he had done. He spoke kindly to our little group, saying, "Sit down- see you all in a minute."

"Just let's sit over here and wait it out" said my musician conspirator; he kind of liked being able to "buck the tide" as he called the security guard/friends. Elvis, often liked to have the entire band and singers join him in his suite for a sing along into the wee hours of the morning-even though they'd all, including Elvis, been on stage twice and might have rehearsed during the day also. Apparently "they" forgot to let my musician friend know he was included- several times- and he was a bit miffed. He asked me not to mention it to Elvis or anyone working with him, he didn't "want to make any waves within the group" since he had to work with them and travel around with them working for Elvis. He worried about Elvis, truly concerned for his well being and he didn't like most of the men "taking care of him". He thought Elvis just didn't want to start over with new people, that he preferred dealing with the problems within the group rather than change employees and have the problems that would cause on the road. He said, "Elvis is comfortable with what he knows, but he's apt to lose confidence if he doesn't know what to expect-he won't change horses in mid stream."

Suddenly we saw Elvis abruptly head into his bedroom causing some people to leave in disgust. After a few minutes he came out, still in a slightly boorish mood, but his men began joking around, trying to get him over it. One of his men, **Charlie Hodge** fell to his hands and knees and scooted across the floor bellowing like a bull and attacked a coat held drape like by another man. Elvis poured his drink on the crawler, the man bit him on the leg and Elvis pulled him to his feet saying, "Man, don't you know that looks sick?" Charlie playfully punched him and Elvis snickered, saying something dirty and then broke into giggles at his friend's response.

There were several new faces among the men who were working with Elvis, some of whom Elvis appeared to resent when they acted as if they were in charge. When asked who they were he merely growled, “security” and turned away.

Linda reappeared wearing a long lounge type outfit and looking beautiful. She tried to get Elvis to eat some dinner; he declined saying, “Thank you darlin, ma guts won’t let me right now” and he put his forehead on her stomach as she stood between his knees in front of him, with his arms around her waist. She held his head and he kissed her naval, then looked up at her and said something. She kissed him and then went to sit down.

Though I saw Linda with Elvis several times, and she smiled and said “hello, we’re glad you came” to me on one occasion, I don’t know if she knew me or had any idea how I came to be around. She was very gracious, warm and friendly and she had beautiful soft brown eyes. She radiated warmth and gentleness, it was easy to see why Elvis cared so much for her--she was genuine and she cared very much for his well being that was obvious. I liked her. Elvis did care and spoke of being “lucky to have her” with him.

He began telling a guest that he had been having “killer headaches” and that he “could not relax anymore”. He mentioned not sleeping well and of “hurting all over” and he said he thought they might go to the Virgin Isles or Hawaii after the engagement because “I don’t hurt so much out there.” He related that his “insides hurt” and laid his hand just below his sternum to indicate where. Someone said it must be an ulcer and he nodded a rueful look on his face. Then he said it had been bleeding “since I threw up a bit.” He turned his tale into a joke saying, “You know, it wasn’t easy...” he paused, we waited for the rest. “I’ve had this bit in my teeth for years ‘n guess I didn’t realize I’d swallowed it.” He glanced around, a sly gleam in his eyes then giggled, saying, “I’m a singer-not a comic!”

**Don Rickles**, another popular for his personalized insulting comic performances had been upstairs, before the midnight show, cracking Elvis up, hammering away at Elvis’ sex appeal. People who were there related some of the “insults” saying that **Rickles** said after viewing the remains of Elvis’ dinner and salad he (**Rickles**) could “smell the cat nip” on Elvis’ breath adding that it sure wasn’t “poke salad” and said that “trying to get through the sea of women downstairs was like paddling a canoe with a fly swatter”. He said Elvis didn’t need to worry about the cost of heating oil, he could “just pull up a few more women when he felt a chill” and that “if Elvis was a stud horse he’d be nothin’ but skin and bones” then said, “Oh, he is skin and bones--look at those legs!”

Apparently, Elvis had tears running from his eyes from laughing so hard, every time he’d just about get over it, **Rickles** would blast him again. Elvis was laughing so much he

couldn't talk and was falling out of his chair, laying on the floor. Several people who had "seen *that* show" were hoping **Rickles** was going to come upstairs and stay awhile after his own midnight show but a little later one of Elvis' guys said he had called to say he wasn't going to make it that night. Elvis was disappointed but understanding saying another time then, though later some of his guys were downstairs in the Hilton coffee shop saying Elvis "threw a fit" over it, making it seem like Elvis was an "out of control spoiled brat" and not the gentleman we saw earlier. I guess telling those kinds of stories made *them* "look better" or got them attention, as if the activity in those back booths with their late night conquests wasn't attention getting enough.

While we were watching Elvis visiting with other guests, a couple of celebrities, one of them a singer/songwriter, were brought up. Elvis had given the singer the nick name "*The Good Shepherd*" and so his stage name was **T. G. Shepherd; Joe Esposito** who appeared to be in charge of scheduling time for important guests brought them in. Elvis went to talk with them, then spoke briefly with Joe who quickly left again and I didn't notice if he returned. People think it is strange that I chose not to befriend Elvis' men; the simple truth is, I did not want to and it seemed to me since he had never introduced any of them to me personally when he could have, he didn't want me to be "one of them". I followed my heart-as he taught. He never had to worry that I might "betray his confidence".

Elvis took one of the male guests into another room, shutting the door for a private chat. Later, I saw Elvis give that pal, who my musician friend said was a "newly signed" country singer, what appeared to be a check judging from how the man folded it and put it inside his jacket pocket. The man hugged him and Elvis walked him to the door, his arm over his shoulders. I don't think anyone really knows how many other performers Elvis helped along their path to fame, like letting them use his tour bus or buying them a new one, giving them money, recording their songs, mentioning them in public and in private to others who could assist their careers. And he did it all quietly, wanting no fan fare and no mention of his involvement, please. He said, "Tellin' it would spoil the blessing I get from bein' able to do somethin' - now you don' want to do that, do you, really?"

Later Linda had gone to another part of the suite and Elvis was standing with his men, one of them encouraged him to talk about a well known female actress/singer who starred in movies and Broadway plays that had come upstairs while he was on stage and helped herself to his bath and his bed.

Elvis related that when he found her there she told him she was going to give him something he'd never had before and he, smart mouth that he was, replied, "What--- Syphilis?" She then had to be escorted from his suite yelling that he was a "no-good fake" and "no good useless stud"! In telling this he put on that "machismo cover" of his



and came out with a few choice phrases I'd never heard out of him and said her selection of words were "pretty blunt" –I thought his were beyond blunt! The room nearly turned "blue". He then said he had a "turn with her" when he was a "mere chile" but did not care for a "rerun of events". He added, "She wasn't nothin' to write home 'bout then- can't say she ever was...but then that's her thing...n I don't want none of it!"

One of the guys chortled, "He even had housekeeping change the bedding 'cause she was in it!" Elvis shot a sharp blue-eyed look his way then strolled away to talk to another group of guests where he soon was laughing loudly, bantering with them and appeared to be "rating" the women they had noticed in the audience. I have to say, had I not known much about him I would have thought he was a jerk with a big mouth and an ego to go with it; however I realized it was more for their benefit than his, and he played the game to be "one of the guys".

### ***Observing him---***

Elvis was heavier than he had been in years past, but it was evenly distributed and looked good, with the few added pounds he looked like a very handsome mature male. He was tired; his shoulders sagged though he made an effort to stand up straight. His strut was more a walk, his face was pale, slightly puffy and he had dark circles beneath his eyes. He was complaining of a sore throat; one of the guys went looking for his doctor. One of his guests who worked in a hospital, mentioned that Elvis "didn't eat much" and she was surprised he had "gained any weight"...she thought his weight gain was "fluid retention" and that his eyes gave him away, "he doesn't feel good" she added.

Elvis finally got over to us, thanked us for "drivin' all that way in the rain to see me", chatted a bit and I asked him to sign the scarf he had given me 2 years earlier at a dinner show- and he did, with it over his knee- trying to get a pen to write on silk wasn't easy but he did it. He had given me a gold necklace and earring set with emerald green stones to go with the dress I had described in talking on the phone with him a few weeks before he was to appear in Vegas in 1972 and I wore them and the dress the night he asked Charlie for a green scarf as Charlie was handing him a white one. Elvis shook his head, Charlie held out a blue one, Elvis shook his head and I guess said, a green one because Charlie dug one out. Elvis sang "*Love Me Tender*" strolled over, stood giving me one of his "um gonna get you" looks, dangled the scarf at me, pulled it back as if to give it to someone else, then flipped it back at me grinning as I grabbed it and held on. He let it go slowly and winked at me, then began kissing the ladies, telling one, "Wait, wait- not here-upstairs baby!" as she nearly pulled his suit off his shoulder in clamoring for his attention. That got a lot of shrieks! So did he when he first walked on dressed in that body hugging, white, laced front suit; I wanted to have him sign that scarf as he had chosen it for me. I had 3 scarves from him, two white that I gave to people not lucky enough to get one but that green one was special--chosen just for me.

It was nearly dawn and most of the people present seemed to be either working on stage with Elvis friends or were friends of those people and Elvis was slowing down. The hotel doctor came right up, looked down Elvis' throat, took his blood pressure and prescribed medication. Elvis sent his stepbrother David to "fetch it" from a drugstore; Elvis declined the doctor's offer to "go into the bedroom for this" and the doctor prepared to give him a shot. Elvis removed his jacket and rolled up his sleeve and the doctor made a "joke" saying, "bend over son." Dismay flooded Elvis' face; he looked up at him then grinned as he realized he was teasing. He flinched, turning his face away as the needle went into his arm. Though the doctor held cotton over the injection site, blood ran down Elvis' arm... and he glanced around, saying, "See-I got blood in ma veins...an' ever thin' – just a human being---like you all." A group of people applauded and he looked at them like they were nuts, but he smiled.

A woman who was nearby jumped up in a rush, and practically snatched up the cotton pad the doctor had used to wipe the blood from Elvis' arm. Elvis looked at her with his mouth dropping open; he didn't say a word but the look on his face said plenty! She seemed dazed, near tears and said over and over "oh, it's his, oh it's his--" as she carefully wrapped it in a napkin and put it in her purse. Elvis shook his head in disbelief as he was saying something to the doctor, who made a joke about it "making good soup". Elvis kind of laughed but I won't forget that astounded look he had when she snatched it up! What struck me most was that she left, holding onto her purse as if it held something very precious- she could have stayed longer to enjoy *the source*, yet she chose to take her "prize" and go.

He seemed resigned to whatever was going on in his life, although there was a deep sadness about him that did not leave, even when he smiled. He appeared to care for Linda who knew how to handle him. She wore a beautiful necklace that she said he had given her for her birthday. When someone said it must have cost him his entire Vegas salary, Elvis put his arm around her and said, "She's worth every penny of it!" Linda gave him an adoring look and he bit his lip, and then smiled sweetly at her. During the years they were together, Elvis performed one song that he told me was for "Linda" – It was called "*Something*" and he always sang it so sweetly and beautifully during those years with her at his side.

He had been wearing a blue cashmere suit jacket that he left off after getting the shot, a blue shirt (he rolled up the sleeves to just below the elbow), and darker blue scarf for a tie, had on several rings, turquoise and gold with many diamonds and wore what looked like his wedding ring beneath another ring on his left hand. (Lisa had just been visiting her daddy a few days; I think he might have been wearing that ring for her as he said she

liked to see him wear it because “Mommy got it for you”.) A lion’s head medallion that shimmered with jewels, a cross of black gold and gold rope chain finished off the picture. He also wore silver and gold framed glasses because as he said, “Um blind as a bat without ‘em, damn it.”

A guest asked when he had seen Priscilla last and Elvis’ face became a stone. He growled something about not long ago, and left the room. It was obvious to everyone that his ex-wife was a forbidden subject, but a girl who was close with one of his men began saying that Elvis carried a “suitcase full of photos of Priscilla” with him and that he was “carrying a huge torch for her”. At that, choosing not to hear the rest, Linda went after Elvis.

Actually, the “suitcase full of photos” was a collection of books that Elvis loved; his “reading material” and he lugged them (or the guys did) around with him everywhere he went. He probably did have some photos of his little girl and her mother too but the “torch” was only the love he held for the mother of his child. Though he was traumatized by the divorce and separation from his precious little girl, he had accepted it and knew it had to be—he couldn’t change his life and she could no longer live as he did. He told me that when she left and took their baby and all of her things that he had felt like “part of my heart was torn out and gone too”. And he softly said, “She made me bleed...”

One of the guys who was there when Priscilla moved out of the Beverly Hills' house, taking Lisa and her things, (**Jerry Schilling** in interviews and his book *“Me & a Guy Named Elvis”*), said that Elvis was devastated, shut himself in his room and they (the guys who were there) feared he might “do something drastic” so they kept creeping down the hall to listen at the door to his bedroom. He was sobbing, screaming and beating things up for hours and they couldn’t do anything to help him - he had locked the doors.

Several comments have been made by various friends and co-workers of his about how he chose songs reflecting periods of his life, such as *“For Old Times’ Sake”* (written by **Tony Joe White**) and one featured in the *“On Tour”* concert movie documentary, *“Always On My Mind”*, a song that said so much about what he felt concerning the breakup of his home life. I believe that being able to go on stage and sing gave him emotional release in a way that he could not receive any other way; it allowed him to express what he felt without “admitting” he felt “that way”. He said, “Singing gives me an outlet that nothin’ else ever could or did – I need to sing--I feel alive out there (on stage) --in front of people who come just to see my show-- my life is nothin’ without that--feeling--”

Elvis told me that only a true love would let their lover go, if that was their heartfelt desire; for only in making your loved one happy could you be content yourself. He had

let Priscilla go because she was not happy being his wife; he thought she had “changed” and the things they planned were not enough to satisfy her. He could not fully understand why- but he accepted it, saying she’s a young woman and it’s too much to expect her to wait on me. He still loved her, he said that he always would but he wanted her to be happy over all.

I admired Elvis for his integrity; he blamed himself, saying he let his career go to his head and it got out of hand; he never publicly said a bad word about her, even though there was discord over her relationship with other men. Elvis was jealous, over his wife and over his child’s affection toward other men in that wife’s life, but still he defended Priscilla-when I thought he ought to be able to “see” through his rose colored glasses where she was concerned. I believe he felt he had failed one of life’s “steps” somehow, that he struggled with his blind need for Priscilla’s company which he had had for over 9 years, counting from when they met and the time they were married. He was lonely at times even though he was single, free to have the company of women any time he wanted, and on a few occasions, often very early in the morning when he was alone and couldn’t sleep, he spoke of missing their life together, saying he wished sometimes he’d never done it, (got married) but he was so happy for a while- and he had Lisa- that made it worth it, and a few times he cried.

### ***Behind Closed Doors---***

I never got backstage or upstairs to see him again, thanks to Elvis’ security men and their need to “protect him” from friends and enemies alike. Elvis often asked if we were coming over to see the show but he never did ask if we had tried to see him. Nor did we tell him that we had, or any of the things we saw happening downstairs after the midnight shows or what we heard being said by those in his employment, and that I know he knew nothing about. We didn’t because he had enough to deal with, he didn’t need to worry over anything related to us and because he couldn’t do much about it anyway. If he blew up and they figured out who told him, they would have just *made sure* we never spoke to him again-- I wonder if we ought to have told him, but it’s too late for that. In our way, we were guilty of protecting him also, and share the burden of allowing his entrapment and that is what it became-he was held captive by his fame, his security teams, his image and those many friends/employees who for whatever reason blindly avoided seeing what was happening to Elvis, the man who was so protected he didn’t realize it because he didn’t know any different by then-or just didn’t have the energy or desire to make drastic changes? I wish I could ask him what he thought it was.

I think about the things he did say and what he did not, and try to piece the parts together, it’s sometimes difficult to imagine that people can take a decent human being and make them live a life so sheltered, just for money and the power it brings. Elvis had

to do things against his nature, he had no choice though those around him say “it didn’t happen” but did they really know? Elvis didn’t talk to them-he had to live with them-protect them. Or was it just that he was alone on top of that mountain?

He did mention that he had no way of refusing people connected to his world and in the end; he did what he had to do, because he didn’t have a choice. He said he worked some shows for himself-other shows went to “them, for debts that have to be paid” one way or another-it was those that ended up being “another” that he hated the most.

He was handsome, for a long while he looked like that “image” and there were many who would pay big money for that “image” just like when he became so hot in 1956; I said it’s like that now?” He said, “Baby, it’s full circle-I can’t do nothin’ ‘bout it-and he can’t either-it’s okay, nothin’ like before--- I mean, they’re mostly nice an’ just want to see what all the hype an’ excitement is about. Funny thing is, most of ‘em find out an’ end up bein’ on my side...’un in this shitin’ game, need all the help I can get!”

Though he never went into detail he told me he would be “out of it all” soon —but it sure screwed up any chance of “fixing things with ‘Cilla” or for starting over, but there wasn’t anything he could say or do about it-“it’s better this way, it’s better I’m single, ‘n there’s time, I can change things. If I can just- jus’ keep it together long enough...God help me.”

It was during this time that he “gave up” his interest in continuing the studies he had been so excited to do- so that he could become a “priest” and be part of the “order”—and he had excitedly said, “It would be official, I could teach others”. He would never tell me what exactly this “order” was; it was the reason he wore the white and then gold silk scarves over his shoulders when off stage, signifying the steps he was taking for becoming more than a member, but said when he finished and was “ordained” we would be “proud “of him for doing it. Then suddenly, he gave it up, almost overnight and said, “I can’t do it, I’m not good enough...have to be pure of spirit, heart, soul and body... ‘n can’t do it, not now.” He stopped wearing the scarves, and he would never speak of it again. No one appears to know anything other than he was involved in spiritual studying and interested in **The Self Realization Fellowship**, more so after he became acquainted with **Sri Daya Mata** whom he spent time with, talking about “things” and who “trusted” him with “treasured personal material” relating to that Fellowship’s ancient past and in doing so, she inscribed herself on his heart for ever- he was stunned, humbled and felt “like a king or somethin’” he said, “that someone special like her would think me worth botherin’ with.” So like him to feel unworthy but I don’t think that was what he was “in training for”; I think it was some other group, like an ancient “brotherhood” -something that had been in existence a long while and that touched his heart and spirit like no other. And he gave it up, mainly because his family, those he loved and trusted, didn’t take him

seriously and told him he couldn't manage his own problems, how the hell did he think he could help anyone else with theirs? If his loved ones thought that, I guess he started to believe it also.

(**Sri Daya Mata** passed away November 30, 2010 at 96 years of age. Elvis would have those "joy bells" ringing for her arrival.)

### ***1973, early am; still not sleeping---***

**Elvis:** You think about evolution an' all that's be'in taught kids' today- it's so-so jus' scientific bullshit! But people are willin' to take it an' run with it an' don't consider that God made the earth, the heavens and mankind, the beasts of the fields, the oceans an' ever thing in them an' He made the earth bear fruit so we'd all have food- even bearin' fruit in the waters of the ocean to feed all those creatures. Now, how can they defend their beliefs that we all jus' crawled out of a puddle some where an' came to be what we are today? Don't buy that-not even on sale!

*Wanda: I don't either but then I was raised to believe in the Bible and its teachings-many people of today have not had that groundwork, you know.*

**Elvis:** But they got minds, reasoning ability and they ain't blind or deaf! Just look around, how is it nobody is still e-volving-growin' wings maybe or extra fingers an' arms? Don't that make you wonder? We got just what we had for the past thousands of years- we might be cleaner, better groomed an' wearin' better clothes an' such, but damned if we don't all look 'bout the same, men are men and women are women an' the kids still comin' from the same damn circumstances! Just look at the Heavens -they don't change! Maybe some stars fall an' we got telescopes to see things blowin' up an' all that but it doesn't mean things are changin' ---they're just goin' on like they were intended to go.

*Wanda: What about the fact the earth used to be so hot, volcanoes everywhere and dinosaurs and big saber toothed tigers--*

**Elvis:** That don't mean they were evolving- it just means that God made the Heavens and the Earth and it hadn't cooled down yet- who's to say He didn't do it with a big bang kind of theory? His word says very plainly that He made us from the clay of the earth, and then he made woman from the first man's rib -so she's earth too. We got the same ingredients in us, our bodies as are found in the soil of the earth – ever' animal and plant livin' has the same ingredients--same chemicals! We are all the same- an' we ain't evolving! I got ten toes and fingers, two ears and so have you! Damn it, it just makes me want to-to stand up somewhere with a -a microphone and a damn f--.big speaker an' shout it out to these people to get their f--.in' eyes open an' take a look around! Gawd!

*W. Boy, you are riled up over this one!*

**Elvis:** Was talkin' to some college kids other day 'n man, it freaked me really! They are so-so gullible an' it's not right! Only one of 'em had ever even bothered to read any of the

Bible- they think it's just mythology and symbolisms an' kind of a combination of things put together to keep the early day Catholics in line or somethin' like that an' to put fear into people so they'd not act against authority an' do somethin' stupid. In some ways that might be true-but that don't mean it's not the inspired word of God handed down an' that it isn't true. Damn it, sometime, in my lifetime I hope, someone is gonna come up with proof that is so strong nothin' can shake it. Maybe the comin' of Jesus will be that proof--

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*Wanda: That ought to do it!*

**Elvis:** Yeah, but will it be soon enough to save these young minds today?

*W. What would you do if you could-other than shout from a mountain top?*

**Elvis:** Ehh--awww, don't know if I could- but would like to-to maybe go to some colleges an' do some gospel concerts 'n maybe could talk to 'em a little-not much 'cause I don't--don't know that much either, but maybe if I meditated an' asked God to help me, asked Jesus for His guidance an' then would have the-the inspiration to say the right things--make 'em feel God's almighty power-- Awww--don't know really. Jus' kinda confused myself as to what could do, but I'd like to try. I'm jus' a singer--but sometimes feel--now don't say nothing ---some times feel like ought to -to do more--like maybe should of- of been--maybe a preacher or somethin'--like um not-eh, not doin' exactly what was intended. Gawd--don't--let's get off this--line of thinkin'--I'm just a singer an' I like doin' it!

*W. Don' what?*

**Elvis:** Singin'-- (Snickers) an' that too! (Laughs) You know, what really gets me goin' is these young person's don't think for themselves, ya know? They be willin' to believe anyone who's -who's studied somethin' an' they don't question it enough!

*W. Isn't that true of every generation?*

**Elvis:** whose side you on? It might be, but it's the older generation teachin' the younger ones! We got to stand up for what's right an' we are not doin' a good job of it!

*W. I guess then those of us who see these things need to set an example for them-right?*

**Elvis:** Right! You know, I try to tell people--I mean talk with 'em an' if-if, you know, they kinda listen, and then sometimes want to tell 'em things. Sometimes feel they- they--this sounds silly--

*W. No it doesn't--*

**Elvis:** I try to see-feel-perceive- what is troubling them or somethin' they feel or think an' then give them somethin' to – to cling to. Sounds crazy sayin' it, but (his voice drops off to almost a whisper) sometimes it's like somethin' in me reaches in an' an' feels what's on their minds-deep down, the secrets of their soul or somethin'. Scary at times--other times it's--it's emotional an' I have to-to do somethin'--

*W. Men too?*

**Elvis:** You know that--usually its women--yeah. Sometimes men, sometimes the fellas workin' with me--it kinda scares them. Don't want 'em to think me--weirder 'n I am---' they---eh already do, ya know. But sometimes it's jus'-just cookin' an' I forget not to-to

say somethin'. If I wasn't careful no body'd work with me! Sure wouldn't be alone with me! (Laughs) I'm a-a freak--really! You don' know the half of it--of me!

*W. Yeah? I know you have a big purple eye in the middle of your forehead and you sometimes see through it! Right through skin and bones--straight into the brain! Huh?*

**Elvis:** The heart honey, the heart-- (Laughs) Gawd--the sun is comin' up! Oh lord--another day an' I ain't sleepin' yet!

*W. Two or three days?*

**Elvis:** Long days--wish all the days were jus' the evenin' an' nights--could make that okay. It's the in between that's get 'in to me, damn it. I need--gawd what do I need? A whack over the head or somethin'--maybe I'll jus' go run up an' down the hall an' wake ever' body up! (Laughs)

[I wish he could have done those college gospel concerts – how wonderful it would have been for him, and for all who attended.]

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**Elvis:** *“I love my life---* sometimes it feels like a-a dream--if I'm dreamin' I hope 'n pray I *never* wake up! Man, I don't know-- jus' somethin' bigger'n all of us reached down 'n plucked me up- took a look 'n said, “He'll do-” 'n tossed me into the spotlight! 'n I been here ever since--” (Snickers, then laughs happily)

**Elvis:** “Ya know, in every body's life, sometimes it's good 'n then sometimes it's got some dark days 'n long nights-- but if ya put the good times in one basket 'n the dark times in another, you'll soon realize the good far outweighs the bad-- 'n it's the little things that count--sometimes they turn into the things you miss the most. Life sure ain't no bed of roses--got some thorns in there too. Even with thorns though, maybe they are there to cause us to appreciate the good times ya know, it's a shame when people go through life complain' and frettin' over stuff that don't really count much if they'd just put it in the right place in life. I try to keep happy thoughts before me, even when I'm at the lowest point it's better if I just think of the good things goin' on, or comin' up down the road. That way it's something to look forward to an' let's me think ahead an' forget my daily problems for a while. Life's always got its good side, we just have to be smart enough to look for the light 'n stop livin' in darkness. Man, I love my life--really!”

### ***Mysteries & Puzzles---***

There were people who “ran into” Elvis in San Diego, in various locations in California throughout 1972-74, once at a place called “*The Golden Door*” (an exclusive spa near Palm Springs), two persons said they saw Elvis Presley there, staying in rooms with some wealthy women connected to the “mafia” and that a “helicopter came and picked him up” after 2 days. He didn't have any treatments the spa offered, but the



women did and Elvis supposedly stayed with them. Some photographs were shown to a friend of ours in Palm Springs, Elvis is standing between two women, he doesn't look happy, no smile, no expression just an "I'm here what else do you want look" in those eyes. He's wearing a white shirt, loose only at the neck, no jewelry and dark pants. His hands can be seen; there are no rings, no bracelets and no watch. Behind them is a door with some type of information sheet attached that has "*The Golden Door*" in gold at the top of the printed information. Elvis had recently ended a stint in Las Vegas and was *supposed* to be at home in Memphis for a few weeks.

When I asked him if he knew about "*The Golden Door*", he said he'd heard of it, that the people who went there had more money than he'd ever see, and then he changed the subject. (The conclusions I relate are my own, based on my own opinion and judgement.)

At another time in a nice hotel near the beach in San Diego, at a very early hour, new carpeting was being laid and one of the workers was a friend's brother. He told of seeing Elvis Presley. "They (4 men) brought Elvis down the hallway; they came from a suite of rooms. Two of them were holding on to him, as they passed the brother said, "He looked right at me-the damn guy's a 'hop-head', could have poured his eyes out on the floor!" He said that Elvis stopped, and commented, "That's a good job you all are doing-perfectly matched pattern-damn nice!" and he smiled – but her brother went on, "I know a druggie when I see one! " He went on to say the men roughly forced Elvis to move on; and upon seeing that he had a "weird feeling" and went to the window to see where they came out and saw a Mercedes pull up, the men put Elvis into the back seat, one on each side of him and the car moved away heading onto the freeway nearby.

After we told my friend's brother that Elvis was on medication for several medical problems and had eye problems that made his eyes tear up a lot, and he took sleeping pills sometimes and may not have been up long; he admitted that he couldn't get past the feeling he got when Elvis stopped, spoke to him and the way he looked straight into his eyes and smiled. A few days later he said, after talking with us he had thought more about it *and it was like Elvis wanted* him to know something, maybe that he wasn't there because he wanted to be?

The descriptions of the men with him did not fit those he usually traveled with. I asked Elvis if he had been in California at the time the carpet layer mentioned-Elvis said that he had stayed in Memphis except for two days. He didn't say where he was those two days.

Though I was not present but a few times to witness many of the things that seemed strange and different in those last few years of Elvis' life; what I saw of him before those events began, tell me that Elvis was doing what he had to do-to protect his family and most especially his child and his wife. He was held captive by his fame, his image and

by those seeking to exploit that image for all it was worth-and did until the very end. When his health began to fail, it is likely he had to meet certain demands by doing as many performances as could be crammed into what time he had left.

Some of his friends/employees say that it was Elvis who kept pushing for more tours, asking the Colonel to book them etc. and he was driving the show, and maybe he was because he kept saying he didn't have much time.... had to get things done and money was tight, things cost so much more in those days. He just didn't seem to understand that he needed to save money, not spend it, he said. But I think he was trying very hard to pay off debts related to Col. Parker who had connections to everything Elvis did, or might want to do in the future. The money went fast, there was a long list of people who worked on his career and were paid by money Elvis earned, including what later would be called "outrageous" percentage taken off the top by his manager, and before any costs were paid; he took his percentage first; then there were all the lawyers working on the suits filed because he was a big celebrity, and a target for such things. However, Elvis said in '77 he was going to quit, get another manager who was more knowledgeable and up to date with things in entertainment, etc. but he ran out of time. I can easily understand why so many people question the circumstances of Elvis' death-after all, as it turned out he *was* "worth more dead than alive" especially if his health wasn't going to improve. Some people who know what Elvis made and what he should have made, say that Parker took Elvis for all he could get; for himself. Failed to charge enough for costs and left that to come out of Elvis' less than half percentage; it's even been said that Parker should have been held accountable legally. That came about after Elvis' death; then he got "cut loose" legally and more or less "went into hiding". He was I've heard, afraid for his "life"-the rabid fans, you know. I hope he had trouble sleeping...

When I heard that Elvis had bought his last car, a **Mercedes** limo on credit and was making monthly payments-I knew something was up-he *never* did that! And then to find out he had mortgaged Graceland and signed the ownership over to trusted lawyers and Priscilla, for Lisa to inherit full ownership upon becoming legally an adult. He paid off the money he owed Priscilla for the divorce settlement"-astounding! I didn't understand at first because he told me he didn't intend to "leave her anything" said she was not included in his will since he had given her a large divorce settlement; then it dawned on me that giving her a say over of his home until Lisa was old enough, was one way he *could be sure* that she would have a legal say in what happened to Graceland in case he were unable to do it. She would protect it for their daughter-he always said she was smart and handled money well and he knew she'd do the right thing for their daughter. And she made him proud---just as he believed she would. And yes, he did consult with his lawyers who had handled his affairs for years.

When he mentioned he was having a will drawn up, he asked some questions about wills because he knew I knew a little about how they were worded; I asked him if he had ever done one and he said he hadn't, not really but his lawyers had always known his family would get everything because "it's theirs anyway". He didn't want any "loop holes" for anyone to challenge the will so it was being kept simple and direct, according to his lawyers. I said he'd need a witness, someone not connected to the will or his family in any way, and he said, "That's what they told me." I said, it sounds like they are looking out for you and your family and he seemed relieved to hear it. I didn't ask why he was having one drawn up, but I already realized when I had last seen him, how badly he felt and I knew in my heart, he was aware it wasn't something he would be getting over and then to say he was having a will done--- well, healthy people with a future ahead of them, don't usually think about such things. And he was working as many shows as he could, it seemed to me; though for a short time after mid 1976 he thought he was getting better and things would be alright with his physical condition--but once out working again he started going downhill fast, over night seeming to gain 25 to 30 pounds and it was just fluid buildup in the cells of his body--*not* fat from "over eating, etc" as was being said by many people--reporters and employee/friends etc— Elvis was eating very little, his colon was already giving him problems and eating added to it. And it was something beyond his ability to control, especially when working.

He said, "There's something I have to do" not long before he died. I think he was working to "buy out" his contract and he thought he nearly had enough to do it. Some of those "friends" *who had more money than he* were helping him and he "thought he could do it soon." He may have, he sure didn't have much money left when he died--nothing like he said he had got together to do it with; Elvis said he wanted to keep Graceland for his little girl and his father – didn't want them to lose "everything *if I should go...*" And that makes me believe he did "pay off that debt"--which very well might have gone to Colonel Tom Parker and the Hilton Hotel Casino perhaps--

A few friends have realized after Elvis' death, that he was telling them "good bye" in subtle ways, some say he thanked them for being his friend, saying they had helped him get through all those ups and downs. Even our teenage daughter noticed that he "seemed different" when she spoke last with him and after he was gone she said, "he was telling me good bye--I told him I loved him--" after he said he loved her in saying his good bye. Most of us who knew him feel that he knew his time was short, and he wanted to leave his friends knowing that he cared and appreciated their friendship. So like him- he was a loving man who wanted to leave that love with his friends.

In the last few years several of his friends/employees have written about their times with him; some have said that Col. Parker on the day Elvis died, quickly wired a million dollars (Elvis' share of concert receipts *I guess*) into Elvis' account which didn't have but

a few hundred dollars in it at the time. Elvis' share of monies earned paid for all expenses on those tours while the Colonel took his “cut” off the top – before expenses and Elvis was responsible for the taxes as well. When I heard Elvis say that I thought he had it wrong, surely. But apparently he knew - and naively thought it was okay. He also trusted his father to keep things paid; Vernon did the best he could, but he failed to keep the taxes paid up on Graceland and when Elvis died, there was several thousand owed in back taxes, plus all the expenses of the funeral and bills pending for thousands of dollars. There was little coming in from record royalties because the Colonel had convinced Elvis to sell off several catalogs of songs he had recorded in the past though some rights were retained, most of the money did not go to Elvis - so “in order to pay” for his divorce etc Elvis had borrowed money against Graceland, and Col. Tom had earlier, talked him into selling the rights to some of his best hits. But Elvis said that money had gone for other debts more “pressing” and so he still owed her for more than half the settlement. He was never bitter about what she got, not in the least except it made him angry that she took him back to court etc. since he had been “generous” the first go 'round, he thought. *Even he didn't know “how much”* he was worth until she did take him to court-- but Elvis said, it was her lawyer who talked her into that- and the lawyer got at least a third of it, he said. That is what made him angry. He hated paying lawyers for such things and thought they were “rip off artists” in many ways. (Some are and some were.)

Elvis didn't have any accounting abilities, he was not one to save and didn't want to invest in anything- all he wanted to do was go out and perform and he yearned to make a good “fim” of course. He had no idea what “kind of money” he actually earned – and was very surprised to find out he made “millions” --- he wondered where it all went! He didn't think he spent that much – but sometimes he did since he had no idea what was going out or what things *actually* cost. And when he did buy something, he usually was charged twice at least, the price anyone else would have to pay--but he didn't realize that, I don't think. To Elvis money was to be spent--he felt “over paid” because he loved doing what he did, had fun and could get just about anything he wanted so it made him feel better about that if he could “give it back to the people who gave it to me”. He said, “If I buy somethin' then the salesman makes a little bit, then spends it and that goes into other pockets and so on, and so on, an' in that way, I can return it to its rightful place – to the people. I'd feel bad it was all in some bank somewhere, makin' someone else rich jus' keepin' it for me--money is useful only if it brings comfort, happiness, joy and smiles to other people--. if it don't, its jus' paper 'n ink--nothin' much really.” So he spent it about as fast as it came in-- And he always said, “Hell, if we need somethin' I can always go do a few shows an' that'd take care of it.” And until that last year or so, he was right.

I still think about the conversation I had with a gentleman who ran one of the biggest fan clubs in England, **Todd Slaughter**, who wrote about his experience trying to get to meet Elvis to give him an award from the European fans. He finally managed to get a

brief meeting when Elvis was getting off his airplane while still on tour. Todd said he didn't think it was going to happen, Elvis was late coming off the plane and several men along with Col. Tom had gone aboard and none of them had exited while he waited on the tarmac at the foot of the steps. Finally they came to the doorway and Elvis came down between two men with Col. Tom following. Elvis came slowly down, saw Todd whom he had met once before back stage and kept his eyes trained on Todd's face. Todd took a couple steps forward, holding out his hand to Elvis who grabbed hold and held on tightly. Todd was shocked to see blood on Elvis lower lip, the side of his face reddened as if he had been slapped hard. Elvis looked him in the eyes softly saying, "I don't want to do this, they're makin' me--" and he held tightly to Todd's hand and wouldn't let go. Col. Tom said some words to Elvis, who still refused to turn loose or move on down, so Col. Tom, with the help of one of the other men with him, removed Elvis' hand from Todd's arm. Todd was then told to go; Elvis had other business to attend to.

(I recently found the article Todd wrote for his fan club news letter; he explains in detail the events leading up to the meeting, not knowing if it were going to happen or not, then not knowing the location as he rode in the limo that ended up at the airport in Indianapolis. He said that Elvis appeared weak, held to the rails coming down the ramp and he heard him ask Col. Tom where Todd was as he (Elvis) said, "I can't see very well." Elvis remembered meeting Todd another time, he talked with him as they shook hands; Elvis told the Col. it was alright, he knew Todd, and the Col. kept trying to end the conversation. Elvis didn't let go of Todd's hand willingly, and shaken by the events of the meeting, Todd did not reveal all the details when he composed the article at the time of his news letter's release. I don't think I would have done so either; circumstances were not "good" for those who "talked too much about what they saw" according to another of Elvis' fans who was around and on the scene often; if you did, you wouldn't be on the scene again! I hope Todd won't be too upset with me for including more of those fateful moments with Elvis.)

I spoke with Todd by telephone after Elvis died and my book was out; Todd was very gracious, publishing portions of the book in the fan club news paper so the fans there in England could read parts of the book. He spoke to me about what he had witnessed at the plane, Elvis' bloody lip, the red mark on his face and his anguished words. Todd was still bothered by how long Elvis held on to his arm, until his fingers were roughly pried loose and he was pushed on down the stairs, taken to a waiting car and just as he was about to get in, Elvis again looked Todd's way and said, "They're makin' me do this--" He was then put into the car, one man on each side of him and the door closed. There was nothing I could say that would ease Todd's mind and heart, we both felt helpless, yet there was nothing either of us could have done to help Elvis- it was his life and he had to live it. Thank God he loved most of it, said he'd do it all again and only change a few

things-- Todd and I know what he meant-- but we are still haunted though Elvis has been gone for more than 30 years and there are those questions, and no answers.

I wonder about the photographs that were found by a housekeeper for the Orange County Airport (now known as the **John Wayne Airport**). Found in the men's restroom late on the night of August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1977. The photos are of **Rick Stanley** a son of Vernon Presley's ex-wife, with a young blond woman and of Elvis who is standing between the two. They show a very tired looking Elvis, circles beneath his faded looking eyes and not much of a smile on his face. The photos appear to have been taken indoors; Elvis is wearing a multi-colored leather jacket and dark pants with one of the wide, chained belts, he has on just one ring and his tinted glasses. Ricky and the young woman are smiling and appear to be pleased.

It is surprising that someone would "forget" to pick up those photographs that were found lying on the counter top beside the wash basin in the men's restroom. More cause for wondering is that several people who worked at that airport say that Elvis was there in the wee hours of the morning, that he and three men got into a limo that met the small jet plane on the tarmac; they returned a couple of hours later and two men helped Elvis up the steps and back onto the airplane that immediately fired up to leave. There was a record of such a jet landing and taking off but it is not registered to nor did it have any recorded connection to Elvis Presley, Inc. or anyone connected to his organization. Was he there? If so what happened?

Two airport workers who witnessed the arrival and take off said that they thought Elvis was having problems, was ill in some way though he did get out of the car and was walking with the help of the two men. They also say that Elvis waved at them when one of them called his name. Both of these men were very upset to learn Elvis had died on the 16<sup>th</sup> just hours after they had seen him. They were not fans in the sense of the word, but they felt "drawn to him" having seen his plane arrive and then to see him actually get out of the dark brown limo and back onto the plane, and have him turn to acknowledge them with a wave. If not Elvis- who? Then there are those photos--who would have left them-unless they were very distracted and in a rush for some reason? I don't think we'll ever know-in this lifetime.

One of our mutual friends had medical training and worked with doctors, she said that Elvis called to talk; he was very serious and he wanted to know if she could tell him how long he had to live. She couldn't; he asked if she would "talk to her doctor" who was a heart specialist, and perhaps he might have an idea about it. She had to tell him it wouldn't be possible without an examination and tests... He told her he'd had all that done, but they would not "tell me anything much"; he thanked her for listening to him, and then said goodbye. A few months later he spoke with her again, and said he was

going to do his next show where she would be present, just for her: it was his way of thanking her for taking time to try to help him with his problems. He said she had told him something no one else ever had before and that night, he kept his word and dedicated his show to a “special person in the audience”. She was the only female he kissed at that show, and he had to lay down on the stage on his belly to reach her!

From what has been told by some of his friends, he had mentioned not living very long, not expecting to live to be 50 years old; and a good many of them did not realize how serious his health problems had become -he didn't talk about it with them. Many were shocked when he died, when they had last seen him, he was looking good and was enjoying the time between tours to have some fun and relax. About 6 weeks later he was dead.

Elvis said he didn't want to do the last tour that was to start around August 17<sup>th</sup>, he wasn't doing the usual things to get ready for it, and though he talked about it some with the guys, he left it up to them to make things ready. He said just a few days before that he didn't think he had much time left, he spoke as if talking to himself, “when the leaves turn, gonna be then, when the leaves turn” and a little later he said he had gone outside and was looking around and a leaf fell, turning all yellow and red-- “gonna be soon-they'll all be fallin'--” Very early one morning, he was near tears when he told an old friend that he didn't want to die, didn't want to leave his daughter, but she'd be alright and her momma would take care of her--and added “I'll still be here, I won't leave her--” I don't think he did, he's still here, watching over his family and everyone he can who cared about him. Elvis said he didn't want ‘to die on stage someday -and scare everyone’ but he “didn't have to worry ‘bout that because God ain't gonna be that mean to me -I'll be home, with my friends and it'll be all right...”

And he was - and it was.

I was very happy when Vernon arranged to have him buried at Graceland, bringing his mother there too-Elvis would like that, all of them together, at the home he loved, especially having his momma back, where she belonged, at the house he bought for her.

He spoke of the first time they looked through the place; she was speaking of its size, how much it would take to make it a home and he told her she could fix it anyway she wanted, buy anything she liked- he mentioned seeing the drapery with the gold fringe and tassels, the use of dark wood and elegant wall coverings where he stayed in fine hotels, saying he would like that and she was excited at the idea, because she liked that look also; she bought furniture and draperies and had them come put it all up so it was ready when he came back home. They had a little party and drank toasts of champagne to their new home; he said, “God, so long ago but--really--it's just yesterday in here” (his heart).

I feel very good that they are all there, at home where they were the happiest they had ever been, but he said--"It was--like it was a--dream-- man, I kept wantin' to pinch ma self--.thinkin' I'd wake up or somethin'-- Gawd-- no way to explain it, really-- 'n momma 'n daddy--were wantin' me to get some kinda business so when it was "over" we'd still have somethin' comin' in-- " He laughed and said, "Music is ma business -- singing, but daddy couldn't see it lastin' '--me neither really! Like that ya know, kinda unreal, like a dream--"

Elvis adored his mother, who had lived just for him, to take care of him and who loved him unconditionally regardless of what he might do or think. She instilled him with faith, hope and gave him confidence - he seldom made a decision without first consulting her advice and suggestions. He carried a great sense of guilt after her death, because he said, "I let her down, when she needed me most; I was too self absorbed to notice what was goin' on with her health -- 'n she died." His life had changed right in the middle of what he had always dreamed, success, he was an actor, he was the "hottest thing" going in the recording business and movies, money was pouring in and suddenly he was "drafted". He thought he would lose everything being gone for nearly 2 years - he was to be sent overseas, away from home, his fans and his family - and his biggest fear was "to be forgotten" because time brought new names, new faces before the public while he would be gone, and he could be replaced by someone new. He was full of fears, self doubt and worry, he didn't notice his mother's faltering health, he thought only of himself, he said. "An' then she was really sick an' I didn't notice --what kind of son is that? A selfish, inconsiderate one, that's what! An' all the time, my momma was--was--dyin' 'n I didn't see it; blinded by my own wants--'n couldn't see her needs!"

I don't think he ever truly came to grips with those self incriminations and remorse over the death of his mother, and I don't think he ever recovered emotionally from her death because he didn't have time to grieve – had to return to Army duties, face the press and strangers, shipped overseas with no one he knew or was close to who knew him well, and was forced to "keep it all inside" as a result. When he returned nearly two years later, his close family members who had known him all his life said, "Elvis was never the same again; he kept things so bottled up inside after she died; he wasn't the same happy young man ever again."

I have so many questions that do not appear to have any answers; at least not yet. For instance, Elvis was said to have had codeine in his system, he was allergic to that chemical compound and would seldom ever take it after getting other medications that would help his headaches. Yet the autopsy says there was some found in his system but he had visited a dentist the night before who may have given him codeine--was it enough to bring about a severe reaction, difficulty breathing and - heart failure? Where did this substance come from and why would he have taken it knowing it would make him ill---



especially when he had weaned “off everything except what he had to take” to stay alive--he quite proudly told me this just a few weeks earlier and he was looking forward to taking about a year off, resting up, getting back in shape and clearing his mind of all the worries and stress he'd been under for the past few years. He had plans; he was making more and looking ahead to starting a new path in his career. Several well known entertainers he spoke with in Vegas, told him he could come back to films, and encouraged him to try and he was elated that some wanted to work with him.

He was talking about his plans, had told several people he wanted to get a new manager, change directions and do the things he felt he wanted to do. I can't help but think that he might have talked to someone who didn't take kindly to his plans, who perhaps felt Elvis didn't have the right to change things, get rid of people etc.; maybe it was just someone who casually mentioned these things to the wrong person- someone who would stand to lose a lot of money if Elvis “quit”- someone who had made the comment when Elvis was seriously ill--“He's worth more dead, than a live.” Of course Elvis himself didn't expect to live to be very old- had told people this many times and believed that early deaths ran in his family. And he knew he had internal problems that would “some day” be serious. Still, so many things seem “out of place” and there are so many different stories from people who were there that awful day -and they all “found him” - that bathroom must have been very crowded. And where were the Stanley boys who were supposed to be there taking care of him that day? One of them turned up later; the other one didn't show up until much later and yet they have said they were there, and he was on the bathroom floor... but by then, he was at the hospital and had already been pronounced dead. Why didn't Ginger check on him when she didn't find him in bed; she didn't notice he hadn't gone to bed, yet they shared that oversized bed? Instead she dressed, did her hair and makeup and then looked for him. Remember, she was very young and he had not told her he was in serious trouble with his health.

Losing Elvis was a horrible shock, and quite often sudden emotional stress over a life changing event *can cause* distortions in one's memories of those first horrific moments, does that explain why so many “stories” from those present at the event are often varied and “don't fit” with other people's memory of the same event? Why is it that so many friends and his ex-wife, continue to say drugs played a serious role in his death when Dr. Nick and other people who were with him more often than his ex-wife, say Elvis did not abuse drugs, that he “*needed those medications to stay alive*”? Elvis' housekeeper who had been with him for years and who looked after him and took care of his home, says that she never saw Elvis take anything but the medication his doctor gave him and verifies that in his last few years, that medication was packaged in “little envelopes, brought to him dose by dose” and that Elvis did not take anything his doctor did not give him. I know that Elvis was very pleased to tell me that he was “off everything but what I have to take” and said he “wasn't taking sleeping pills much either”

and that he took pain medication when he had to go to work because without it he wouldn't "even be able to wiggle my little finger, much less anything else!" He said even "my finger joints hurt after a few days on stage" and he hated it when he couldn't "control ma hands from tremblin' tryin to hold the damn mike steady." He also mentioned that the back of his neck, the bones hurt and sometimes he could barely turn his head; he told me he had "arthritis in the neck bones and that the "joints are stickin' together" and he "popped and creaked like an old man" when he got up after sleeping a while and that his vision made it hard to keep his balance at times. He also complained about not being able to bend over easily and exclaimed, "Gawd... 'um gettin' old! Damn it!" He said he didn't want to get old; it wasn't anything to look forward to. Several people who knew him said he had spoken of "not living to be old" and some say he specifically said he didn't think he would live long enough to be 50 years old; he based this statement on the fact that his relatives had died fairly young of various problems, mostly heart related as had his mother. And his father was having heart related episodes in those last years, worrying Elvis who deeply feared being left "alone".

As for the "drug myths" and being "stoned on stage" - I highly recommend Darrin Lee's thoroughly research filled book: **Desert Storm: The Shattering of A Myth!** To Order: Website: [www.DarrinLeeTCB@aol.com](http://www.DarrinLeeTCB@aol.com)

(Yes. I believe that Elvis did not take anything not prescribed; he died while trying to stay alive so that he could go on singing; he knew death would be soon, but no he did not know the exact moment in time nor would he kill himself. It was as he wished and God willed, he was at home, with his friends and everything was "all right". )

### ***Musings...and Regrets--***

I wonder now, if he sat upstairs in the hotels or at home, wondering and waiting for people to call or come by, or did he notice that he seldom saw anyone outside the "circle" of friends around him, many of whom he would say in his last days "only stay because I pay them." Some of those same friends say he didn't come down stairs much in later years, instead stayed up there doing "whatever" he did and that usually he had a girl friend with him keeping him company. Elvis didn't come downstairs much, in his own home he said, because he never knew who'd be down there and he'd have to be "Elvis" for them-he said several times in those last months, "Gawd, 'um sick of bein' Elvis Presley!"

I doubt he ever knew of the many times people tried to see him but were denied access, or was it like his male friends tend to say, he "didn't notice or care, everything was all about him, that's all that mattered, he didn't give a damn about anyone else." I think he noticed, and his own insecurities prevented him from asking, for fear he might learn that people "didn't love him anymore". Elvis you see, never truly grew up, though

he was very much a man, macho and “tough” on the outside. Inside, Elvis was still that little boy from the wrong side of town, poor, wearing hand me down clothes and too shy to speak without a stutter. A little boy who learned one day that singing would get him noticed, but only if he was “different” and he pleased them, fed their need for excitement, joy and love. Those things he could do, with his God-gifted voice, handsome face, flashing eyes and graceful body. But under all of that was the little boy, unsure, still fearful and still unable to sleep for fear of waking up alone in the middle of a nightmare.

So many things I have forgotten; mostly I recall a wonderful, gentle guy who had a heart as big as all outdoors, a laugh that filled the air around him, joyously and fun, making everyone laugh also. A man who would give his last dollar to someone he felt needed it or the shirt off his back just because they admired it. A man who stood in awe before the huge crowds of people, unable to believe that he was worth all the fuss and bother they went to just to see and hear him sing and because they did, he worked himself half to death trying to give them their money’s worth, make them happy, excited and glad they went to all that “trouble” coming to see him. He tried so hard not to change for fear we wouldn’t care anymore. A comment he made comes to mind, “I wake up some times and if it’s real dark (Elvis liked to have a night light always when alone) I get scared-like when I was 5 or 6 and momma and daddy were sittin’ outside ‘cause it was hot, but I was asleep in the house. I guess it was a bad dream because I woke up too scared to move, and then I started screamin’. It was a long time ‘fore I’d go to sleep alone after that.” And he added, “It’s like bein’ alone is somethin’ I’m goin’ to have to face some day-maybe one of these days I’ll have nobody to give a damn. Gawd- I hope I’m dead by then!” He also said, “Ten years after I’m gone nobody’s gonna know who the hell Elvis Presley was” and “they ain’t gonna give a damn!” He was soooo ...wrong!

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### ***Those Memories---***

My favorite memory of being alone with Elvis came the day he gave me a big Teddy Bear for my child, taking it out of one of his cars. Earlier he had bad news from the producer who came to tell him they had chosen someone else for the part Elvis wanted; he was in a bad state of mind, snapping at friends and being difficult. The evening wasn’t going well and several people left, including several of his men friends; those who stayed were afraid to say or do much for fear he would growl at them.

Elvis had gone to his room and wasn’t socializing; I decided to leave but I wanted to get a better look at the lights of Los Angeles down in the valley below his back yard fence that was above a steep ravine that dropped down to the **Bel Air Golf Course** below. Elvis was known to get the hose and spray water on the golfers below--- he’d laugh, describing how they would react to “rain -out of a clear blue sky”! It was a clear night,

typical California weather and the stars were out brightly. There was one lawn chair away from the yard lights, in the darkest area facing the drop off below. I sat down just to enjoy the view for a few minutes. Presently I heard someone walk up behind me. It was Elvis and he had brought a lawn chair and sat down and took my hand, lacing my fingers through his as he often did when holding hands with any female, young or old.

“What cha doin’ out here alone?” he asked quietly. I replied, “Just looking” and he nodded. We sat there silently and a star fell in the distance. “Did you see that!” he asked quickly, I said yes and he said, “Make a wish for me-make it come true!”

“Star light, Star bright, etceteras: make all Elvis’ dreams come true!” I responded quickly and he leaned over and kissed my cheek saying, “That’s great-now it’ll happen!”

I laughed but I think he was serious as he then told me “Momma said if two people want the same things, then you can make it happen. We used to do that.”

He began relating how she had loved him, had wanted so much for him and how he had tried to give her the nice things in life, to make her happy. But just as it seemed he had everything to give her, “ever thing changed an’--an’--she died” he said very softly. He spoke of a time when he realized how much she sacrificed for him, and loved him even when he didn’t do what she wanted for him. When he was a young teenager, things were rough and it was hard on her, money was tight; they were on the verge of being evicted, so he had two jobs and often missed super time. His father had injured himself doing a job too hard for him and was not able to work for a while. Elvis’ income was all they had to live on; his mother was working at a factory making sheets but her income just barely paid the rent and utilities. He wanted to quit school to work full time so he would earn more money, but she insisted he should graduate-he would be the first to do so in his family. He kind of snickered saying, “She thought I could be head of some big company, or some thin’, really.”

He told me his mother kept supper warm for him as he came in late from work, but then he lost one of the jobs and was home to eat with them. He noticed she was only having a little cornbread and milk and asked why. She told him she’d had a big lunch but it “dawned on” him that she was doing without so he could have more because he was growing and needed it. It broke his heart he said, and he couldn’t say anything but she saw his face and hugged him, telling him she was getting too fat anyway. That was when he made up his mind that one day she would have everything and would never have to do without again. He vowed that no matter *what he had to do*, he would take care of her.

“It liked to broke my heart to know how much she loved me,” he said, “but that’s a mother’s love for you.” His eyes were shiny with tears and he squeezed my hand as he

spoke, saying when he married, it would be to a woman who had that type of love in her heart, one who would put him first and want to be there.

I asked, “Before children, Elvis?” And he said, “Don’t you think a man should come first in a woman’s life?”

Not when children are involved, I said and he went into a lengthy discourse about how men and women come together in marriage to have kids, to give them a secure home life, yet a woman should love her man and put his wishes first. A man then ought to put wife and children over his own needs and should never place the woman in the position of having to choose-him or the kids.

I was surprised at that time, to find him so thoughtful as he tended to give the impression of being more shallow with a juvenile personality, very self centered and fun loving most of the time, yet behind that facade was a thinking man, and as I was to learn, a man who tended to keep things dear to his heart quiet, but also one who quietly made plans for anything that “might happen” down the road. He was not nearly as “spur of the moment” as some people thought-he just didn’t divulge his plans until it was necessary--or the right moment came along.

He asked the time as his watch had stopped-I wasn’t wearing one and he said something about it was getting late as certain lights had gone out below. I asked if he often came outside and watched the lights. He said yes, when he couldn’t sleep. Then he joked that sometimes he was lucky enough to find a girl who also liked to look at the stars-not just THE star. I said that it must be a problem all right. He nodded yes, and then said, “It’s the price you pay-if you want something bad enough, you have to give up something to get it. That’s life-and it never changes.”

He began telling me how long it took light from certain stars to reach the earth and how he was from Jupiter-he laughed and said, “Out of this world!” He spoke of Jupiter being the Blue Star Planet and how it had several moons, one being Orion.

I said it must be a romantic planet; he grinned saying that Venus is the planet of love-not Jupiter. “Jupiter is intellectual-a place of higher learning,” he stated as if he knew.

He went on telling that people on earth would soon know about other races on planets outside our galaxy and commented that he would like to be around when that happened but guessed not- “in this body” he added. “People will live longer and longer, as they learn from those coming to earth from outer space-they’ll practice the oldest forms of medicine, mixing mystical with more conventional methods”. He explained something called “*Ayurveda*” which he said was centuries old and was “medical knowledge taught

by God's chosen of the people and written in Sanskrit." "It deals with Bible teachings as well" he continued. "They'll be able to cure many incurable diseases."

He spoke of the stars, pointing them out and naming them as if he had studied astronomy, and I knew he had no formal training, though he did have a telescope. I asked where he had learned so much, he grinned and said, "I read - but mainly it's because I came from up there, really." and he pointed toward the stars. He said he was from space again, from Jupiter's 9<sup>th</sup> moon.

I thought he was kidding and went along, saying, then how come you don't have pointed ears and blue skin? He chuckled, saying that people always thought of aliens as being "different" but the basic difference was in spirit not physical bodies. Then he leaned closer and stared into my eyes saying, "Maybe I do really, 'n you just can't see it." As I looked into those deep, dark eyes staring into mine, it appeared that he had a kind of light around him, glowing and pulsating kind of and for just a moment, I was spooked; then he smiled and I swear to this day that the "light around him" flared a bit larger and brighter. I had not seen anyone else who had that "glow" but now I realize that we all have that ability, we just don't use it, understand or perhaps don't even know it. It's our magnetic aura and every individual's is different one from another; some people are sensitive and can "see" aura's easily, some have very strong, powerful aura's that are spiritually tuned – they stand out, just as Elvis did throughout his lifetime- and his aura was visible that dark night, perhaps because there was just he and I present at that moment in time.

There was something about him that made me realize he truly believed in "star travel" and "star people". He was reading a book about such things written by **Brad Steiger** who later wrote "**The Star People**" and he began telling me parts of it that implied there were outer space beings that had come to our Earth in earlier times and some might still be here among us. Elvis spoke of unusual things, most difficult for me to grasp, but I loved listening and watching him, he was so eager, so animated and sincere. There was a list of things in the later book that were said to be used to determine if one was one of those "star people"; several things fit Elvis' personality and abilities, including lack of sleep and sleep walking. He also had "bad dreams" and "dreams about long ago things" he said, and he was "hot all the time, liked his rooms colder than most people found comfortable" and he "heard things" but at that time he didn't say what he "heard" other than music from the "spheres of heaven" as he called it. He gave me a copy of the book, and I did read it over a period of time; when I tried to give it back he told me to keep it, saying "You'll want to read it again, sometime." He was right, after his death I did read it, cover to cover and I wondered where he might be- on Jupiter's 9th moon? Or just "flying around the world, visiting".

After Elvis' death, I learned a startling fact. Jupiter was known to have several mini-moons but the 8 fairly large moons were the most known at the time he told me he was from the 9<sup>th</sup> moon but in 1978 another large moon was discovered, making it 9 moons of Jupiter. Elvis would have said; I knew that! And now I have learned that **Maharishi Mahesh Yogi** is practicing the ancient work of "*Ayurveda*" at one of the larger medical research centers and making rapid advances due to new discoveries. Elvis spoke of this fact in the 1960's and predicted its future use. (It is now known that Jupiter has several moons, some quite small, they just were not as well known as the larger ones in those early years with Elvis.)

He talked about ancient cities, the many marvelous temple ruins, statues and pyramids left with all the paintings and ancient script of those times on the walls and inside tombs. He mentioned different people who wrote about these things, saying that he too believed that there had been visitors from other planets "out there" who had come to earth and gave the people new ways of doing things, like moving 6 ton solid granite stones easily and ways to cut those stones; he didn't believe those stone cutters used simple tools as is taught today. He also believed that ancient Egyptian artists who painted the walls of those many windowless tombs might have had some form of light other than candles and oil lamps, he said "phosphate lighting" perhaps; I didn't know what kind of light that might be but he apparently did. He spoke of the description of **Ezekiel's** "flying chariot" in the Bible, saying it was a description of a visit from ancient astronauts and not the "living God of man, but just a fellow space traveler mistaken to be a God by someone who had never seen nor thought about such a thing". He spoke of reading about ancient lands, how names of cities and areas had changed with the passing of people and time; he knew some fellow he called Vincent (I can't recall his last name) who researched, visited many countries around the world and had written and taught what he had learned of ancient human history. He mentioned reading books by **Eric Von Daniken**, who wrote about ancient travelers from space and the many sites all over the world that "speak" of past space travelers visiting earth. Most of the things he spoke of were not something I would on my own have thought about, but he inspired interest, his sincerity caused me to want to know more about those type things. Many people who had a chance to spend time with him have said Elvis "had a way about him, he made things interesting so time flew by". That evening beneath the stars, he spoke of time, how it passes faster as people age and I said it went so quickly for me already, I hated to think it would go faster.

He teased about my getting "gray hair" (I had a natural silver/white streak in front since 18 years of age) and then he tapped me on the head and told me "an angel reached out an' touched you"). He said that his mother had dyed her hair as she did not want to age, and it bothered him also. He mentioned how she loved his blond hair and blue eyes, saying she had naturally dark auburn hair and was surprised when he turned out to be blonder - but then there were relatives who had light hair. He thought black hair was

“right” for him, didn’t I think so he asked. I agreed and he smiled saying, “All women tell me that--it makes my eyes show up better.” He laughed when I said, “Yeah, and makes that big head appear smaller too...”

He continued talking about his mother, saying that he didn’t think she had been very happy her last years as she worried so much over him. “We were real close,” he said, “you know, I was all she had- except for daddy.”

I didn’t want him becoming depressed, so I said, “I’ve been happy knowing you, but time has flown by---I can’t believe it’s been 4 years!”

He looked at me for a moment, then suddenly said, “Wait right here---I’ll be back” and he went into the house. He returned with a little box, opened it and took out a pendant watch. “This is for your birthday,” he said. “Now, when you look at the time, you’ll always think of me.” He grinned, lopsidedly and with his head tilted slightly, looking about 17 years old.

I was speechless, and to this day I have never found another watch like that one, it hangs on a gold chain, the actual watch is in closed inside a leaf done in gold that slides over and the face of the watch appears. There are two pearls inside flower buds on the leaves- it kept perfect time, was a “wind up watch” but the top leaf hinge wore out after years of use. His gifts were often like that, unique - out of this world. And he apparently kept several pieces of jewelry on hand, in case he needed something to give to someone, including friends and those ladies whom he dated. They all received beautiful keepsakes of jewelry from him, because he loved to see them happy, enjoyed being able to surprise and delight his friends. Often he simply took off a piece of jewelry he might be wearing and gave it away, to strangers and friends alike. He said it was a joy and a blessing for him to be able to do that kind of thing for others, to see them light up with happiness.

He mentioned hoping that I would never forget him and said, “That happens. You know, time erases many things.” I told him I was always being reminded of him, that he was “burned onto my brain forever unless I had a serious accident with memory loss, I’d never forget him and I didn’t think anyone else would either.

He cuffed my head lightly saying, “Don’t make fun of me—I can’t help it if I’m insecure. You know us Hollywood types...” and he gave me a sly wink and laughed.

I remember asking Elvis how many children he thought he would have and he was quiet a moment then said, “I’d like several...but I’d be happy with just one, really, if that’s all there were.” He asked if I thought he’d make a good father (he meant the



image) and I said it was obvious that he would because kids loved him and he loved them. Besides that, he was always taking in “strays”.

(During the time I knew him, there were at least 3 young women who had lived under his protective “roof” at different times. (While stationed in Germany he came across a young girl whose father was an alcoholic and was “beating her”; Elvis brought her home to stay with him, his grandmother and his father). Each girl had no other *safe* place to stay - they each found jobs, went to school and were treated well under that “roof”. He gave his men “hands off” orders - because the “girl is a friend” and she was to be treated “like family”. Yes, they often did sleep in his bed, but he did not “touch them sexually” and he was “like a big brother”. One of those young women wrote to me and said he was a gentleman, and treated her as if she were his sister while living in his homes. He “found her” in Las Vegas- after he and his wife separated, and she stayed with him while he was in Las Vegas working and then stayed at his home in Los Angeles. When he had a lady friend visiting, she stayed in one of the suites kept for visiting relatives or friends, on a lower floor of the hotel and when there was no lady friend around, Elvis let her come back up and keep him company. Though he did not have a romantic interest in her, he did speak of the emotional turmoil of being separated from his wife and child. The young women went on to become professionals in their fields of education - one as a hair stylist and another became a social worker. Elvis was proud of their accomplishments and later in life he said, “Girls go on and do right, make somethin’ of their selves, but man, I had no luck with tryin’ to help boys, gawd!” (He was referring to his step-brothers.) His comment was not exactly a fact, though he was never satisfied with what he had done or not done. Elvis would go down and speak with young men who had come into “contact” with the law -the Memphis Police Chief would call him, and he’d go down and give the young men a “pep talk” about doing good things, making something of themselves, using his own early circumstances as a “guide” and giving them encouragement to try. Some did, some did not and those who did not were the ones that Elvis felt remorseful over. “He said, “I tried; it wasn’t enough...”)

**Kathy Westmoreland**, Elvis’ beloved friend who also sang “high voice” at his concerts, *told on her website* that he would go to the jail in Memphis on Christmas Eve, go back and speak to the men imprisoned there. Asking them about the circumstances of their life, why they were there, did they have family and etc; he would get their addresses, and told them he would help them if they straightened out their lives. And he sent people out to make sure that those men’s families had Christmas while their men were in prison. These things were never told publically while he was alive; he did the kindness from his heart, because he practiced what he read in his favorite book, **The King James Bible** wherein it says, “I was in prison and you visited me, hungry and you fed me, naked and you clothed me”. “Love” Elvis said, “for one’s fellow man and woman is

what it's all about. ***You can't love someone as yourself and not care about them.***"

That starry night when we talked of his having children some day, he smiled and then said, "Yeah, but I don't think I could hit one...spank 'em, ya know." And he told me of his childhood and being "spanked" rather brutally by both of his parents, though in those times it wasn't unacceptable to correct children with physical punishment, and Elvis held no ill thoughts about it, in fact said sometimes he *deserved* "more'n I got!" I knew then he was thinking that he might follow the pattern though Elvis was very gentle, kind and tender by nature to children, animals and other people. Still, he questioned himself, looking into his past for answers.

We sat in the dark, talking and laughing for a while, until his men found him and began trailing out, asking him questions and hanging around to listen. I remember him saying to one, that he was "just talking to Berry" and I guess that's why the guy called me "*Mary*" when I left. Elvis could not do anything without them following him, listening in or interrupting and I learned, he could not truly be alone, be himself unless alone in his bedroom with his door locked. And once, after someone interrupted his plans, he commented that the only time he could be alone with anyone to talk privately, was if "I take them into the bathroom and shut the door, and then sometimes," he said ruefully, "I have to run the water to be sure I'm not bein' eves dropped upon." He was not kidding yet he was so very patient, so tolerant toward them, and all that came with having to be "guarded and protected" one's whole life as he had been from about 19 years of age.

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### ***Sometimes---***!

**Sometimes Elvis, you make me Laugh, Cry, and just Smile. Sometimes Elvis you seem so Close to me, it is like you're in the Room with me. Sometimes when I hear your Voice,**

**I feel as though you are talking just to me and I have to remind myself that you're not.**

**Sometimes I feel as though I have Known you all of my Life, as if we were Neighbors.**

**But then I have to remember I never had the Chance, to meet you at all. Sometimes when I see a Certain Picture, or Hear a Certain Song you Take My Breath Away. Sometimes I think to Myself, was Elvis really Real, but then I know deep down that you were Real-**

**And even though I never had the Chance to be Blessed with a Touch, a Kiss or a Wink. I know that you know how much you mean to me. So Elvis, I have To Tell You---**

## **I Love You with All of My Heart!**

***Barbara-Rose-Lyn, 6/22/2013- USA***

### ***Elvis---the Knight---***

Elvis was unique in so many ways, he was said to be “cameleon in personality” and it is difficult to define him but one of his best qualities was in being “tuned in” to people and their needs. He once said, “I listen to their wants, then look past them and try to help them with their needs.” It was after his death that I learned he had done another “good deed” for my grandmother who lived in the Ozark Mountains and to whom I introduced to Elvis one spring when she visited us in California. Before she had to enter a nursing home she traveled by bus to visit a friend in a small town near the Tennessee border. On the way back she got on the wrong bus and ended up in the Memphis bus depot at 2:00 a. m., alone, scared and facing a 3 hour wait in the nearly dark bus station. Not only did those things worry her, she had but a few dollars, not enough for another ticket home. She was crying, (Grandma was 72 at the time) and the waitress in the café that was nearby asked her what was the matter. Grandma told her; the waitress asked didn’t she know anyone in Memphis who could help her. Grandma said, “Only Elvis” and began to relate meeting him in California and that he knew her granddaughter. The waitress knew someone who worked at Graceland and called them. Elvis was at home and his employee told him of my grandmother’s plight.

Knight that he was, Elvis came with two of his men, stayed with my grandmother in a private office at the station until the bus arrived and he paid for her trip home. Grandma said he told her not to tell me; it would be “our little secret” he said and so she didn’t say a word until his death. Now you might say, the story is “farfetched” but my grandma lived in a very small community, not even a town really, she seldom ever saw big newspapers, magazines or talked to anyone from out of the area. She knew nothing of Elvis’ street clothes, or his jewelry but when she began describing what he wore, the rings he showed her, the pictures he carried of Lisa and Priscilla, the men with him and what he had to say, there was not a doubt that Elvis did rescue a frail, 72 year old grandma in the middle of a dark, lonely bus station in Memphis just because he wanted to help.

This is just one more story of Elvis Presley’s good-hearted generosity; why didn’t he want me to know? I suppose he thought I might scold her for being “out alone” again as I had in the past and she said she mentioned that to him at the station. It was his way of understanding her need to be “free” as long as she was able, and he didn’t want her to “get in trouble” for that, after all, she had already been scared enough.

Her memory failed quite a bit within a few years, but she *never* forgot that Elvis came to her rescue and he hugged and kissed her when he told her good-bye at the bus station. She always ended the story by saying, “and he was handsome, so big and strong and such a gentleman, he picked me up and put me on the bus because the steps were so high!”

He sure warmed her heart; I wish I could have told him how much it meant to her and to me. I’m sure he knows now, and that he was there to welcome her when she crossed over - he promised. And he always kept his word, if something came up that he could not keep the commitments he made, he would tell you. So far, I haven’t heard him say differently.

I am an optimist!

### ***Elvis baptized an’ what might have been---***

Conversations with Elvis sometimes resulted in spiritual lessons, or he talked about the Bible as that was his guide for living and he turned to it for solving personal problems as well. We spoke about being baptized and he told of being “ducked under” water in a pond fed by a natural creek in Tupelo, and that he had felt so “light in body”, as if he would float away, saying that he still got chills just remembering the feeling. That it wasn’t because he was cold either, the water was warm and it was a “real hot day”. He was about 12 and he wanted to be baptized so his momma let him since he was old enough to “discern right from wrong according to the Bible.

He mentioned that after being baptized, sometimes in church when somebody “spoke in tongues” praising God, he could understand and translate what was said – once he said there was a visiting preacher who did it, but no one translated so Elvis stood up and translated it. When he was finished, he “got scared because ever’ one was starin’ at me.” His mother told him it was “the most godly thing” she had ever heard – and she was so proud of her son to have that gift. He didn’t know what that “gift” was – but if he had it, then he was real proud also, he said and laughed. He added that it just seemed like the thing to do since no one was going to so “I just did it”. He didn’t think it was the Holy Spirit because he “didn’t talk in tongues or nothin’ and to have “it” a person would”, he thought. We discussed the fact that the Bible says there are various gifts, all not the same and perhaps his gift was to “discern” so he could translate for those with no gifts-or just not that one. He thought about it and then concluded, “God’s been so good to me, guess he might of wanted me to have the gift of “hearin’ --more’n just music.”

Elvis said he used to pray for the “gift of tongues” because his mother had “it” but he said he felt he had been blessed with so much, maybe he wasn’t meant to have that one.

(I would have liked telling him that according to the Bible, Jesus “gave that gift” to all of his disciples including those who today believe in His promises; people who have

prayed with or been prayed for personally by Elvis have said, “He prayed in another language” one they did not understand, many say he spoke in “tongues” as Pentecostal believers would pray. Elvis grew up attending **Pentecostal** church services with his mom and dad, perhaps when he prayed for others he spoke in “tongues” and did not personally realize because he was totally absorbed in helping his friend?)

***Elvis: Bible verses---***

**Elvis:** Ya know, there are so many verses in our Bible, in the different writings done after Jesus was killed; some of ‘em were written a long while afterward and are based on memories and maybe, hearsay also...an’ they’re done by several different people and say the same things... That’s rare ya know, for anybody to recall things so similar, damn near impossible! So...that’s another proof of the Bible bein’ inspired writing an’ so forth... See, it was meant to be, an’ it got done for all time’s sake.

*Wanda: So you totally believe what is written is the truth about those times?*

**Elvis:** Yeah...don’t you?

*I do, we had a visiting preacher who brought all those things out to us...a kind of summer Bible study group kind of thing...he was very interesting to listen to...kind of like you when you’re really into what ever it is. You’re a good teacher, too bad that’s not your chosen profession huh?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) It...it kinda would be ridiculous to think of me as bein’ teacher material since I can’t spell an’ don’t have much else education wise... I just tell it like I...eh...see it, that’s all...a lot of things require some study to understand...I’m a – a beginner, really.

*Yeah...but you do have a way with...words...even those not said in mixed company!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Words are...jus’ words...its how you use ‘em that makes them more than trivial... Ya know, Jesus used parables based on what life was like back then, to get his point across...’un I just use whatever comes to mind...that way there’s less chance of bein’ misunderstood. So you all had visiting preachers come by to hold revivals like we did, huh?

*Every year, usually one in the colder months and maybe twice through the summer...I liked hearing different views...especially the one guy who held the Bible classes for us teenagers, he was good at making things relevant to us, maybe because he wasn’t much older than some of us.*

**Elvis:** Yeah, I liked the ones that got into it, ya know, put some feelin' into their delivery, some of 'em were full of fire an' put on a good show as well as makin' it real. Man, I loved goin' then, sometimes went ever' night for revivals. You all do that?

*Not every night, but we would get there pretty often...sometimes it seemed like it was every night...but my dad worked days and tried to farm too, so during those busy spring days we couldn't always get there...but the winter ones, we'd be there.*

**Elvis:** Yeah, us too, much as possible. Miss that sometimes; I still get out to gospel shows, ever chance I can. Love that man, music stirs ma' soul...always did.

He used to go to a black church nearby because he loved the music and the pastor's delivery was "so special" and he'd sit in the back after everyone came in – sometimes he was the only white boy there he said, and then later he took his girlfriend with him and they'd be the only white ones. She liked the music too, he said and one time she got up and sang with him because sometimes the pastor would ask him if he wanted to sing with them, and Elvis said, "I sure did – and he knew I was 'bout to bust from wantin' to sing with them!"

He said he was around "16 at the time" and added: "if I hadn't graduated an' started singin' 'an she'd been outta school, I'd of been married to her an' probably had 5 kids an' never would've done records or nothin'--I would've been workin' some job, watchin' football, lookin' sloppy 'n bein' lazy an' sittin' 'round drinkin' beer, smokin', talkin' jive 'n keepin' ma wife knocked up--damn! Ma first hit saved me!" And he laughed saying, "Lawd, lawd, wouldn't be nobody – don't know how that would've gone down--there'd been somebody else doin' this sh-- 'n not this boy! Maybe 6 kids might of made it better--Gawd, glad that didn't happen! I'd missed all this excitement an' that'd been a real shame! Naw--not this boy---I was born to rock! 'Course, if the bed's a big 'un, rollin' ain't bad either." And naturally, he laughed that snickering giggle of his.

It was easy to talk with Elvis, he was it seemed, always interested and very interesting. He at times did seem to be a tad slow getting things out, but I think it was due to not being understood by some around him and the fact he had stuttered as a child, especially when speaking to strangers, or being questioned by someone he wasn't familiar with. He sometimes would stutter or stammer even as an adult...but most of the time he was "in control of ma damn brain even if ma mouth is slippin' some." He said it depended on the surroundings and circumstances as to whether he stuttered or not; occasionally when he first began performing live in Vegas, he stammered a bit...he was always nervous and scared during the first few days and then he said, "I got it together-jus' hope the Scotch tape holds!" And of course he snickered.

### ***Those “hot” After hours-- in memory of Francine Defarggio***

Elvis appeared in Las Vegas twice a year and those events had “names”; the July-August engagement was called “***Elvis’ Summer Festival***” and the Colonel went all out to “decorate” the hotel lobby with all kinds of Elvis banners, flags, hats, creations that were fit for any fan of the “king”. They were “hot” items to have-”fer sure”! The winter “events” were spectacular as well.

But we (a lady friend and I) had the best of the ‘hot’ items ever used- summer or winter--- and was a complete surprise!

We were there during the coldest wintertime days on record so said the waitress in the Hilton coffee shop, and I believe her! I had made a black faux seal fur cape. lined with violet purple material that had swirls of silver all over it; the cape was nearly ankle length and I have to say, very dramatic. The main feature was it was WARM! I told Elvis about it and I got the strongest impression from his interest that he *wanted* it, especially after I said it was ankle length on me. It was kind of funny that in later years he wore long capes, so I guess my intuition was right.

Jimmie wouldn’t take three days off work; he wouldn’t even take a vacation but he got vacation pay and was paid for working through vacation time; I went with a lady friend and another whose husband came with Jimmie, for one night just to see Elvis; then they went back home to work the rest of the week---men and their jobs! We had side by side rooms and I think they were on the 25th floor but not sure now; I didn’t want to be “way up there” but that’s where we were assigned rooms. Anyway, I had talked to Elvis earlier and told him we were coming and staying at the Hilton; he asked for our room number and said he’d give us a call when his shows were done and warned it might be “kinda late” but he meant early morning- for us.

We saw both shows that first night and he was in top form, looked great in a snow white jumpsuit that laced up the front but was worn mostly open, and his audience was kind of noisy at the midnight show. He loved it! We ate between shows so when that last show was over we went upstairs to wait-he did say he’d call. My friend went with her husband to their room for a few minutes then came back over to mine and her hubby went downstairs to gamble. My other friend went down with him because she liked to play roulette and 21; Francine and I stayed in my room watching television--and the phone. I was wearing a flannel nightgown (Vegas hotels apparently ran air conditioning year ‘round) and had put my hair in giant rollers so it would not “fritz up” over night-try sleeping well in those-we didn’t have all the fancy things out today. She had her “street

clothes on” so she could be ready to have breakfast with her hubby before he headed home to that job.

We were startled when someone banged on the door as if they had kicked it; Francine was about to open the door saying something about “He must have forgotten the room key”. She hardly turned the knob when the door flew open; Elvis came through and practically carried her with him into the room. He was followed by a medium built guy with light brown hair; Elvis said as they were entering, “Close the door Bill, ‘n have a seat-jus’ be a little while here.” He pointed to a chair beside the dresser near the entry and then stopped, looked at my friend who appeared to be in a trance, then at me and said, “Thought there was gonna be three women here?” I said, “Yes-one went downstairs.” Elvis mumbled something about “have to do--” turned toward Bill and said, “Watch the door, jus’ be a few minutes.” He said something else but I’m not sure exactly his words but it was something like, “less you wantin’ to watch--” As he spoke he turned and winked at us.

Bill’s eyes bugged, his face blanched, then went red as an “Oh God - what am I doing here” look came over his face--because Elvis was doing his macho walk toward the bed, saying “We better get to it - don’t have much time”. At the same time he was unfastening the wide white and blue belt dangling with gold chains that hung low on his black wrapped hips, dropping it on the floor- and pretending to unfasten his pants. “Who’s up first?” he asked, in that macho on stage voice. As he said this he winked at me with the most mischievous look on his face. Francine was still in a trance, her eyes transfixed on Elvis; I glanced back at Bill who was turned toward the door and even the back of his neck was red!

Elvis couldn’t keep it straight, he started giggling and then busted out laughing; Bill was speechless and Elvis was de-lighted---he had “fooled him good”! He sat down on the bed; Francine almost jumped over the bed to get pillows to put behind Elvis so he could lean back and rest. He put his long legs up, boots and all on the bed and as she “fluffed up” the pillows behind him, very sweetly he said, “Thank you dear, that’s nice.” He leaned back and then began firing questions; “how’d we like the show, what else had we seen in town” and so on. I can recall so clearly how his eyes blazed blue neon fire, he was still “on” from doing the show, one foot keeping a beat all its own. He asked if we’d mind if he smoked. Bill, who had recovered from Elvis’ joke, came “alive” and as if from thin air handed him a little cigar, then materialized a light for it and went back to his chair. All this time my lady friend was staring at Elvis who would catch her eye and smile; she kept saying, “I don’t believe you’re here!” over and over. Elvis cut his eyes my way and grinned; he was enjoying every minute of her “in a trance state” especially after she picked up his belt and stood there hugging it to her breast.



I was trying to answer his questions, though we had not seen anything other than Hoover Dam so he rattled on about celebrities who had been by to see him, one having been **Sammy Davis, Jr.** to whom he gave his beautiful ruby ring, **Danny Kaye and his wife, Mel Torme, Freddy Fender, Buck Owens, Ray Stevens, Carl Perkins, Dottie West** that he said was one of his favorite female singers, **Tanya Tucker** about whom he joked “put the fear of God in me”- she was little more than a teenager at the time; **Frank Sinatra** and his wife, **Mia Farrow** and several others I don’t recall now. Thirty minutes passed so quickly I couldn’t believe it when he finally echoed Francine’s “I can’t believe Elvis Presley is right here!” by saying “I don’t believe it either, an’ we got to go ‘fore they call the police to find me!”

He stood up fast and my friend kind of squealed; Elvis snickered, turned to face her and said, “Gi-me ma belt honey”. She stood there starrng at him, hugging that belt as if she didn’t hear. He held out his hand saying, “May I have my belt?” She was frozen in place. So he stepped closer and said very quietly as if for her ears alone, “Do you want to put it on me?” She appeared to be in a “trance state”-- she dropped the belt which he snatched from the air so fast it was all a blur. Almost at the same time he leaned over and kissed her lips very quickly and stepped back, slapping that belt on fast. Francine was grasping her hands together, saying, “Oh my god-Oh my god ---he kissed me!” as if to herself. Elvis turned to me, smiled as he stepped up close and looked into my eyes. I had removed the big curlers while he was getting settled on the bed; (I hate for people to see me in curlers-and now him! Ye-gads- and in my “granny gown” too---what next? At least it had lace ruffles and pink roses--)

Elvis reached both hands up, gently ran his fingers through my hair, loosening and fluffing the curls and then gently kissed me on the forehead. He had not kissed me on the lips since the night on the top of my car kiss -except one other time; it happened after the first time I saw him perform on stage in Las Vegas and I told him I could barely believe the guy I knew, and the one on stage were one and the same. He had grabbed me by the arms leaving bruises that lasted for days and probably I had bruised lips too -so rough was that kiss! He was so excited from having just done the 5<sup>th</sup> show of his first 1969 Vegas “gig” he didn’t realize his own strength. But this time, he was very gentle, tender and teasing because I’d taken the curlers out--for him.

He turned to Bill and said, “Check the hall-” Bill peeked out, and then disappeared; he stuck his head back in saying, “All clear -let’s go!” Elvis flew out the door and they went snickering and giggling down the hallway. Later Elvis told me they had gone down the fire stairs, took the elevator up and when they got off a “search party was formin’” so he told them he had to “take a leak an’ all the johns were in use -what the hell’s all the fuss ‘bout?”

Not long after his “escape door” was locked to protect him-but really to try to keep him from sneaking out-though he still managed to get away with his girl friend’s on drives out into the desert now and then and eventually there was a friend’s home in Vegas where he could go to escape the hotel when he needed to, or wanted to. We saw the next 4 shows and had front table seats a couple of times with the help of friends, (we had to tip big to get them) and Elvis was tickled to see us so close. He made Francine squeal big time when he ended a song and did that upper body shimmy right in front of her!

The “strangest” thing about that surprise visit was Francine’s “fear she’d lose her memory” because on the way home she peppered me with questions, trying to make sure she had every moment “secured” in her mind-she was in such a “trance” it seemed like a dream she said, “But I remember how his lips felt -like getting an electric shock!” A lot of women would say that over the years; Elvis said, “Some time’s I feel that too--don’t know what it is -must be the electricity in the air or somethin’ --really.” Uh-huh.

### ***What He Did For Us---***

People ask us about things he did for us. Well, there were some of several things that we were unaware of when they occurred. The one that stands out most happened when we were so naive, young and kind of dumb but we liked fancy cars and we were car shopping. I mentioned to Elvis that Jimmie and I loved the Lincolns, (we had an older one a **Lincoln Premiere** with the old style boxy body but it was starting to have problems so we were going to trade it in on another car). He said he liked them also, and that was one of the first cars he’d ever driven as a kid. He suggested that we to go to a **Lincoln-Mercury** dealer in Newport that wasn’t that far from us, he said he noticed they had pretty nice looking cars in the lot. So that’s where Jimmie and I went. The car dealer bent over backwards selling us an almost new Lincoln car with perfect leather upholstery and very low mileage, a car much too expensive for two “kids” to afford but we were dumb and didn’t realize what was happening. We just felt we “deserved” it and we drove away in a beautiful luxury car.

Next day Elvis called, I must have gushed over the car telling him what a good deal we had made and he agreed the car was a good buy. By this time Jimmie and he had become “phone” buddies and Jimmie mentioned that our new car was almost identical to the models coming out in the New Year except that his car didn’t have the hood ornament and Elvis said, “Really--they look good with it.” A couple of weeks went by and Jimmie received a package containing one of the new hood ornaments for his car.

About a year later I received a small inheritance check from an Uncle who had passed away and when I went down to pay the Lincoln off, the guy at the desk said, “What’d you do-rob a bank?” When I saw the paperwork for the car loan, I realized there was no way

we could have bought that car so easily, with nothing down and such small payments *unless* Elvis had made a large down payment to “cover” the “oversize trade in amount” for our older Lincoln, and he might have made arrangements to back us on the deal, asking of course, that the man say nothing to us of his part in the sale. That explained why the *manager* of the car lot took care of us, why he was so obliging, giving us really good rates on the purchase, and kept saying what a wonderful thing it was that such young people could “afford” a car like that and we must be “very special people”. We were- Elvis made sure of it- but he would never admit anything other than telling us about the car lot...he said, “You like it, don’t you -told you they had some good ones.” And he quickly changed the subject.

Elvis had offered to buy us things, a car, a house whatever we might like, but we refused because so many people seemed to be taking advantage of his good nature and we didn’t want to be among them. That sounds phony, but it’s true -and too, we didn’t like the feeling of “paying back” or “owing anyone any favors”. It comes down to the way we were raised-Elvis understood, he was raised the same way.

Just a few months after meeting Elvis and talking with him a few times on the phone, and after he met Juliann. We finally bought a washing machine and I was at home doing the laundry when a big Sears delivery truck pulled up and one of the guys came to the door with a clipboard in hand. He asked my name and I said, “That’s me but I didn’t order anything from Sears.” He looked at the clipboard, then back at me and rattled off our address and phone number. I said yes, but we didn’t buy anything from Sears! He held up the paper work so I could see it and I saw the letters EP that were circled in red ink down by the customer signature that wasn’t Elvis’ writing or his name. I didn’t know at that time that he often used aliases. The other man was unloading a swing set and asked me where I wanted it-the clipboard guy put it up and began hauling in a slide that went with the swing set I thought, but turned out to be for the 12 foot wide by 3 foot deep above ground swimming pool, complete with a filter system to keep it clean.

By the time they set things up, brought in a child’s wooden picnic table and benches, pool toys, the biggest water gun I ever saw, a mini peddle driven go-cart, a stand-a-lone hoop and basketball set and several boxes of toys, one holding kid sized band equipment that included a mini electric guitar and amplifier and a drum set and last, a pair of leather roller skates with fringed tops, our little yard was becoming pretty filled up. The guy with the clipboard had me sign for receiving the items and I asked, “This stuff is paid for, right?” He said, “Yes ‘um, it is!” And he left.

Juliann was in “seventh heaven”-she didn’t know what to play with first and finally opened the guitar, we plugged it in and she twanged away for several minutes. I said you know who gave you all this don’t you? With a big smile she said, “Uncle Sevis knows

what I need.” One look at her face and I had to agree, he sure did know what she needed! (We put that first guitar up and gave it back to her when she turned 7; she enjoyed it more by then.) That same year on Valentine’s Day he gave her a puppy- a little miniature black French Poodle with big brown eyes and a long pedigree; she had been born in Memphis but her mother had come from France he said and Juliann named her “Be Be” which was short for Bridget’s Tar Baby. She was Juliann’s dog and such a wonderful dog. She had to be put to sleep the same year Elvis died-she was 13 years old and Juliann was turning 16 soon and in her last year of high school. We kept “Be Be’s” little lime green, rhinestone collar with her tags still on it; of course we have lots of photographs and memories to go with it. And she will be waiting to see us when it’s our turn to go.

Juliann may have been the youngest “real” mini sized go-cart driver of her day because she was barely 4 ½ years old when her dad put a small engine on the go-cart one and on weekends we took her to a nearby school where she drove on the sidewalks and the parking lot. Only trouble with it was, it had no brakes! So Jimmie ran along next to her “in case” as the only way to stop it was to shut off the engine! Both of them just loved that go-cart! When she was not quite 7 her dad bought a small sized motor bike (for adults) and taught her how to ride it. I saw them riding once-after that I wouldn’t go watch because I didn’t want to see her go end over end in a pile of dirt some day! They were “dare devils” those two “kids” of mine--Guess I “had” three “kids” actually, counting Elvis who would have “fit right in” on those “wild ride” weekends! He got a real kick out of the motorized go-cart stories and the fact she liked riding motor bikes.

His daughter was driving a golf cart all over Graceland before she was 6 years old I’m sure she had a very good “teacher” when it came to “wild and crazy antics on wheels”.

Note: There is a very good book that was originally the manuscript for a book written by **Nick Adams**, most noted for his television show entitled, “**The Rebel**”. His daughter **Allyson Adams** carried around what she refers to as “the daddy box” for years, then finally she opened it and found his manuscript. Upon reading it, she came to know her father, to understand him and she loved the story he had written about his times spent with Elvis at his homes in Memphis, and around Hollywood in those first early years of Elvis’ increasing fame.

I highly recommend this book, “**The Rebel and the King**” for any fan or anyone who wants to know the young Elvis as well as the man he became. Nick’s view is tender, sweet and captures those early days of fame and the wonder of it all. Elvis was then a young man who even then gave his God

the credit for shining the light on his life, for giving him “the voice” and he never forgot to be thankful for it all. Nick shows anyone looking, that this young man Elvis never changed; he retained his good humor, his manners and his ever increasing need to give back the joy he was living to his fans. And he always right to his last day, gave God the credit, saying “Thy will be done, in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

So many photos of Elvis, few when very young and then as a young teen; but he was getting his “wings” and he was “growing into his lips”; it all came together well! I have favorites, this one reminds me of him so much; he was a little child behind all that “glory”. In this photo it was all “just beginning” to “jell” slightly, but within a few years, it was” set up” and ready to go! He played at that club for “a while” in the early days of trying to “get a name act”. (Taken outside **The Eagle’s Nest** night club in Memphis shows us the young entertainer- wearing a pink jacket!) (In the 50’s!) I don’t know who took it- but THANK YOU!

Elvis told me that when he was 14 a friend who was a year older and worked at a small grocery store, took him in the alley behind the store where the owner would toss out left over fruits and vegetables and other items that would not keep since he closed the store on Sundays. Back then there were no big refrigeration bins etc; to keep things fresh. His friend climbed into the dumpster and began hauling out potatoes, apples and other such foods. Elvis said he couldn’t believe it, but he was in over his knees looking too because it was perfectly good stuff. He took his “loot” home to his mom who was a little upset he said, until she saw how good the stuff was; even the wrapped package of meat that was still fresh. “Momma made up soup, stew ya know, usin’ the meat and all I brought home. Man, we ate good ‘n she made cornbread too.” In telling this he sounded like he was about 12, speaking softly, warmly and reliving that wonderful few days of “plenty”. He said she told him not to tell anyone, not even his father, but if he came up on one of those lucky times when he could grab a few things like that, don’t say no! And he laughed, giggling about what people would think of them for “eatin’ out of the trash bin!”



**Young performer Elvis taking a break outside the Eagle's Nest club in Memphis.**



At the “scariest thing I ever did!” Jaycees Award presentation-where he had to “get up an’ talk in front of all those....those people!” He was “sweating bullets” and it shows. Thousands of fans didn’t “scare me” but speaking in public in front of people he felt were somehow “more important” than he did! And he couldn’t decide which rings to wear-so he wore them all...why not?

He said that when he was young they went to a “Goodwill” type store to shop for clothing; it was there he found out he could get “nice things” even though they were used, a lot would be like new and someone just “got tired of them or didn’t like the style”; it became his favorite place to shop in the early years before he was “anyone”. He said he liked different looking clothing and mused that in wearing such things he was trying to be “noticed”. It worked! And then he could shop at Lansky’s in town.

Elvis told the story of how when he had money, he would buy clothes there that he wore “in public”. Then when he was doing well and making films, he traded a fancy and expensive sports car to Mr. Lansky telling him he would give him the car in exchange for anything he wanted from his store. Elvis laughed in telling this story saying that “when I was finished lookin’ an’ choosin’, the place was a wreck!” Mr. Lansky said after Elvis’ death that he “still had that car” and expressed great sadness at the loss of Elvis, “my friend” he added. Mr. Lansky passed away in 2012.

You can read Mr. Lansky’s story/interview regarding Elvis by going to: [www.elvislightedcanldle.org/forums](http://www.elvislightedcanldle.org/forums) and looking through the index guide for the article wherein Mr. Lansky reveals more information about “Dressing up the King” throughout his career. Contains photos also.

Personally, I think if he had not been a “lover of fine clothes and jewelry” and worn so many super outfits, he wouldn’t have been “ELVIS” and didn’t we all love that fancy, glorified dude? You bet-cha and still do!

(Thank you Mr. Lansky for helping him “make it in the big time”.) Looking good, “sharp” as Elvis would say, “put me in the spotlight more’n if I was just wearin’ a plain suit... Man, I needed all the help I could get...standin’ still wasn’t somethin’ I ever did well...but it wasn’t enough without the right clothes an’ lookin’ the best I could usin’ what I had to do it with...an’ that wasn’t much right ‘bout then...” He shakes his head, and grins.



I am not sure, but I believe this is a snapshot taken off screen- perhaps, I don't recall him with those "dimples" showing during the movie, "Charro". I teased him about his "snow white arms" as you can see in this photo, they were! He said that "any skin part not covered cooked" in the heat within minutes, so he put on a lot of sunscreen and wore the hat when he could.

He looks so happy here, too good not to include! He told me that he had "rode that horse with boils on my ass!" in some of the horseback scenes. He thought he had "caught the boils from sittin' in the tub" – He meant wherever they had stayed while on "location". It was extremely dry and hot out there "like bein' in a draft from hell" he explained. I asked him if the vest he wore in the film was the one that got used in most of those films being called "spaghetti westerns" and said that maybe "**Clint**" had worn it. He didn't know but said they were "hot" and his shirt was sopping wet most of the time. He did some of the horseback scenes riding, rearing and bucking himself; by then he was an "expert horseman" and insisted on his horses being well cared for.

He also said there were some "damn big scorpions runnin' 'round at night".



CHARRO

The **Lincoln** I drove to Balboa to meet Elvis on the ocean side, in a howling wind and rain storm; and forgot to hit the electric unlock button or run the seat back so heI have been trying to find the pictures of the tan Lincoln we bought in 1964 – so far that box of photos is still “missing”. We have moved 5 times since 1993; still have some boxes packed and stored with items we “don’t use” enough to unpack. Once an “Okie” always an “Okie” my dad, the “dyed in the wool Okie” himself said.

**Bottom left:** *“My” MG that went into Los Angeles, it ran up and down Sunset Blvd, and other places around Bel Air, Hollywood, and the beach areas and all over Orange County in Southern California. We still have it; it’s been modified with a V-8 engine but Jimmie hasn’t had the time to spend on it in years. Starla’s MGB racing car is here also- and maybe one day, she can have it restored; it was her first car, bought just months before Elvis died; he was excited for her and wanted to help her “fix it up”.*

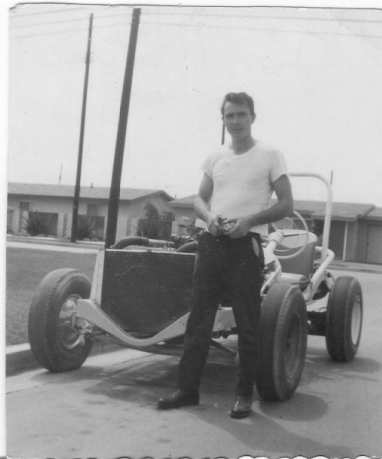
**Top right:** *Jimmie with one of his dune buggy projects- it “used to be” an old Plymouth- he loved to “tinker with cars”.*

**Bottom right:** *One of the gifts via Sears from “Uncle Elvis” who knew just what “she needed”. She’s delighted, to say the least – those were the “kiddie cars” to have back then! She’s just 3 ½ years old. He also sent one that looked like a go-cart car- Jimmie installed a “lawn mower motor” on it. Elvis thought that was a “great idea!”*



1958 Lincoln

MAR 64



APR 63



**Top left:** *Teddy Bear Elvis took from his car for me to take home to Juliann who is wearing the little lace dress he sent to her.*

**Right:** The black velvet and white silk “Party dress “that the cleaners “lost” she received from Uncle Elvis -for her sixth birthday; she is seven in this photo.

**Bottom:** 13 years later a gentleman is giving a rose to Starla at “The Cowboy” where she and her band played several performances to a “full house”and received a write up in the local “Country Music” magazine for “up and coming performers” in So. California. And she received personal invitations to come to Nashville and bring her music for interviews with recording companies. She and I went in 1991.



(We went to Memphis on the way home from Nashville, and went on the Graceland tour. At that time one could not enter the rooms, just the entrance, to look into the living/dining area, the music room where the piano was on the right of the entrance and to where one could look up the stairs but not go up (still closed today) and tours were allowed to go into the basement entertainment room where there were 3 televisions lined up, his record collection and all the mirrors on the ceiling, with yellow and black as the dominate décor throughout the room and furniture.

His aunt and grandmother still lived there, and some areas were restricted; we could go into the back, peek into the den (“Jungle Room”) and go out to look at his cars and motorcycles parked in the open at that time, then into the enclosed area of his ratchet ball court where his suits/costumes and some displays were set up. And we went into the long hallway of glassed in displays of awards and trophy's he had received over the years. I was amazed, he had never mentioned them, other than the Grammy's for his gospel albums but nothing about all the things he had for his “comic” abilities and musicals, and the many, many awards and letters for his generosity over the years. We walked into the garden, past his grave and then down the driveway to cross the street to get to our car. Starla will be traveling for her job, she plans to go to Graceland when in Tennessee; she will take pictures because they have allowed cell phone cameras at Graceland though they frown on flash cameras. The displays they have now are so much better, and there is no guide rushing you along! We also saw the display that Lisa Marie helped set up across the street. It was very, very interesting- many of his personal items- clothing and treasures. Some we knew about; it was a very special exhibit, obviously displayed by one who loved him.)

During those years, Starla and her band performed what was being called “Rock-a-Billy” music, she composed most of the songs she sang, played electric rhythm guitar, and had a pretty good following building up. She didn't read music - Elvis told her he didn't. )

### ***And then we became “Squatters”***

I have to admit we were “stubborn and ignorant kids” and it must have been frustrating for Elvis because he liked to do things for people -and tell them what to do; we were very “independent and bull headed about a lot of things” very much like he could be at times. We were looking for a place to move where it was less crowded and where our daughter could have a safe place to play when she was around 5 years old. I mentioned that the apartment complex where we were living was becoming full of rowdy people and I didn't like what Juliann was seeing and hearing. Elvis agreed we needed to move. A few days later a man came by, gave me his card and said he was from a realty company and mentioned one of our local friend's names saying they had told him we

were looking for property. I said, “Only a rental property.” and he said, “Well, that’s my specialty” and since we both knew the same friend, I agreed to follow him over to look at a place. It was perfect, like a little farm all by its self in a quiet area. I said great, where do I sign? He said he didn’t have a rental agreement with him; he’d just shake hands for now, so that’s what we did. He also said the utilities were already on; he’d take care of changing them to our name. We moved in right away and loved the wood-burning fireplace, the big garage and work shop/storage area, and the house had a large living room, a long, though small kitchen and one big bedroom with a stone tiled shower in the bathroom. There was a separate dining room that was fine for Juliann’s bedroom. Outside, it was a “vine covered cottage” trimmed in red brick and most of the property was totally fenced. Just across the street, less than a block away was a ***Winchell’s Donut*** shop-Jimmie loved that!

We lived at the “farm” for about 8 weeks and the guy didn’t return; I had no idea who to call and couldn’t find his card, and we had not paid any rent at all! Nor had we received any utility bills and there were no working phone lines to the house so we were on a waiting list for a phone. Two more months went by, still no paper work and the friend who “had told the Realtor we were looking” didn’t know a thing about any of it! Now, I was really perplexed and wondered when we’d be evicted and maybe hauled to jail for trespassing! I told Jimmie, “We’re like--squatters-we could go to jail!” With that he began to be a little concerned as well, saying “Maybe we should look for other housing” though he didn’t want to move again. (He had a lot of tools, was into hot rods and had “stuff” that took him about a week to load and move. I could pack and move in one day, if I had to-but then I was organized.) And the fact I worked part time as a legal assistant kept me thinking of how much a lawyer would cost if we got sent to jail!

In the meanwhile a neighborhood flock of small very colorful banty chickens had moved in and boy, we were happy about that because the “ivy covered house” was being overrun with yard spiders-those chickens made short work of them! Juliann loved the very colorful, strutting rooster and named him “Handsome Elvis”. She found out where eggs came from when a hen who had a nest on a shelf in the garage laid an egg that almost rolled off and hit Juliann on the head. She still remembers that vividly! I just remember being afraid to sleep for fear the police would bash in the door some night to haul us off for “trespassing” or whatever they might call it!

We finally did get a phone line and Elvis had the number but no one else did in case the police were after us-but I didn’t tell him *anything* about us being “squatters” the one time he called while we lived there.

The saga ended after nearly 6 months of rent-free living, right through Christmas and past New Years; we finally found another place and moved out before we went to “jail or



worse”. I think nearly the exact minute our phone was installed in the new place Elvis called, fit to be tied because we moved! He blurted out that he was trying to purchase that property and had planned to “rent it to us” since we wouldn’t let him give us anything like that- but we had “ruined it by moving out, leaving it vacant” and the deal was off. The owner could get more money for it as property prices were sky-rocketing in that area.

Well, to say the least I was shocked, he was upset and I flat told him *never* to try to sneak around like that where we were concerned again. I thought he was going to slam the phone up because I could hear him breathing so loudly. When he finally did say something it was just to utter a short, kind of choked, “gotta go, bye-bye” before he noisily slammed up the receiver. Jimmie was angry that we didn’t know about it because we would have stayed there and Juliann was very upset that we couldn’t take the “chickens” as our new place was “in town”. I didn’t talk to Elvis for several weeks and I thought he’d never talk to me again; finally he called early one morning and began talking as usual as if nothing had happened; neither of us *ever* mentioned that escapade again!

### ***Cakes, Candy and Other Things Sweet---***

In the mid sixties Elvis would come into town (Palm Springs or Los Angeles) and it was strange how different the very air appeared to be as word got around-”HE’s here!” He did drive himself and others around at times; a police officer who was a friend’s uncle and knew Jimmie’s boss, told about coming upon an expensive car sitting under a freeway overpass near Westminster, in Orange County (California) late one night in 1974 (not 1973.) There was a faint light inside the car, he pulled up behind it and walked gingerly up, ready for anything since he could see a man and a woman bending over something in the car. It was Elvis and **Linda Thompson**, his girlfriend at the time, trying to read a map to find out how to get onto the freeway that would take them back out to Palm Springs. The officer was thrilled to help them and had them follow him onto the right freeway but before that, he asked Elvis for an autograph. Elvis got out, looked to see if there were any photos in the car trunk, and then ended up signing the back of the officer’s ticket book instead. The officer said of Elvis, that he had never met a “nicer fellow” and that his girlfriend was “beautiful”. Oddly enough, that officer later on served as a security guard for Elvis when he played at the **Anaheim Convention Center** in 1976 and after the show, though Elvis was exhausted, he remembered that the officer had helped him find the right freeway. The officer was very impressed that Elvis remembered “since all policemen look alike” to most people. He also said he thought Elvis was not “feeling very well” and that when Elvis arrived before the show, the officer was worried because “Elvis appeared to be in a weakened state physically”; he did not suspect that Elvis was “medicated or “on” anything, he was just “not feeling good”. Elvis spent

some time with his little girl while in town; possibly at the Palm Springs home; he also kept some medical appointments before leaving town. (It would be enlightening to know exactly how many medical appointments, different doctors he saw, and the number of times he had been taken to emergency and/or hospitals. There were many, that we do know, but there are so many more times that were not ever made “public”. Perhaps these things are not detailed because there are his “friends” subject to believing that he was “a drug addict” simply because he had health issues that were never revealed to them during his lifetime. And sadly, some people will always believe rumors rather than the truth. Elvis said that “People tend to feel better if they can put themselves above other folks they feel are somehow different from them. It’s just human nature, flawed though it may be.”)

Elvis had some favorite business locals even down in the area where we lived such as *Priscilla’s Bakery*, he loved their sweetened with honey chocolate éclairs with vanilla cream filling-but they had to be freshly made. We got acquainted with that bakery when Elvis ordered a three tiered birthday cake for Juliann’s birthday-and her dad had to go pick it up. It came in 3 boxes and he and I had to put it together using two “tiers”; it was actually a wedding cake done up to say “*Happy Birthday*” and to Juliann and her guests, it was quite impressive with the beautifully made “hard icing flowers and ribbons”. The tiers had to be returned for a deposit and Juliann got to keep that money as part of her birthday money from Elvis. We learned that he ordered the chocolate éclairs when he was in Palm Springs -two boxes of 24 each and he shared them with his friends. He sometimes called in the order himself and he was so polite and always tipped well, but he insisted they be freshly made and chilled. Maybe he had been sickened by some spoiled ones sometime in the past-or knew someone who had been -and he didn’t forget.

I think it was Lisa Marie’s first *Valentine’s Day* that she was old enough to know about, when he called up that bakery and ordered a few dozen heart shaped cakes with glazed white frosting. Well, he gave them our phone number and asked them to have us pick up 9 cakes for our family and friends. The bakery called but the lady was a bit upset because someone who had said they were Mrs. Presley had called and canceled all but 6 of the cakes! She was beside herself, didn’t know if she ought to follow Mrs. Presley’s instructions or Elvis’ -I said I would do what Mrs. Presley said unless Elvis calls back and changes it. I knew that Priscilla was there although they were more or less separated at that time. I had scarcely hung up when he called to tell me about the 9 cakes I was to “spread around” -I knew he didn’t know the change Priscilla or someone had made in the order so I told him about the call from the bakery. He softly cursed under his breath and then said, “Damn it, I don’t get nothin’ right really; okay, but I’m gonna get 6 for you all to share. Just go pick ‘em up, they’ll be paid for-you all have a nice day together.” He went from being excited and happy to quiet and low in about a minute and a half. And yes, I felt sorry for him -after all, he just wanted to share his little girl’s first Valentine’s

Day with his friends. What's wrong with that? Mrs. Presley, if it was her and not the housekeeper being her for the moment, probably thought he was spending too much money on other people, etc.

Juliann always got a special heart shaped box of candy on Valentine's from Elvis and she has all of the boxes today. I think she probably has every scrap of wrapping paper and ribbon that came on the gifts from him, including a faux leopard fur coat and the little pink lace dress. But her favorite clothing item from him was a little dress of white and black velvet. The bodice was black and the full skirt white with an over skirt of what might be see through silk. The dress had a sash belt with "crystal "stones hand sewn on it--she received it when she was 6 years old. She loaned it to a younger friend (the daughter of my friend who later on "kept" the necklace Elvis gave me) to wear to her own birthday party; the dress got punch on the black velvet bodice, went to the cleaners and disappeared. But we have photographs. It came from a shop on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills and had the store tag sewn inside. I think that tag is why it "disappeared" since the cleaners didn't know its "Elvis connection".

Elvis often sent floral arrangements to his friends, and for our area he used **DeMural Tosh Florists** when he sent anything to us. Since we were married on Halloween he got a kick out of that and sure enough, we received a floral arrangement complete with a carved out pumpkin jack-o-lantern that worked, and all the flowers in the arrangement were sprayed black! The base had corn husks, a few dried ears of popcorn and a witch flying over the jack-o-lantern from the tallest flower. It was pretty "shocking" and the lady who delivered it got a big kick out of looking at it too. She said, she knew Mrs. Tosh was talented and inventive, but that arrangement took "the cake"! After Elvis died Mrs. Tosh called me, she was in tears and said " it's so hard to accept he's gone...he was such a sweet man" and she told me he had always paid twice what he was billed for because he knew she went "all out to make special things for my friends" and that she would go out to find whatever he wanted herself, to be able to please him.

Before Elvis' "68 *Comeback Show*" as it's called now was aired on television as the "*Singer Special*" sponsored in part by *Chevrolet*, I told Elvis we had to get a new television because I wanted to see that show in color! The television we had was an old black and white set. We talked and laughed a little, he told me how nervous and scared he was over how it would be received and I told him he could have just stood there holding his guitar, grinning and it would be a hit. Of course he had to tell me how that wasn't so, etc. and etc. and I hadn't seen the show, it might not be any good, really. He also said he was on a diet and exercising so he'd "look good on television" and then said he sure hoped a few thousand people would tune it and he explained how ratings worked; he hoped he still had fans "out there". I said, "Stop worrying! There will so many people

watching they won't be able to count them!" He was silent a moment and then said, "Gawd...I hope so--at least 'nuff it won't be a-a-waste of time..."

A day or so later a man knocked on our door and began a sales pitch about how he was representing a company who had come out with a magnificent 4 color gun television that people were going to be raving about; but they needed to have customer reviews so they were in the neighborhood to offer people a chance to own one of these special televisions for a fraction of what they were going to be once they were on the market. Well, the truck was standing at the curb, another guy had one half of the floor cabinet television out of the truck using a large dolly and the cabinet was beautiful in the sunlight. Elvis' show was in 2 days. I asked how much they were selling for, he told me and I said let me look at it. I looked, it was a super nice television with a beautiful wood cabinet and they had a warranty for one year that went with it. I bought it-for \$200 with tax, quite a lot of money for us-but the rent wasn't due -yet. They brought it in, hooked it up and the picture was "magnificent" and when Jimmie came home, he thought it was a great deal also. The television was made by *The Lear Corporation* and was an *Olympic* television. They never were marketed as far as we know but that television had the best picture I've ever seen on any home television and it worked perfectly for 17 years! We had a problem with the color when we moved several years after Elvis died, and the repairman had never seen one with 4 color guns! He was so busy trying to convince me what a great guy he was; he dropped the back onto the tube and broke it! I could have killed him, but instead just sent him packing without paying him a dime! We did get it repaired, but it was never the same though it had a good picture, it just wasn't as clear and sharp due to having a different picture tube in it.

We learned some 5 years after we got that "good deal" that it was Elvis who sent the guys over there with the television-he had a couple of them, gifts from RCA he said, and he didn't need another one so he sent it to us. I said, what did they sell for and he said, "Oh--'bout \$900 or so, why?" We paid \$200 for ours I said and he kind of snickered then in a pouting tone of voice said, "Well, couldn't risk you sendin' it back, ya know how you are sometimes--damn stubborn mule--." He coughed and cleared his throat and I had to laugh at him, especially when he told me I had "paid the drivers" to deliver it! Heck, I LOVED that TV-especially getting to watch "*The 68 Special*" on it! Those first close ups of those eyes and that face--WOW! Even though today's color televisions are super looking I can't say the "thrill" of those can compare to that *Olympic* 4 color gun television back in 1968; every time I see the opening scenes from that '68 special, Elvis' face reminds me of that TV.

Just before our 10th wedding anniversary we received a white box so large it barely went through our front door- it had a big bow on top. The fellow who brought it out in a white station wagon with Tennessee license plates, said "Happy Anniversary" and handed

me a card containing a crisp new looking \$100 bill and included was a message in Elvis' hand writing: "*Mix up something strong and special in this and drink it all- tonight!*" He was probably thinking that after 10 years- we'd need it! There were several boxes inside the large one; each containing a piece of beautiful "cut crystal" that fit together to make an elaborate and tall, punch bowl set. There was nothing written about the crystal set included, I have no idea what type it is, but every piece is *heavy* and it has etched lilys as a design. There was one section that could be used separately but was meant to be a base for the quite large punch bowl. The base piece sat on a round flat section with the punch bowl on top, and there was plenty of room to set punch cups on the flat section. There was also a smaller round piece that could be used for a cake plate or other things. A sterling silver punch dipper and a little "dripping tray" for it came with it but there were no cups; I hunted through antique stores looking for matching cups, didn't find exactly the same pattern but close enough.

While Elvis was still here we would have "Elvis parties" with our friends, watch films or his *Singer Special (Come Back Show)* and we used the punch set a couple of times; I tried getting photos of it, but the flash on the camera always made the light reflect off the cut glass and I gave up on that. Since we have moved into a small house, Starla has all but the base piece that is small enough to keep out for easy access, packed up and stored at her home which is larger than ours. Because the set had no punch cups when it arrived, I think Elvis may have received that set as a gift, because he said they had "several sets around the house". He had guests over often; the cups might have been used at one time and just not put back with the set we received; no, I didn't tell him it came without out punch cups.

He told some of us a fanciful story about how his grandmother, mother and he used to make "Ambrosia" a "southern" desert though it was more of a "fruit desert", and made with whipped cream laced with mixed fruits, pecans and cut up marshmallows. He said that he was going to make some because he "missed having it at holidays". And he said they used a "tub" to make it because there were "a lot of people coming over". His story was that he knew a farmer who had a special cow, she gave the best and richest milk of any of the others, and he didn't want to use any cream other than taken from her milk...she was getting old and wouldn't be around much longer.

(People who lived in country areas and grew up having farm animals enjoyed having fresh milk and home made butter. Elvis' family had always had chickens, and access to milk cows; he spoke of his mother buying milk and butter from local farmers and he said she liked fresh, homemade butter milk and so did he. I knew about cows, some types did give richer milk and better cream-my dad had a milk cow like that, a Jersey/Guernsey mix named "Babe".)

A few days before Christmas a delivery truck showed up with a box made for refrigeration; it held a lovely glass bowl with a matching lid, containing Ambrosia. It was “an over night shipment”; fortunately; it had been kept very cold, nearly frozen though the temperatures in Southern California had been in the 70’s. Another of our friends also got a package of it that was delivered in one of those “white station wagons with Tennessee plates” so we rounded up all our “Elvis friends” and shared the Ambrosia.

It was wonderfully good, and some of us tried to duplicate what he said was his grandmother’s recipe but I think he must have left something out when he gave it to us, because it never tasted as good as his. I asked about that, he snickered and said, “Well, you got to make it in the tub”. I said the bathtub? In a perfectly “straight” tone of voice he replied, “Yeah, if you want a big batch, that’s the best place to do it.” I joked, “so what makes it taste different...the bath tub ring?” He laughed, and said, “I told you, you have to have the cream from that one cow...it’s her special way of flavoring the milk and cream!” We all decided that missing ingredient was Apricot Brandy, because he sometimes used it to help heal a sore throat, but he kept saying “no, it’s the cow” but he did tell one family group that he “prayed over it”, and that “blessed it” and made it special.

I knew he was not going to reveal that one “secret”- and he would never tell anyone what was left out of that recipe! That cow’s milk was fresh, had not been processed commercially and was “right from the source” just like the fresh milk I grew up drinking and is totally different from what one buys at stores. Even today’s “organic” milk isn’t “natural and fresh” from one cow; herds are kept on smaller lots than ever before, their milk is all mixed together, “cooked” at a very high temperature known as *pasteurization* (named for **Louis Pasteur** who developed the method) to kill off whatever might be in it, good and bad, and then it has “additives” put back in to give it “flavor” etc. but it’s not “real or natural” like the “raw milk” that comes directly out of a cow’s udder. The pasteurization process is done because dairy farms of today keep so many cows it is a “dirty place of business” and it’s easier to “cook the milk” than keep the thousands of cows clean etc...and it insures that no bad bacteria will be in the milk.

Today’s milk is also put through a pressure machine that reduces fat cells in size and separates them (what we call cream) from the milk (these machines were available in small size for “home use” back in the 50’s- we had one and made butter from the cream, though fresh milk left to sit and cool will have cream rise to the top where it can be skimmed off. We never “cooked” our milk – we kept our cow clean and the “raw” milk was great!). Using a machine for separating the cream is called *homogenizing* the milk. In the 60’s it was still possible to buy milk with some of the cream at the top though I have not seen that in years; most “whole milk” has some cream blended so that it does not separate. The “milk” separated of all its cream, is used for making various cheese including cottage cheese that is low in fat. Regardless of what name is used to label the

vast selection of dairy products we know as made from “milk” it is all pasteurized and most of it is also homogenized, that includes butter sold today as well. In the 50’s –early 70’s there were still farmers who kept fewer cows than do today’s dairy farmers, and they could sell raw milk to the public; that is no longer true due to the “fear of getting some kind of bacterial illness from dairy cattle”. Most states have laws that prevent the sale of “raw” milk; the few dairies who might be still selling some “raw” milk in the United States are always kept under strict scrutiny by the FDA to ensure safety.

(They ought to be more concerned about the chemicals being used to make those many cows give more milk- too many “antibiotics and growth hormones” is getting into our children—. Believe me, those few “happy California cows” grazing on lush grass *is just a commercial... and is not reality*. 3 to 4 hundred cows standing up to their knees in muck, crowed together in an acre or so area is not natural; it is a breeding ground for bacteria; to keep the cows “healthy” they shoot them full of antibiotics, regularly. That is a fact, carefully kept “quiet”. It is now legal for meat packers to combine the ground beef from several cows together making it impossible to “track” exactly where the cows came from- how’s that going to work with “mad cow” still popping up around the world? It can’t...and guess who lobbied that new “deal”...the Cattleman's Association; they can make money faster and cheaper – that means – profit and to heck with safety!)

Unfortunately, when most of us who were born and grew up in the 1930’s - 1950’s are gone, the majority of people living will not know what “*raw cow milk, cream and butter*” tastes like nor will they care; like Elvis said, “You won’t miss what you’ve never known or experienced, really.” He said he “missed” having fresh milk when he was in Los Angeles. (**Grandma Suzy** said when first we met, “Elvis is a wise young fellow; he has an “old soul”; he remembers many things, and loves passing them on.”) She too was wise, so you two “old souls”, *this* “old soul” is passing on one of those “life lessons” as you so often did. The world is changing; we must pay attention and be aware.

He did the Ambrosia thing that one year...when asked about it, he said “She died, she was old ya know...they just found her gone one morning...” He told one of our friends that the cow was born early on a Christmas Day and that she had been an “unexpected birth”, her mother who was old and had not calved in recent years, had died right after she was born; her owner “bottle fed the calf so she was special. She had been loved” and that was why her milk and cream was better. He said, “Love always sweetens the spirit, be it human or animal.”

A few of us received cheesecake that he said was from an “old family recipe” from him one year -he said it was the best we would ever eat... It was pretty good, especially since my family had never eaten anything but “*Sara Lee’s*” store bought kind. After 1968 we didn’t get any more “food items” from him, but his life had changed, he was

occupied with his wife and their new baby, the Television show, the last of “those films” and then he began doing Las Vegas regularly and touring. Those were the best gifts...being able to “see him” and experience sharing that amazing “high” with the people sitting in those audiences.

In the late 60's I received a package through the mail from Elvis' grandmother who was his father's mother. Elvis called her “**Dodger**” because when he was young he threw a ball at her and she “dodged it” making him laugh. Some people told that story as if he were trying to hit her in anger or something, but the way he told it, they were playing a game and having fun. She crocheted and had made some colorful round potholders that resembled Pansy or Violet flowers, there was also a little jar of homemade mint jelly and she included a little note thanking me for being her grandson's friend. I put the potholders in box frames behind glass, hung them in our dining room and sent a Polaroid photo of them with a thank you note to her. Elvis must have talked to her about his “outside friends”, shared some of our silly antics with her because he liked to make her laugh, otherwise she would not have known about us... or sent anything to us. I mentioned in my second note to her at Christmas that Elvis spoke of her and loved her home cooking; she responded with a hand written note and her sausage recipe. I still have it, though I have never tried to make our own sausage. She loved her grandson dearly, missed him after his death and told people that he never failed to come in her room when he had to leave, to say goodbye, gave her a hug, a kiss and say “I love you”. She is also the grandmother who told Elvis he should not marry Priscilla, that she would break his heart. She liked Priscilla, but she did caution him against marrying her; Elvis didn't take it seriously but after they split up he mentioned that “warning” and said he should have “listened, an' maybe made some changes along the way to off set” the problems they had later on. He said, “Hindsight is what kicks you in the ass when you screw up.”

Elvis was so generous and so proud of his little girl, he was always buying things for her, some things were actually a bit much for a little child, but he was Elvis for heaven sake sooo-- Juliann benefited too, when he got his little girl a white FOX fur muff, gloves and hat he also got a short jacket for Juliann who was a few years older than Lisa-I didn't know it was FOX fur-I thought it was white rabbit! He bought Lisa a fur coat but Priscilla didn't think it right for her to have that at so young an age and “put it away”, apparently she did that with several early “too extravagant” gifts from him. He knew by then I wouldn't want my daughter to have anything that expensive so he chose a “faux fur” one and gave it to Juliann; it was leopard print and very pretty. She received a larger sized pink lace dress with satin trimming, black shiny leather *Maryjane* shoes, pink socks with lace and satin trim to match the dress and a gold bracelet with pink mother of pearl settings -just like he got for Lisa when she was 2 years old. And when he bought Lisa a “couple of rings” he got Juliann one also, though by then she was growing up and the



ring she expected turned out to be set with a “baby size” ruby stone but just a bit larger band to fit her finger. She loved it anyway and still has it. I think there were other little girls who got things from him that were similar to things he got for his Lisa Marie, so it wasn’t just our little girl who benefited! A few years ago I saw his Lisa Marie on television along with her mother; the host mentioned her father and the gifts he’d bought for her that her mother had put away because she was too young for fur coats and etc; Lisa listened, then softly mumbled, “I wish I could see them now.” Everyone watching must have thought, “She didn’t **ever** get them-how strange!” A great many people agree.

For several years we lived in Garden Grove, our neighbors “got used” to seeing the white station wagon stop at our house with deliveries, and only one time did anyone mention the Tennessee license tags...but of course, we hadn’t noticed... that was his preference. It was a bit hard to explain the *Rolls Royce* though...but that day, we were not home and had no idea who it might have been! And then there was the day one of my lady friends was getting married; her groom had an important job at **Disneyland** and invited Elvis. No one expected him to show up, but he did, hid out in the Bride’s Chamber that had a viewing window so he could watch but not make a scene by being seen there, and he left before they opened the doors for the new couple to leave. I didn’t know about this, I was the “maid of honor” and busy. The bride’s assistant was nearly fainting over that guest, and was barely able to speak a word she was so “in shock”. She did exclaim several times, “My god, he’s handsome, oh my god! He’s so handsome...” but she didn’t say his name- and the groom was average looking. Elvis said, “Was only there maybe 10 minutes...he’s gonna get me some tickets (to *Disneyland*) an’ I was goin’ by there anyway” (the church). He wanted tickets to give to the mother of a little girl dying of cancer; they went over two days, it was the little girl’s “biggest dream come true”.

Julinn began playing the guitar Elvis gave her that he used in “*Change of Habit*” and was pretty good considering she taught herself but her big interest was in going to see him in live performances though she took her guitar to school and performed for her class a couple of times. She didn’t tell them she was using “his” guitar though! When she was 16, after Elvis left us, and in her last year of High School she left early to go with me on the book tour but she was given credits toward graduation for the trip because she was doing interviews and television etc. and seeing the United States. Once we were home she got a job, saved her money and bought herself an electric **Fender(R)** guitar and amplifier and began putting her songs to tape; it was a few months before she had bought recording equipment, microphones and could “lay down tracks”.

Within a year she had a group of 4 musicians backing her and began using her middle name Starla and they played all over Southern California with her dad and me being “roadies” for the group, she began “carrying her own PA system” and Jimmie and I

learned how to set it all up and tear it down but my favorite “job” was decorating their costumes. One of hers had a form fitting black jacket and I put on a peacock design in sequins and rhinestones and did the extended tail down onto the side and leg of the matching black pants. Starla helped with a lot of the sequin sewing and wore it for the first time at a large club in Orange County known as **The Cowboy** where she asked the audience: “How do you like my jacket?” And turned around to show the fancy work on the back; they clapped and cheered. Facing them she said, “I got it at “**Pic-‘n Save**” and got another round of laughter. Elvis would have been proud! *We loved being their road crew*; they played the nicer clubs, including **The Crazy Horse** and **The Cowboy** both located in Orange County and **The Palomino Club** in West Hollywood, those clubs hosted some very well known entertainers. Of course they played at all the military bases and then ventured out of state a few times to play at State Line, Nevada a couple of times. She didn’t like the little “dive, hole in the wall, out back, places” those Hotels had their “hired entertainment” staying in. Elvis would have laughed at that-he was good at telling “hair-raising” stories of his own early days of “being on the road”.

One day while she was at **The Palomino Club** in West Hollywood, **Evel Knievel** came in to meet with the club’s owner/manager, **Tommy Thompson** who was a friend of Evel’s. Mr. Thompson invited Starla to come aboard Evel’s motor home that was in the parking lot to meet him. While there Evel talked with her; she mentioned that her mother had written a letter to him when he was incarcerated for “defending his reputation” and that he had responded in writing and that her mother and dad liked him a lot. He said I must have made an impression on him, he hadn’t written to many people in his lifetime. She said I had mentioned that there weren’t many good role models for kids, no super-heroes in real life and that I had said **Elvis**, **Ali** and **Evel** were about all that was left. Evel showed her his art work; he is a very talented artist, doing wild life and Indian culture. He gave her a numbered artist print of geese flying over a lake with the evening sky framing their flight and he dated and signed it to her with a regular carbon pencil because he said, “An artist signature on a print wasn’t authentic if it was signed and dated in ink.” And then he told her how to have it framed. It hangs properly framed, along side another that holds the pencil written letter and envelope that he sent to me wherein he mentions having met Elvis and his father, saying that he “thought a lot of Elvis, he was a nice guy” and he had enjoyed knowing him.”

In 1976 Evel met one of Elvis’ girlfriends (**JoAnna**) when he was doing a convention appearance in Los Angeles; she was one of the beautiful young women working at the convention and was chosen to meet Evel at the airport and she excitedly told Elvis she was going to meet **Evel Knievel**! He said, “That’s nice, tell him I said hello”. So as she rode in the limo with him to the convention center she told Evel that a “mutual friend told her to say hello, and it was Elvis”; they chatted a bit and Evel said Elvis was a “nice guy”.

She had been assigned to be a “greeter” at the entrance for the event, however hardly had she reached her “post” when she was told that Evel asked that she be reassigned to help him on stage; he told her he was “looking out for her” at the convention, “protecting her from the “wrong” people, etc- “to help Elvis out”. Evel, she said was nice, funny and considerate and Evel was in a “lot of pain” from arthritis and often had to take rest breaks from meeting the public during the day; she said he was a gentleman and very gracious with the many people, some with young children, coming by to meet him.

Starla’s group was known as “**Starla and the Lonestarr Band**”; they had good crowds everywhere they went. In the 1980’s she was invited by a couple of record companies to come to Nashville and bring her songs; at one company she had a meeting with the brother of **David Briggs**, who had been one of Elvis’ piano players. The meeting went well, they liked her songwriting skills and offered her a chance to write for the current hit makers of that time, but Starla didn’t want to write that type country – she was more into upbeat, rock-a-billy country. And she didn’t want to sign a long term deal giving them the rights to her songs and any she might write with other people. And they wanted her to live in Nashville –that was the “deal buster”.

To make a long story short, she played music for 10 years, had three **Air Force Band** musicians backing her and was writing good songs right up until her main musicians were shipped out to the East Coast to play for the President of the United States. She disbanded her remaining group and became a “civilian working a 9 to 5 job”. She still writes songs and plays guitar and has a dedicated music room for all of her recording equipment, keyboards and electronic drum “stuff” to lay down the music and vocal tracks but that’s mostly on the “back burner” until she “retires and has more time for it” she says.

### ***Journalistic “truths” or not ---***

Going “public” has it’s “effects”- after Elvis died and we had done our first book tour in 1978, two different reporters asked questions about Starla, saying that they had been told by one of Elvis’ “right hand men” (one of them invoked the name of **Joe Esposito**, Elvis’ long time employee as his “source” though reporters *will say whatever* it takes to get a “story” *regardless of truth -or not*)” that my daughter was Elvis’ child. Starla and I were quick to tell them the truth- *she* was born *before* I ever spoke to or met Elvis Presley so it would have had to been quite a feat for him to be the father since we had never met until she was already 3 years old! One reporter asked to see her birth certificate... Jimmie said he had only heard of one “*immaculate conception*” and since he had been present at Starla’s conception, that couldn’t have been the case. We were always amazed at the “stories” that came out of the imaginations of “journalists” in their haste and need

to get something in print... but like Elvis said, “They got to make a livin’ too...” And then there were people *who did claim* to be “his child” or “had his baby”... Elvis said he didn’t believe there were any “kitten’s left across the country”; I think if he had known, he would have wanted to know them, take care of them...Elvis was an honorable man, he would *never* have knowingly abandoned *any* child of his.

It always amazed me that my rather shy, quiet, beautiful daughter could walk out in front of all those people and turn into a truly good entertainer. If I hadn't been there and seen it happening, I might not have believed it - Elvis would have been pleased, to say the least at how much she learned from him. And he's still an influence- she has a couple of his favorite books, *The Impersonal Life* and *This Thing Called You*, beside her bed and reads them faithfully, especially when she needs a bit of support in her daily life. She says, “It’s kind of like he’s talking to me, helping me get through the day---” She is the most patient, kind and steady handed person I know; her job requires that she work with and around male managers, department heads and other “in charge” guys, and she is well known around the globe for being “the one to see” when they need special and unique produce products for their grocery stores. And they always want things “right now”! She tries to treat people fairly, is non judgmental, listens to their stories, and turns them into friends. As “Uncle Elvis” always tried to do.

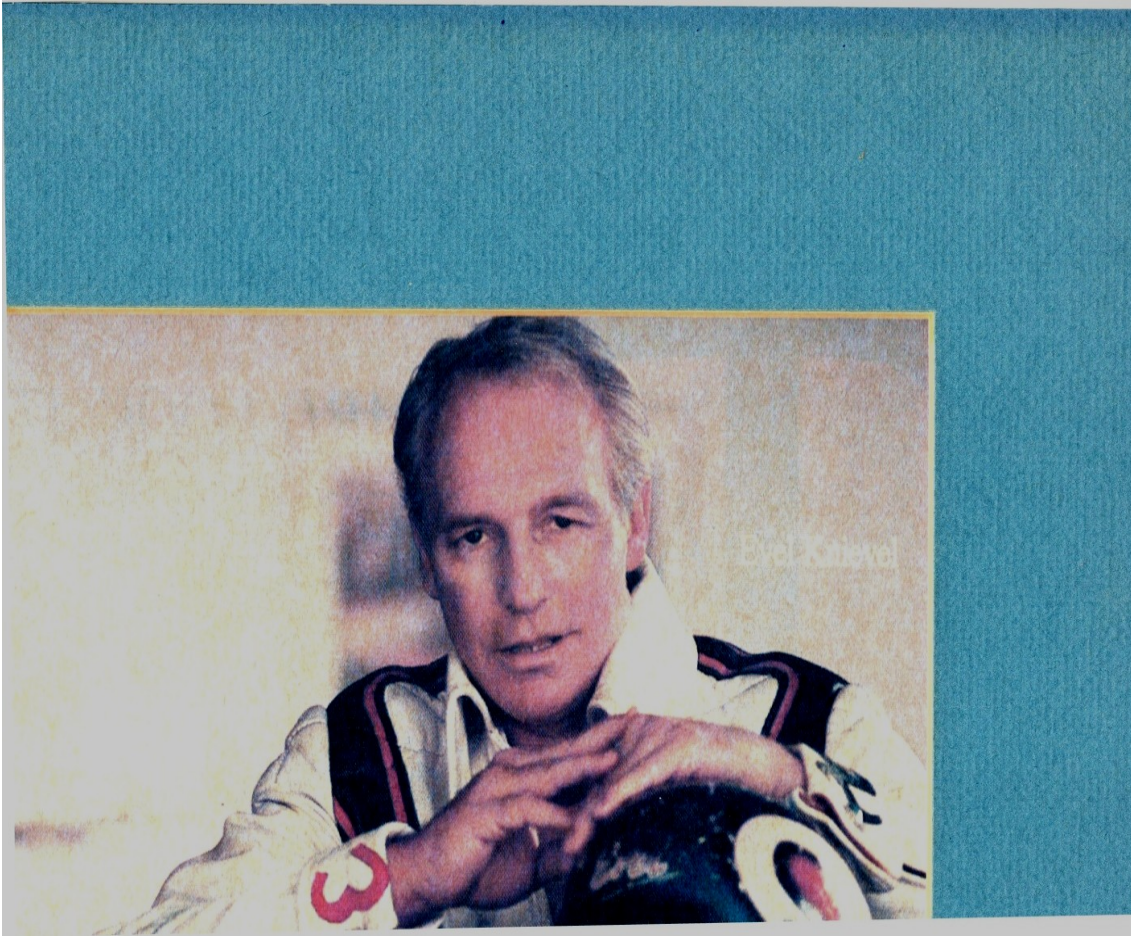
Elvis and his father Vernon did quite a few things together; I heard that they were at the scene to visit with **Evel Knievel** about the time he attempted to jump the canyon on his souped up motorcycle. Elvis thought Evel actually did clear the canyon, but when he jumped out the wind blew his parachute back away from the canyon wall where he was supposed to land. He said they just misjudged the wind currents racing through the canyon and the down draft caught the chute. That is what Jimmie thought also; he watched the event on television.

I have included herein a photo copy of correspondence from Evel.

Hand written with carbon pencil from jail cell: Evel’s letter in response to one I wrote to him upon learning where he was spending “time” courtesy of California. He was sent to jail for “defending his honor” when a former friend wrote a tell-all-book about Evel because he didn’t get exactly the amount of money he wanted for “working for Evel” though there was more to the facts. Evel was angry at what he felt was betrayal; he went to let the guy know how he felt and took a ball bat but he did do some damage to the

office furniture and he did appear threatening. The man had him arrested and Evel went to trial- he lost the case and ended up paying restitution and doing a few months jail time. People thought because he had a ball bat he meant to cause bodily harm. The truth of the matter was and still is, because of the many broken bones and injuries he suffered during his dare devil career Evel was barely able to get out of bed, a chair or do much defending of himself should things become physical – so he took the bat with him because he intended to bash in desk and office- which he did. He never laid a hand or a bat on the guy, just his furniture. I imagine he was pretty fearful looking and sounding and shook the guy up pretty good.

In my opinion, (and you knew I'd have one) anyone who thinks it's "clever or okay" to trash other people's lives and make money doing it, deserves to have the same fate come their way. Evel wasn't dangerous, though he could have been –he paid the price for losing his "cool" but the "friend" ended up the loser in many ways.





Dear Wanda :

Hi, Thanks For the letter.  
Things are Fine with me and I  
will be out of here in just  
a few more days.

I Feel super and have had  
much time to think about the  
Facts of Life this country its  
people and what helps to keep  
it going in the world.

~~It~~ will not last much longer  
there are many humane beings who  
have used this Free system to  
their own advantage to only  
destroy what it really stands  
for.

It is a big world and I  
owe this country nothing, I  
can go elsewhere.

Concerning Elvis, I knew  
him + spent some time with  
him + his Father. I had  
a lot of respect for him  
personally + his Showmanship.

There will never be another!  
Hope to meet you soon.

Emil

-

The photo of Evel is one of the last photos in full dress racing costume taken of America's racing & motorcycle jumping Super Hero of our time- Evel Knievel. It's said that he had broken nearly every bone in his body at one time or another. In his later days he was almost unable to get up by himself, but he continued doing many charity appearances and going out to meet his fans. He was also a gifted artist who did beautiful paintings of wild life scenes, landscapes and our American Indians in native costume. He was a man of honor, American pride and held a deep love for his country and its people.

We will not forget – his legacy will remain a living thing to all who shared this time with him. Please check out his beautiful paintings of wild life and American Indians. And do remember to “properly frame them” by having someone who does that sort of thing do it right. You will be glad you did.

We also have a letter from **Richard Nixon** who personally signed it and sent us a copy of his memoirs, which are very interesting to read. We sent him a copy of the hard back first edition “We Remember, Elvis”; and he quickly responded.

We have a letter from **President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter** thanking us for their copy of that book; they included a lovely Christmas card with them standing in the Whitehouse Rose Garden. Every Christmas we continue to receive a card from them. The last 4 years the cards feature President Carter's art work-scenes of his home and surrounding areas.

**Ophra Winfrey** wrote a note when she received a copy of our book (she was not doing the book reading/recommendation part on her show until much later) thanking all of us. It was great seeing Lisa Marie on her show and for Ophra's continuing interest in Elvis' legacy. I think she had a lot to do with bringing Lisa and her mother closer together.

We sent Ann Margret a hard back book but do not know if she received it; it was not returned by the postal service.

### ***More humor and sensitivity---***

I turned 30 in 1970 and I was a little depressed the day Elvis called me to wish me a happy birthday. I told him I had the 30 year blues. He turned into a clown and sang a



funny version of “*Happy Birthday*” to me and “*I Found My Thrill on Blue Berry Hill*” but his insinuating tone of voice and lyric version would have made **Fat’s Domino** cringe! The lyrics were something like this: “*I found my thrill dreamin' I was on Strawberry hill- I found my thrill-- aww the softness, the feelin' of chest touchin' breast-- lips pressed to - lips an' oh god - the rest-- The wind in the willows blew ma sweat all over her face. Aww- I found ma thrill, on Strawberry hill. You were here in ma ha-art-- un though we're ap-art, n' was only a dream-- still givin' me a chill jus' thinkin' of bein' on Strawberry hill*”. And of course he sang it drawling the words, sounding more like **Fat’s** than Elvis. So, we ended up laughing quite a bit before he had to go. A few days later a young man knocked on the door and handed me a lovely bouquet of yellow roses and a gift wrapped box. Inside was a wide cuff, gold over silver bracelet with a jeweler’s chain safety catch and a little card that told me how to keep the bracelet from tarnishing. Some time later I realized on the bracelet were *Lilly of the Valley* flowers, my birthday “flower of the month”...the guy was amazing!

Elvis’ card was a picture of a cow sitting in a chair wearing an apron and he or someone had colored her “spots” blue. In his handwriting was a message, “*A little something to chase away the blues--.*” *EP.* ----It did. I kept that blue cow card on a high side table but Juliann’s poodle liked to shred paper when she was by her self- she got on a chair to get it-well you know the rest!

He wrote inspiring inscriptions inside new modern English **Bibles** for both Juliann and to Sherry, one of her friends, on their graduation from Junior High School, bought Juliann a regulation soccer ball and shin guards though he felt that was “too rough a sport for little girls” even though he would have paid to send her to **Karate** lessons! She preferred soccer though she did try out **Karate** to please him. And of course, he was thrilled that she enrolled, he paid for her white gi, gave her a special case for her “belts” and gave her “pointers” in the sport but she preferred soccer and was invited to join the U.S Women’s team that traveled around the country and even overseas playing soccer. She turned them down to play music and sing; Uncle Elvis had died and she turned to music for comfort.

Elvis gave Jimmie a study **Bible** with a study guide to help him learn and enjoy reading the Bible in 1976, for Jimmie’s birthday January 1<sup>st</sup>. Elvis had Jimmie watching his favorite evangelist, **Reverend Rex Humbard**’s television show every Sunday. Elvis spoke to us, relating that the Humbards had come to see him, and there was awe echoing in his voice when he said as “Busy as they are, they came out here to see me, gawd; this is Las Vegas!” Several times in the months following he was still marveling that they had come there just to see him! He mentioned that “it was God sent ‘em ‘cause I needed them...’n answer to prayer, thank you Jesus!”

After Elvis' death I wrote **Rev. Humbard and his wife, Maude Amie** to ask if they would give me permission to tell the story of his and Maude Amie's visit in December, 1976 with Elvis back stage in our book, **We Remember, Elvis**. She told him he was her “bell sheep” and she believed he was leading people to Christ through his gospel songs; her sincere words made him cry. At the time I wrote him, the Reverend had not spoken publicly of that visit and I mentioned how much Elvis' fans would love to know that Elvis had spoke with them about his love for Jesus, the Christ and that they prayed together with him. I received a lovely photograph of he and his wife with a nice letter signed personally by both of them. I don't think they gave anyone else permission to publish it as I don't recall anyone telling me they had read it in any other book. After I received the letter and photos and before our first book came out, Reverend Humbard asked Maude Amie to speak of that meeting with Elvis on one of his Sunday broadcasts and Jimmie was watching.

In the last year of his life, Elvis gave Jimmie a turquoise ring that had been one of his because he had read that Capricorns *should* wear turquoise as it helped them remain calm and centered. Jimmie is a **Creek Indian** and he had *never* had anything made from turquoise, so Elvis immediately fixed that!

### ***Revelation- via Elvis—***

Probably the most emotional revelation Elvis brought about in my life was when he discovered when speaking with my father, that my natural mother was still alive. Until then, Elvis had assumed not, since I told him I had been raised from about 6 years old by my father and his second wife, **Kathrine (Katy)**, who was Jewish, very shy and who back then did not speak of her heritage as Jewish people were “looked down upon” in some cultures; I was totally unaware of it while growing up. She was an excellent housekeeper and cook and I learned a lot from her. Apparently Elvis was pretty shaken to find out that he knew “nothing” about me –“*Really*”; my father called me to say he might have said something he shouldn't have and told me about mentioning my mother, **Irene**. I told my dad, no it's okay, and don't worry about it. Elvis wouldn't think anything about that. Boy was I wrong!

A couple of months went by before I talked with Elvis-he called up one morning as I was just getting ready to go to work and almost as soon as I got out “Hello” he blurted out, “Honey, I-I found some thin' you might want to know about.” I asked what -and he spent about 5 minutes nearly nonstop telling me that he had spoken to my mother, **Ruby Irene who** lived in Kansas City and that she wanted so much to talk to me; it had been years and he couldn't believe that I *had a mother*-and I hadn't talked to her in years! Mainly, it bothered him that he had *not* known; I was *never* one to “spill my guts” to

anyone in those days. I told him I had not said anything because it was none of his business. Of course - that went over “well”--

I was astounded and angry, I didn't think he had a right to do that and said so somewhere in the rush of words he got blasted with. He was very quiet until I “spewed it all out” as he put it a few weeks later. Then he told me she was a nice lady, thrilled that he had told her about me that she had worried and wondered about me all these years. He understood my feelings, but there were two sides to everything, and I might want to know her side, in fact he thought I *needed* to know. He said, “I told her you might not call but I would tell you that she'd like to hear from you.” I had ran out of words and he went on saying, “Honey, if nothin' else jus' write a little note 'un tell her you're fine, okay? Do it for me, please, if not for yourself, *because 'um askin' you to* – I told her you'd do it--” Stunned by the way he put his request, I said I'd think about it and hung up. I didn't say goodbye; he probably took it as being “hung up on” but he never said a word about it.

To make a long story short, I didn't write her or call her or speak to him for months; then one day I received a manila envelope in the mail that contained a new *Mother's Day* card with an old fashioned style sketch of a woman with long red hair holding the hand of a little girl with red hair walking together on a country road winding into the distance. The envelope for the card had a new stamp on it and my mother's name and address on the front. I knew Elvis had sent it; I wrote a short note and sent it off. I got back pages and pages in the first letter, and Elvis was right. She was a very nice lady, thoughtful and so thrilled to hear from her first born child whom she had “taken from her” by someone she trusted.

My father and she were married just about a year after he joined the Navy and then went to fight the war out in the Pacific in 1941, on an island where they were building an airstrip, fighting snipers and hurricane force winds the whole time. He saw me when I was about a year and a half old, then again when I was not yet four years old; the war was over and when he came home my mother who had not heard from him in more than a year and had not received any money either, had met another guy and they were expecting a child. I didn't know my dad so I liked my mom's friend, he was kind and loving, had black hair and brought me toys; his name was **Earl** and he was my Uncle Raymond's cousin.

My dad of course, didn't like the situation; he made arrangements to have his mother pick me up on her way to visit family in New York City, and then she brought me to him in Tulsa; he never returned me to my mother. I was 3 years old and my mother didn't know where to look for me- nor did she have money to hire someone to find me at that time in her life; she just knew I was with my father, and safe and that his mother had no

idea of his plan to keep me and never bring me back to my mother. Had my grandmother known, she would not have brought me.

He and I lived in a rooming house most of the time; we spent a few weeks each summer when my dad was on vacation from work, with my grandmother or my dad's sister's farm. Her husband was my real mother's cousin and when she found out I was visiting, she came by but my dad would not let her see me, though I was never told about this until years later when my mother told me. My dad met a young woman who began working at the rooming house, they married, and I grew up living with him and Katy his new wife, from the time I was about six; I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about my "real mom" because I had not heard anything good about her from a young age and being a child, believed it. Nor did I ever see or know about the many gifts she sent me for birthdays and Christmas--all had been sent back or destroyed. As an adult, I had it all stuck somewhere back out of my "mental sight" - and had done just fine so far--and I didn't want to stir up "old memories"- if I had any.

Well, I was wrong; Elvis was right- I needed to know the other side of the story. She told me some things by letter and then in 1980 she and her husband drove all the way to California from Kansas to see me and on the way bought me a gift, the only one I can remember ever getting from her. Oddly enough, it was a handmade western stagecoach lamp. Something I had considered buying several times during my lifetime--she had no clue that I liked Western decor. "Weird man", Elvis would have said—"weird, man – that's weird!"

We had a great visit, I heard all of her story – and it all made sense. My dad came "clean", still thought a lot of her and it turned out to be a good thing; not only was she thrilled to finally get to see me again, she also got to talk to **Elvis Presley** and renewed her warm friendship with her ex mother-in-law, my grandmother who also had spoken with Elvis. My mother said she always thought he was a "handsome devil" but now she knew he was a "beautiful loving man" as well as so good looking and that's what she said she told him. I'm sure he loved hearing it! She had gone to see Elvis' show when he appeared in Kansas City, Missouri on one of his last tours--she said it was such a thrill seeing him on stage and then knowing that she had spoken with him too! She worked as a nursing aid and was concerned for him, his "skin color was terrible", she didn't think he felt good and he moved carefully as if in pain, but she said he put everything he had into "*How Great Thou Art*" and the whole room was so filled with his passionate praise to God, it was almost tangible; Elvis had passed away just a few months later.

My mother's hubby **William "Bill"** passed away a few months after their visit with us; he hadn't been sick very long; she told me that he had not been able to talk (throat cancer--both of them had been "chain smokers" for years) but he wrote notes and that on

his last morning he wrote a note to her saying, “Don’t worry, Elvis is on his way- he’s coming for me.” He went to sleep and passed away quietly that evening.

My mother lived alone for a while in Kansas, then I heard she went to live with one of her six grown other children. Right about that time we sold our house and moved; I sent her our new address and never got any response to the cards and other letters I sent and none were returned as undeliverable and I didn’t know how else to try to get hold of her since every number I had didn’t work nor did I have any names or addresses of anyone who knew where she lived. And at that time, we didn’t have the Internet to try to “find people” as we do today. I tried the Red Cross-they had no luck either. I very well understand that there could be some resentment and jealousy from at least one of my half siblings, it’s natural and were I in the same position, I probably would feel resentment too. I was the one who “got away”, was raised by people with money, met “royalty” and lived in “the **Golden State of California**” in a beautiful house etc--while they grew up in poverty, married young to escape and struggled to keep “body and soul” together type of thing. And they had *for all of those years* witnessed their mother’s grief, loss and fears concerning her first born daughter. It would have been difficult for children to understand; my mother had made attempts to visit me, but she was denied every time and her cards, gifts and letters were “ripped up” literally- and returned to her. It is a shame what humans are capable of doing to their fellow humans--for truly no good reason. Thanks to Elvis, my mother found relief and the forgiveness she felt she needed all those years; I also found that truth brought forgiveness, understanding and a greater love for my father, and for my mother whom I never came to know until those last few months. I know being able to bring us together as he did “warmed the cockles of Elvis’ big oversize heart”- so said my grandmother, the family “sage”.

I heard when I went to visit my dad a couple of years ago, that my mother had died of heart failure, and no one had told me; I know I’ll see her there, so it’s okay. We’ll all be together and “understand everything by and by--” as the song and Elvis would say.

My biggest regret is that I never told Elvis that I appreciated what he had done or that it meant a lot to me to understand that things were not what I thought. And it was I knew, very important to her that she explain her side of things. He was right; I needed to hear it and she truly needed to tell me. I would have liked to tell him it was weird how much I was like my mother in so many ways-and I had only been with her for about 3½ years of my early life and knew so little about her. She said walking into my house was like seeing hers, Starla and I visited briefly at her home in Kansas when on the book tour shortly after Elvis died - and her house was “like walking into mine”-even Starla noticed! Elvis would have enjoyed discussing the whys and how comes of those “similarities” even though I was raised “apart from her” for years. It would have fit right in with his “findings about twins”, “interest in meeting other twins” and being raised separately from

one's brother or sister, etc. He never questioned or made any comments, and it was too emotionally "raw" for me to "get into all that" and I think he knew; my mother told me he called her, and that she thanked him for "interceding". All that he said to me was, "you know darlin', if you ever want to talk 'bout anything, I'll jus' listen, promise." And then he said he had to go, and never brought it up again; I didn't either.

When my mother learned I had horses -she said when I was just a baby about 6 months old; she had me in a baby carriage and was visiting my Uncle and his wife, my dad's sister. He owned a big dark bay stallion who was loose on the property; she parked the buggy and had just taken me out and went up onto the porch to take me inside when the horse came around the side of the house, saw the baby carriage sitting there and as she put it, "went crazy, screaming and stomping the carriage to pieces". If she had not taken me out-I would have been in it; I saw this happen, she said I was laughing and pointing at the horse gleefully though she was scared half to death. I've loved horses all my life- I used to dream about owning a black horse-maybe that is why.

That stallion was "killing" what he thought was some kind of "animal" on his property-a carriage has four "legs" and this one had a fold up half cover over the top like an animal might look if it was in a "fighting" stance and he had never seen a baby carriage before; the stallion was protecting his "herd", made up of mares and his foals, doing what was natural for a stallion. Still, had I been in it, I wouldn't be doing this!

***From my dad, J.C. ---***

Taken from a letter received in 1968-

Excerpt: “Well we saw that TV program Elvis did, Katy thought he was real handsome and not vulgar at all. He sure worked hard. He’s skinny and he looked like a kid to us. We enjoyed the music and was good to see he did some church songs. Those are our favorites he does. Katy said if he called she would tell him how good he looked and she thought he needed to eat more before he disappears in a big wind. I don’t know much else to say.

We are getting ready to plant and the weather is nice enough so will be busy for a while. James is working and helps when he’s home.

You all take care and take it easy. Kiss the girl for me, grandpa.

Love, your dad  
JC”

***From James Ray, my “little” brother ---***

Yes, I did get to talk to Elvis. The first time he called I could not imagine who “Katie” (mom) was talking to; then she asks if this person (on the phone) would want to talk to me, and hands me the phone! He introduces himself and I had no doubt who it was. His voice and manner of speaking was unmistakable.

He talked of wanting to say hello to Grandma Stroud, who had just recently gone back to the Ozarks where she lived. He mentioned thanking Mom for teaching you how to make pecan pies. He said he was having peanut butter sandwiches with Lisa Marie and I told him they should be eating steak. What a stupid thing to say! (I thought.) He just laughed.

We talked about college and he said I should come to California where it was free??? In future calls we discussed football; he was all for Tennessee. Later we talked about fishing and how he (had) disguised himself to fish down at the Mississippi River (that was not far from his home Graceland). The bank was slippery and he almost slid in and said he (had been) a muddy mess.

I spoke of mounting my 8 pound Bass on the wall; he said I could learn to stuff my own trophy fish and volunteered to send me an article from a magazine that told how to do it. I found it in the mail a couple of weeks later. This was in the early 1970’s and (his calls) caused us to be true fans. I think this is the most I’ve ever typed, so I better quit.

**James Ray, Oklahoma, 2011**

(Our father, J.C., passed away 3/2012, quietly and peacefully during sleep after a long and entertaining life. He was impressed with Elvis, because he could “talk about farming just like he was one himself.” And he liked it that Elvis would talk about God in a way that expressed love, hope and sincerity and as one who tried to live his life accordingly.)



### ***Moments in time---***

There were many phone calls over the years-me to him, he to me. Long talks in the early morning hours when he was awake and trying not to take sleeping pills-and he did try; those times when he was happy and wanted to share the moment, other times when he was heartbroken and lonely.

The conversation we had when Lisa Marie was not yet 6 months old, Elvis asked me why I had decided not to have any more children, and did I mind talking about it with him? I said I didn't think that I personally, could handle the stress, the responsibility for another life. Maybe it was because my dad was gone quite awhile overseas shortly after I was born; he came home back into my life, and then my mother was gone. And when he remarried my life changed again. I just didn't want to have kids; Jimmie wanted a child, so I was okay with one -but I didn't want any more responsibility. He was quiet for a few moments, and then very softly said, "Priscilla told me she doesn't want to have any more, maybe never." He sounded very sad, hurt; he had been so excited when their baby was born, his Graceland housekeeper said in interviews, that he told her that he wanted to have a boy next, and he joyfully confided in speaking to me that "they hoped to have four kids". From the first months we had met, if he spoke of someday having a family, he had always said he wanted children and he included his "Cilla" in those plans, happily saying she wanted children and a family.

Having heard the "gossip" from different people who knew "things" it had bothered me to hear; it was told that Priscilla hated being pregnant, didn't want to get 'fat' and was "starving" herself, keeping everyone around her worried about her health and that of the baby. Elvis apparently wasn't always around as he was making movies, going on location etc and so wasn't always aware of what went on when he was gone and it bothered me to hear how unhappy he sounded. I didn't quite know what he knew, but I wanted to give him "hope" so I said she'd probably change her mind later – it was difficult taking care of a baby, demanding. And maybe she just wants to spend more time being your wife right now; after all you are still newlyweds! He changed the subject abruptly, talking about going back to Vegas and looking forward to doing the shows though at that time Vegas was not a "done deal"; he was nervous, but hopeful he could handle playing there again. A lot of time passed before he mentioned the subject of children again, and that was when he was trying to "get things back together with 'Cilla..." What he said and didn't say, led me to think that he wanted to have children with her; for whatever reason, it does seem to have been the truth...even though he filed for a divorce, had other "girlfriends" and even a long term relationship with Linda Thompson, he didn't get married again. He said he would not have a baby "out of wedlock" because he felt it was "harmful" to a child's emotional growth in "many ways" and with his career and everything it would be worse. And if we talked about the

“rumors of him getting married” that abounded now and then, he would say, “No, I don’t want to do that now...not yet.” And he confided that as long as he still “felt married” he didn’t think it would be fair to try it with some other woman. “Love” he said, “is not what we think it is, an’ no matter how well you think you know someone, things change, sometimes those changes sneak up on ya...’n by then, it’s too late to fix it.” He couldn’t help but think that the lawsuit filed accusing him of fathering a woman’s child had been the finale “nail in the coffin” regarding their marriage breakdown, though he said Priscilla believed him. Mainly, because of how the woman said it “happened”.

He had even mentioned thinking about having a vasectomy so he “wouldn’t have to keep payin’ lawyers to handle the bitch’s accusin’ me!” There were several filed after as he put it, “I proved I could do the job” when he and his new wife had their little girl, Lisa Marie. Elvis spent years paying lawyers to “fight for his reputation” after that first one accused him of making her pregnant behind the door in his suite...while his wife was in another room...presumably “the other side of the door.” That was so silly, I had to laugh...Elvis was not the type guy who would “risk” doing such a thing! No way--I’d bet on that! But the woman kept finding lawyers who’d go after him, do anything to make a name for themselves... and a maybe, some money! Blood tests proved Elvis could NOT have been the father...but still, “science isn’t perfect” said the lawsuit.)

I am not “blaming” Priscilla for not wanting to “get fat and lose her figure” etc- she had her hands full being his wife, the stress and strain of knowing “he could have his pick” of any females he might take a fancy to because he was “Elvis” after all, had to be on her mind and probably “colored” anything she felt. And there were always rumors and gossip; some from people she thought were “friends”. As the wife of ELVIS she had to be “perfect” for all occasions, though he liked her spunk and was proud of her ability to go out and “play” at whatever he was into at the time. He said she tried to please him, I believe she did but it had to have been an impossible situation for her considering he had “sheltered her” and kept her “under his thumb” most of her life and as a result, her “vision of life” had to be limited, and different from reality. As he finally realized, they lived in two different worlds-and his world was one that no other person could fully understand as there was only one “ELVIS”. He began to question whether they could find a way to make things work for them. Eventually he realized he could not make her into something that made her miserable and he could not become her ideal man and still be “ELVIS” and that being “Him” was what paid their bills and gave them the kind of life they were used to having. He said, “We aren’t promised a bed of roses, there are always going to be some thorns; you can’t avoid getting stuck by one you didn’t notice in time to avoid bleeding.” I remember making him laugh like a silly thing, when I agreed, saying “some times those thorns are huge...like the ELVIS image...that would sure make someone bleed alright.” He just broke up laughing at picturing that one and I wasn’t being funny-

Elvis was the type of man who expected the woman he married to be faithful, to wait on him patiently at home, take care of the children and be happy when he was there. He had commented that some women are suited for that life, others are not and young women are especially vulnerable to being lonely, needing time outside the home, a husband who is there 100% when he is home. Often lonely young wives who haven't much to do while waiting, tend to be restless and are easy "prey" for men who are "looking"; many marriages end sadly, no matter how much the young couple hope it won't. Life doesn't always play fair; often both parties are at fault one way or another, and they often do not tell one another the truth, nor do they know how to explain or even understand exactly what happened to their dreams". Elvis and Priscilla, away from the glamour and glory of his career, were no different -two human beings trying to solve their daily problems and fulfill their dreams together. And Elvis was restless, the excitement of performing was always there in memory; he wanted to feel that again, to be on stage and sing for people though he had put it way back on his "memory shelf". It was still there, waiting. It did appear that their child was the only real tie between them; finally he "saw the light" as he put it, and filed for the divorce-"because it's the only way to let her get on with her life".

He talked quite a bit about being excited to work before a live audiences again; he spoke of how every time something good came along, it seemed there would be a bad thing he had to deal with, never any steady flow of life circumstances and he wondered if it was "natural" for other people in a "public life". He asked other entertainers that question; he said they didn't "understand what I mean- they don't have the same kinda life as me, I guess." That was a true statement, though other people were "stars" and very popular, other than the **Beatles** when they first entered the states, no one could draw a crowd like **Elvis Presley**. Not only were there always fans around, and people wanting to "get something or sell something" he was constantly being followed by journalist and photographers, all trying to "get something hot" on Elvis because he was a "guaranteed sale". If anyone doesn't agree, just research all the many books, magazine covers, articles, newspapers, documentaries and whatever else that have been "out there" since Elvis Presley first stepped out onto the public stage. It's astounding to say the least-and still going strong!

The time he called at 3:24 am and sounded so strange I asked, "What's wrong, Elvis?" He said, "God, I'm gonna be 39 years old tomorrow...TODAY!" And I silently laughed because I knew how that shook him- but he was so funny.

A year after Priscilla left him he phoned and said, "Well, you were right-I lived through it-but Gawd, it wasn't easy!" And he added, "I still miss her" then changed the subject.

And once when I told him I had heard he was so “hot” sexually after his performances, he had 2 or 3 women lined up waiting and he snorted, “Gawd! Is that all the hell they think of! All I want to do is get some water and rest!”

And the day I told him about Chinese New Year’s based on reading a placemat picked up from China Town in LA, what animal each year represented and, that it said he was born in the “Year of the Pig”; he cracked up laughing, saying, “I always knew I was a BORE (boar)! Then he asked about Priscilla’s year--”The Year of the Dog”. He roared with laughter, then giggled out, “Oh---oh Gawd—I said she was a-a bitch!” I scolded him and he said between giggling, “Well, we just won’t tell her!” (I learned later on that some Chinese/Asian cultures have different years and creatures representing the signs; one of those says he was born in a “dog” year – he would have laughed at that also, but the placemat “pig” and “dog” one brought out his quick sense of humor!)

And when we were “hounding” him about when he was going to come to our part of the country—he was touring in the Midwest, the Northern states, down South to Texas and even in New Mexico but he hadn’t come to the West Coast in a while. He finally said, “Gawd, you all sound like a bunch of starvin’ cats-- ‘n all of you “yowling for--”Elvis”--okay, we’ll do it! Don’t want anybody starvin’ over me!” And he did, he played San Diego, Long Beach and then added an extra show in Anaheim—where most of us lived! What a guy! We saw them all too, and to get good seating, we stood and slept on the pavement for days - but believe me - we got “fed”!

### ***And more--***

There was the time I had emergency surgery (tests showed my gallbladder was about to burst; I was admitted immediately for surgery) and I asked everyone not to tell Elvis because he was busy working and had recently married. He didn’t find out until after I was home and recuperating. The phone nearly melted he was so frustrated and angry, and being under some medication I couldn’t help crying.

He felt horrible, said every sweet and dear thing he could think of and promised me never would he “yell” at me again; when thinking about it later, actually hearing him carrying on so made even the surgery thing kind of worth it! When I told him that he didn’t think it was a bit funny—but I got a kick out of it.

I did promise never to keep “things” from him again. His reasons were, “What if I lost you or somethin’ an’ wouldn’t know or be able to do nothin’ bout it. Gawd, don’t you know how it’d hurt me?” He sounded so hurt; I thought he was going to cry so I promised

to always tell him if anything should happen again; thankfully I never had to. He told me that the actor who portrayed “Hoss Cartright” Dan Blocker, had gal bladder surgery the same day as I and he “had died on the table” during surgery. Elvis was pretty shook up over that-he had met Dan and liked him a lot. (Seven months after Elvis’ death I again had a “fast surgical experience” and of course, I remembered him and in a way, his spirit was with me.}

After we got past my “not telling him” he sent me a huge basket arrangement of pink roses, white lilies and purple “paper flowers”, all surrounded and filled with beautiful leaves of all the fall colors. I still have the basket-it is filled with large pine cones picked up at Big Bear where he was there filming some scenes in the movie “*Kissin’ Cousins*”. I had to use binoculars to get a glimpse of the action; he was dressed like “Cousin Jody” during part of that day. That was the day he asked me for my home telephone number-and wrote it down on his left palm. It was weeks before I answered my phone and it was him calling to say he was heading back to LA and would be in town for several months making another movie. That phone call was more of a thrill to me than when he gave me his number and I called him! I guess because *he* was taking the time and reaching out to us; it made me feel very comfortable as if hearing from a true friend or family member telling about the details of their daily life.

That day in Big Bear Elvis surprised me and in doing so gave me a view through that “window into his soul”, at least I kind of think of it that way. I was going to head down the mountain but hoped to tell him goodbye first. I had been with a group of people who had been waiting nearly all day to catch a glimpse of him; he was walking along the barricaded line, shaking hands, signing autographs and hugging people while his men flanked him to keep people from getting too personal. As Elvis made his way down the line, I went the same way behind the group of people until he got to the end of the line and headed toward the area where the production company was set up.

When he looked my way, I waved and he nodded his head, signaling me to come that way. I did, he slowed down and I fell in step with him. His men were busy keeping people from going after him, except for one short, cute little guy who trotted along a little behind him much like a mini shadow, but discretely stayed a few feet back when Elvis stopped to speak with me.

Elvis thanked me for coming, apologized that he hadn’t had any time to “visit”, learned I was driving and cautioned me to be careful on the steep curving road going down the mountain, then told me how to brake to keep the car’s brakes from getting “hot ‘n maybe failing to work”, and then said he was winding up and would be heading to Memphis for a few days. He didn’t have much time and he said “See ya later” and started walking away when he suddenly stopped, turned and strode back to me. His

miniature shadow waited; Elvis came up to me pulling something over his head and he quickly slipped it over mine. I saw that it was something green fastened with what looked like an old leather shoestring. It hung nearly to my waist and I said, “Kinda long, huh?” He began telling me that it was an Egyptian amulet and the equivalent of a Christian cross and was symbolic of eternal life and since it was made of jade and “worn for healing” it should be worn near the heart chakra. As he said this he pulled the v-neck of my sweater forward, peered down my front, stuck his right hand inside my sweater and used two fingers to tuck the green jade amulet inside my bra-right over the heart chakra, beneath my breast and I felt those very warm fingers.

I hardly knew him and indignantly I thought, “Who does this guy think he is?” I’m sure my face reflected what I was feeling. When I looked into his eyes, I realized there was nothing but innocence on that face. He had been so intently focused on explaining the spiritual meaning of his gift; he had no thought at all of what he had done; his actions and intentions were spontaneous and reflected his inner spirituality. Realizing what I had been thinking, he had clasped his fingers together like a kid might, then one hand went to his forehead and he was stammering but not getting anything out, standing there looking like he wanted to run. I grabbed his hand saying, “Elvis, thank you!” He looked into my eyes so seriously, trying to say something and only getting out “I-I-d-d” and blushed deep red right to his ears. I hugged him saying, “Oh Elvis, it’s beautiful, I’ll treasure it always!” I turned him loose, he looked me in the eyes for several seconds with a very soft, but serious expression, then in an almost whispering voice asked, “What’s your phone number?” I gave him a pen, he wrote it on his left palm, said, “See ya honey” and walked away, followed by the short little guy whom I later learned was known as “Cholly” to Elvis.

I knew from that day on the mountain, how vulnerable and young at heart and emotions this “king of Rock ‘n Roll” really was, just a little boy living in a grown up body. Even he realized that as he commented in an interview, that “there is no such thing as a man, we’re just little boys in a grown up body.”

I wore that Egyptian cross alot and every time many people noticed and start a conversation with me about it almost as if it had some sort of “magnetic quality” that attracts them. Most of them know what it is and say they have never seen one made of Jade; neither have I.

A few years ago I learned that in Monterey, California there is a beach that one must climb down a steep cliff to reach, where jade can be found just laying around the rocks and a lot more if one scuba dives in the cove under water. Rules are you can’t bring anything to hammer or break the jade loose or carry big chunks up the cliff with any kind of machinery-otherwise, dare devil types can go find all they want to carry back. Elvis

had been there; years after he gave me the cross he mentioned having “found” some jade and some natural coral pieces on the beaches in Hawaii and California-and having jewelry made from them. Maybe my jade cross is one of those.

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***“Movie Star Lets Good Ones Get Away---”***

**{1976 One of my favorite conversations with Elvis--who was speaking of when he was around 27 years old—and was a nervous “movie star” with a nail biting habit.)**

**Elvis:** Not really--eh--one time had enough to manicure (Snickers) had a good reason to let 'em grow that time---was worth it!

*Wanda: And that was--.*

**Elvis:** (Laughing) Maybe you don' wanta know.

*One of those incidents- well, just to toss you a curve-tell me!*

**Elvis:** Oh--eh, it's not nothin' bad – jus' funnin' with you, really.

*Uh-huh--*

**Elvis:** There was this girl--at the studio when we were makin' a fim for Paramount an' she was a manicurist – it was her job to make sure we all had nice lookin' hands-- You know for fims, 'cause ever thin' showed up big time on screen.

*So--you were letting them grow so she could do your hands – I see.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) guess you could--put it that way. Sure wanted her to—do---me, yeah!

*Watch it bud!*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) would 'ove-- She was a good lookin' chick man, from Portugal an' she had dark hair that shone like it was laced with gold, soft brown eyes an' a smile that lit up the room--'n then man, she was jus' fine ever where else--lordy, close ma eyes an' still can see her an' that smile. Anyway, enough of that! I let 'em grow to get a date- she wouldn't date none of us – nobody in the business you know. Not one actor for sure she said. I was doin' ever thing I could to get her to- to give me a chance. But she wouldn't do nothin' but make sure my hands were okay – that nothin' showed up you know, doin' Karate an' stuff, I'd get marks and such an' sometimes my nails would be bruised an' all that. She was all time get 'in on me for bein' so rough on my hands – said I had such nice hands, masculine but delicate an' sensitive an' once she said I had healin' hands, and she put my hand over her heart. Liked to died man, that was a big deal with her- nobody ever had her do nothin' like that before--none of the guys, ya know-- (Laughs)

*So who did you make a bet with – half of the studio?*

**Elvis:** What--no, didn't, not that time. (Laughs) But they were all waitin' to see if I had what it takes.

*And?*

**Elvis:** Well, she was on her way to her car an' I followed her out to talk see, an' she was talkin' real nice with me an' I asked her out an' she kind of smiled and said somethin' 'bout me singin' to her. So I sang “*Love Me Tender*”-- an' when I got to the part about makin' all my dreams come true, she come up real close an' put her arms around me for a hug, an' then whispered if I'd stop bitin' my nails an' she could file 'em, she'd think 'bout makin' all my dreams come true. Lord, she was--was so soft – in all the right places--lordy, lordy. So I let 'em grow out -- jus' told myself ever time started to chew on 'em -- think of how it felt huggin' her--an' it worked!

*Good grief, I might have known!*

**Elvis:** We went out – well, she came over to the house, an' we had dinner an' watched a couple movies an' it was Christmas nearly an' she was goin' home for that. We sat outside an' watched the lights come n' on down in town ya know, an' looked at the stars – she knew 'em all too. So we talked almost until time to go to work an' she went home. (Big sigh)

*That was it-huh?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--she went to Greece for couple weeks... Ya know, they got a -a place over there that's more'n 2 hundred years old; it's a --an Amphitheater where they'd put on shows, plays you know, an' special entertainment of their day. This place is made like a shell...a little more'n half shell kinda, and its deep with seating cut out of stone an a stone stage area in the bottom... it's not in the best shape after all this time passin' but you know, it has the best acoustics ever designed- a whisper can be heard from the top, an' down to somebody in the pit...stage area. Gawd, its hundreds of years old! Science hasn't yet designed some thin' better'n God's natural acoustics yet! Lord, I'd love to go see it... 'n sing somethin' down there!"

*Wow, it must be like echoes; they are sometimes amazing when it sounds like somebody is just right there and there isn't anyone.*

**Elvis:** I saw it in a fim, it was that one I tol' you about-**Sophia Loren's** fim about deep sea artifacts an' so forth...it showed it- it worked--- like a big diaphragm as speakers got to produce the sounds, amplify them...the shape of it an' the stone work. It'd be somethin' to record something there.

*I hope you can- that would be different! So...even that film educated you, huh-and another European woman....shades of yesteryear maybe...? So how did it turn out?*

**Elvis:** Oh, things changed; she got married a couple months later to some guy she met from her country- had known him for years. 17 years older'n her too – Gawd-- what a difference in ages, I mean. Looked like he was her daddy! But can't tell 'bout love-- 'n she loved him she said, so can't fault her for that. I tried to change her mind but she wouldn't budge, so guess it was a good thing. Last I heard, they still were together back in Portugal. Lord! Story of ma life – let'n the good ones get away--

### ***Hollywood Tears---***



**Marilyn Monroe:** Elvis was emotional speaking of how Marilyn died and in talking about having briefly met her when he made movies before he went into the army; he was on the verge of sobbing when talking about the way her life ended. He believed that she was killed to silence her. “She was just a little girl, bein’ used and abused by people tryin’ to use her to get somethin’ for themselves--” (And I thought: “like you...too”.)

He spoke of **Nick Adams**, saying he was an early Hollywood friend, the one who introduced him to **Natalie Wood** and other Hollywood starlets in those early days when Elvis had come to Hollywood to audition and then was going to be filming “*Love Me Tender*”. To avoid problems with fans and “so forth” Col. Tom arranged for him to stay “a while” at **Shelly Winters'** home where a lot of young hopeful, actors and actresses stayed as it was much less expensive than a hotel. **Shelly Winters** it's said was “hedging her bet” with this “line of work- room and boarding house- “in case her career went downhill”. Elvis’ mom and dad stayed there with him when they first came to Hollywood to visit and watch him working in his first “fim” but he soon moved with them to a hotel. It was ironic that after his death a film of his life was made and Shelly, who had met his mom and dad, was chosen to play his mother in the film.

He spoke of how excited his mother and dad were coming to Hollywood, watching him on the set of “*Love Me Tender*” and how much she liked him dancing in “*Jailhouse Rock*” and her favorite film was “*Loving You*”. His co-star, **Judy Tyler** in “*Jailhouse Rock*” was killed in a car wreck shortly after the film was finished- Elvis never watched the film again, nor did he watch “*Loving You*” because his mother is in the audience in one of the final scenes.

Elvis talked a little about those days and having the younger Hollywood stars and starlets visit Graceland, how they'd sing and do funny things and talk of their dreams. He liked **Nick Adams**, and really wanted to meet **James Dean**, whom I got the impression was Elvis' “idol” if he had one. In some of the things he said of Dean, it seemed that he felt they were “alike” in many ways, emotionally and attitude and love of fast, fancy cars. Elvis said he enjoyed the fun and familiarity of the young group of Hollywood's young movie elite's friendship. His mom preferred that he not become too interested in a Hollywood girl- she wanted him to marry “one of his kind” meaning a Southern raised girl with good morals, etc; Elvis said, “They're all jus' friends, nothin' else.” It has been written in different books that **Nick Adams** became a “spy” for Colonel Parker, paid to keep an eye on “his boy” and let him know everything he was “doing and thinking”. He didn't want Elvis “getting into trouble”.

All I can say is Elvis spoke of Nick with kindness and love, never once saying anything about him being a “snitch”. He brought Nick home with him when between

films, introduced him to his mom and dad who were happy to meet him. Nick spent several days with Elvis in Memphis, and speaks of those times in his book. When **Nick Adams** was found dead in his home, Elvis was upset, did not believe it was “suicide” though the reports said it was and that Nick had been “using formaldehyde for alcohol addiction and that chemical was found in a rather large quantity “in his stomach”. Elvis said they “only prescribe that shit in tiny amounts, got to use a little bitty eye dropper an’ two or three drops a couple times a day-no way he’d have a pint of that stuff!” He questioned how Nick could have had so much formaldehyde in his stomach when it would be *impossible* for anyone to swallow that much-the throat “would close shut”. Elvis said, “no one could swallow if they tried”. He thought something bad had happened; Nick had grass and mud stains on his pants, on his shoes and his hands and under his fingernails. He was found sitting on the floor, leaning against his bed with a suitcase holding several hundred dollars nearby and there was no glass, no container nothing the formaldehyde could have been in HAD he managed to drink it. Elvis said, “They tubed it into his stomach-he couldn’t have drank it-he wouldn’t have tried-he knew ‘bout that shit! He was getting back with his wife ‘n had some jobs lined up-he didn’t do it! “They” killed him!”

He didn’t explain who “they” were and I didn’t want to know. There was no further investigation but Elvis never accepted it as suicide. He also thought **Marilyn** was murdered, saying “She’s worth more dead than alive--” He said that of himself a few months before he died--just like he told his cousin, “I’ll look good in my coffin--” He knew all the bloat would be gone, he would be back to his “fighting weight” and as he put it, “get the fxxxing load off my back!”

He stated, “I’ll be worth a hell ‘ova lot more when I’m dead!” I had to tease about that and said, “Yeah--they should be able to get quite a bit of money selling little pieces of your embalmed body!” He cracked up laughing and said “Hell, just gut ‘n stuff me, few strings tied on ma arms and legs -man, they could keep doin’ the show an’ I’d just be a puppet on strings out there!” He went on and on, saying maybe they could put his body in a big “pickle jar of alcohol ‘n jus’ jiggle it to the music, that way it wouldn’t dry out and be leavin’ little pieces ever where they took it on tour”; we laughed quite a bit at those possibilities for his body continuing his career. I remember being so glad that he could laugh about such things, it helps even now.

Too many phone calls, too much to write down or remember everything and many things missed. The times I’ve mentioned I kept notes on, some conversations were taped on an answering machine, most were not good quality but we loved them. Now I wish I had taped them all even though he only gave permission for a few early calls when I asked, and then the interview conversations. The times with him are most vivid, certainly. I think it is important to remember, because he would understand this

“betrayal” of his trust, his confidence because he wanted to be remembered. Asked to be remembered, hoped to be remembered - though he feared and said, “Ten years after my death, nobody’s gonna know who the hell Elvis Presley was...or give a damn.” He was wrong...100 years from now, if this world still exists – Elvis will still be the “king” and I kind of think, people everywhere will be listening to his beautiful voice and watching those movies just to see that smile, look at those eyes and feel the love coming from him to them.

There were so many sides to Elvis; I would never label him a saint or picture him angelic because he was human, uniquely so and a man with a fun loving personality. He liked to tease, at times acting like a naughty little boy just for attention. He had every opportunity to be vulgar, obscene and distasteful, no doubt at times he was all of those, especially if those with him were “acting up” also, but more often he was kind, considerate and thoughtful -a gentleman all the way. We all saw our own view of Elvis. I learned so much from him, and I miss him. He changed our lives, enriched our life style and blessed us with his wonderful friendship, and he didn’t have to do any of it. But he did.

I don’t know why he wanted to be our friend, or be a part of our little family. I don’t know nor do I care now, why he chose to keep our relationship “secret” *if he did* as is said by some of his 24/7 friends today. It was not just our little family, there were several other family groups, all of whom he called, treated well and shared different moments of his life with, and who have shared their story in the books we have written to share with his fans, who love him today, and for always and ever. I believe he may have had “many outside” friends whom he talked with, shared with and in doing so, it let him keep a toe hold on life outside of his circle, gave him insight into the people he felt were his “peers” just regular folks, working for a living and having everyday normal living experiences. Something he said he felt that he had missed by being Elvis Presley though he wouldn’t trade a day of his life as he’d lived it and he felt he had been blessed more than most people on earth by having the chance to be Elvis Presley. He said, “I love bein’ me-who the hell would I be, if I wasn’t?” And he laughed delightedly then added, “Gawd-it’d be damn hard to pick somethin’ better!”

Why he entered our lives I can only say -it was *all his choice*; he didn’t have to give me his phone number, or call us, send us gifts, offer help when we had problems, cheer up our little girl, tell the nurses who he was or that he was her “uncle” when she had to spend 11 days in traction in the hospital. He didn’t have to do any of the things he did over nearly 15 years, but he did. Our lives were so much brighter, our hearts lighter, and God knows, we loved him dearly; not *because he was Elvis*, but in spite of it many times. Thank Heaven he was “*him*” because it was great knowing “*him*” too. We had so much fun going to see him work, laying on the pavement for tickets, making him laugh and

seeing him turn shy when he realized how much people actually cared about *him, the man*, not just the entertainer “*him*”. It was worth it all to us, we’d do it again and more, if we only could. I think he knows that now.

Elvis said that he would like to **“be there for everyone who has cared about me, loved me and who has been there for me...I’d like to be there for them when they need me.”** He was speaking of “*being there*” at the time they crossed from earthly life to spiritual life and it’s my belief *he is doing just that*, and those times we all have that leave us feeling so alone and helpless, we can find solace in his music, especially his gospel music. Many people have told me this and many have written about it in books. Elvis would love that, because for him singing gospel songs was like praying, praising God and he received solace through performing it for his fans, **“My friends” he often called them saying, “maybe the only real ones I got at times—they never let me down.”**

## ***CONVERSATIONS WITH ELVIS---***

The last few months of his life, Elvis was taking that “train on the road” at top speed, day after day and night after night, 55 shows by the end of June, 76. On June 1st he did a live version of “*Danny Boy*”, the only live version of that song. In the moments before he begins he is responding to someone in the audience, and he stutters, snickers at himself, then tries again and stutters more before getting it together. He then begins trying to get the song up with his band and starts without them--- this version is beautiful, pure Elvis from the heart.

Elvis talked to me about when he was a “mere child” saying he was so shy he couldn’t talk to anyone without stuttering. Often he said, he just didn’t talk rather than embarrass himself. He told me, “A fella I met eh-a lifetime ago, he’s all time playin’ guitar, blues ‘n so forth, he taught me how to count ‘fore talkin’ when I was nervous, ‘n then do half time ‘tween words in that helped me stop-’cept when really nervous or havin’ one of them headache spells. He’s a colored fella, damn good guitarist, self taught ‘n all, man. Miss him--ya know-- sometimes seems like--ever’ body’s gone from those days. Miss ‘em-the things used ta could do--goin’ down there where it was all happenin’-- Time’s goin’ so fast, isn’t it?” *Yes, Elvis - it sure did--*

What his fans saw on his last tour was Elvis, the man who was standing behind that image he so well adapted to when on stage. Those lucky people got to see the real guy up there, no hype, no glitz- “jus’ Elvis” and like he said, “--this is all there is folks--I’m so

glad to see you here.” To do those last tours, Elvis had to take certain medication so that he could breathe better, in order to sing. He was having colon problems, necessitating that he follow a regime of personal nature to be able to perform on stage for more than 30 minutes- He was also having eye problems, recurring infections and prescription drops where necessary, especially when working under those extremely bright stage lights. He also took medication for high blood pressure, and some of the medications caused him to have some difficulty speaking certain words, stuttering as he had when younger, and because he knew he didn’t look like he thought his fans wanted “*Elvis*” to look, he was more nervous out on those stages, and that caused him to stumble over words, stammering...and he couldn’t always prevent it, so he laughed, joked and went on...like the professional he had always been.

*You never let him down--and he knew you loved him.*

**Elvis: “I walk out there ‘n sometimes it’s like walkin’ into a stiff wind or somethin’---it’s all the excitement and emotion comin’ off ‘em out there ya know, gawd! It- it- it’s the love---they love me ‘n I feel it, man! I feel it!”**

### ***The “electronic” Beginning---***

Early in 1965 I asked Elvis if he would mind me trying to tape our conversation so Jimmie and some of our relatives could enjoy hearing him too. He was silent a few moments, and then said, “Just your family?” I said, they’d love it Elvis; if you don’t mind. Again he was quiet then he said, “Okay, jus’ remind me now ‘n then.” Then we discussed possible ways of doing it because we didn’t have an answering machine at that time though they were coming out with some that recorded over and over on the same short tape cassette. I said I would see what might be out there-we only had one phone jack so it would have to be something that worked with the telephone receiver. I found a simple thing that had a suction cup kind of thing that was the “pick up” end and it plugged into a little cassette recorder. This is from one of the first conversations I managed to tape record with a stick on thing that wouldn’t stay put, that sounded horrible and at that time, I thought wasn’t worth the effort-but it’s priceless to us now; thank heaven for that “bubble gum and bobby-pin” system we came up with! The main problem was he spoke so softly, I had to keep the phone right on my ear to hear him, and that kept breaking the tape loose.

**1964-65-**

*Wanda: Okay, I think it's stuck on, this is not a good thing-there must be some other way!*

**Elvis:** Don't know, maybe somethin' plugs into a phone jack-never thought 'bout it, really--

*Well, it seems to be working, the tape is holding.*

**Elvis:** Good idea-tape that sucker down!

*So what are you doing today?*

**Elvis:** Goin' to go back to LA tonight-jus' getting stuff together-

*You do that yourself-I mean, you don't have somebody pack for you?*

**Elvis:** Most of the time-'um not helpless really--

*I didn't think you were. Really! Just thought you probably didn't pack your own clothes.*

**Elvis:** I can, ya know. Mostly jus' my books--stuff eh- want to be sure goes where I do, ya know. I leave the girls here though-got plenty of 'em there.

*Yeah right! (He laughs.)*

**Elvis:** (Laughingly.) Don't I though? You seen 'em- Gawd can hardly get in the damn gate!

*I saw that-but you could tell them to get lost, couldn't you?*

**Elvis:** An' hurt their feelin's? Naw--can't do that, 'sides it's kind of nice bein' welcomed home some times. If they didn't show up, man I'd worry!

*You are silly! But guess it would make you wonder if you were losing it!*

**Elvis:** I ain' lost it yet! (Snickers) Jus' a minute, hold on--

*Okay--?*

**Elvis:** Cholly, that you? Come 'ere a minute, if you got time.

Charlie: Yeah?

**Elvis:** I can't get any hot water outta the faucets in there -somethin's plugged up maybe?

Charlie: Pipes may be frozen up--really cold last night.

**Elvis:** Go check will ya--I gotta get ready an' both of 'em aren't workin' right up here. Man, gotta shave an' ever thin' an' there's no hot water -liked to froze ma ass off tryin' to take a shower! Cholly? (Raises his voice)

Charlie: Yeah man?

**Elvis:** Can you do my hair 'fore we go-if there's any hot water?

Charlie: I have hot water-we can do it there.

**Elvis:** Okay, in a few. Check on getting some up here for me, please. An' close the door. (He speaks back to me.) Man, it was cold here-but if he has hot water I ought to have some up here-these pipes are old. Gawd, probably outta get 'em replaced 'fore I wake up swimmin' or somethin'--

*Wanda: It gets that cold in Memphis?*

**Elvis:** Yeah sometimes snows too-it's beautiful when it's fall an' then when it snows-spring is good too-you all outta live here; you'd love it!

*It's too humid for me-or Jimmie. We had that in Oklahoma!*

**Elvis:** You'd get used to it--

*'Fraid not-we like California! I love the fact that it's so nice all year round, except for the fog. I've never seen fog like we've had here!*

**Elvis:** Yeah, can be foggy-'specially down at the beach. You all like livin' at the beach?

*Yep, we sure do. I love going there but I don't get in the water very far-I can't swim.*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Me neither-much! But like to play in the water-I got a pool here an' can swim some-jus' not made for it I guess--get tired easy an' too, don't like drinkin' pool water much. An' it fades ma hair out, chlorine ya know.

*Well, at least it doesn't make your hair green!*

**Elvis:** It could-if I didn't dye it. Man, I saw some blonde's, ya know, that bleached their hair-they ruined it goin' in a pool jus' been cleaned an' re-chlorinated ya know. Talk 'bout ugly! Lord!

*Jimmie said to tell you hello if you called-he had to work today.*

**Elvis:** Okay--oh hey, Jimbo, 'um keepin' her home for you! Catch ya later, man.

*(Laughs) Okay-if I didn't want to be here, I wouldn't be and you couldn't help it!*

**Elvis:** Stayed home for me though, huh?

*Not really, you just happened to catch me; I was about to go out the door.*

**Elvis:** Naw--you was waitin'---I know it, don't lie to me.

*Hey, didn't I have to go get the stick on thing and fix the phone?*

**Elvis:** Okay--so it's not me--.

*Nope--I was going to the store and then pick up Juliann at school, then go get some tacos.*

**Elvis:** I'm not holdin' you up or nothin'--- 'cause I can go help fix the pipes.

*You can fix pipes-have you ever?*

**Elvis:** No, but can't be too hard to do.

*If they are frozen it means they have to be thawed out-how would you do that?*

**Elvis:** Blow torch.

*That could bust them, you know.*

**Elvis:** Well, then they'd have to be replaced so--it'd work anyway.

*What logic!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs--)

[Tape runs out--Charlie comes back, they talk. There is water in the kitchen area and in the other end of the house but not upstairs and there is a pipe fitting either rusted closed or something. Elvis says call the plumbers, get the whole fxxxxing mess changed to new ones and he'd be down to get his hair done. He says good-bye to me. Apparently Charlie dyed that hair many times, with Elvis on his knees, leaning over the bathtub where ever or over a sink. When he opened in Vegas his hair was beautifully raven black-with blue highlights under those lights. A few years later it appeared to have some dark brown highlights---as hair dye improved-so did Elvis' "beautician perfect hair color".]

***Palm Springs humor-1965.*** [His housekeeper answered the phone; then he picked up.]

**Elvis:** Hello? Who is it? (Sounds distracted.)

*Wanda: Me-but if you are busy, it's not important. Jimmie said you called--*

**Elvis:** Me? I'm me-who are you? (Giggles)

*Guess, smart aleck!*

**Elvis:** Can feel who it is--my little Berry-berry-hummmm--

*Are you stoned?*

**Elvis:** Stoned? Me--Hell no! Why'd you ask that? (Snapped out)

*Ever been?*

**Elvis:** Had rocks thrown at me sometimes-- (Laughs)

*Really--I just wondered--you sounded kind of different--you know--*

**Elvis:** Naw--feel really good though--finally got over the cold--got laid 'n that cured me.

*Just had to say that, didn't you? Why is that-to prove something to yourself?*

**Elvis:** Ummm--nobody ever asked me that before--don't think I got an answer--give me a minute--

*(Laughs) I didn't realize you had such a --complex.*

**Elvis:** What--does that mean?

*Ego problems-- A need to exploit one's self in every way possible.*

**Elvis:** I'm a movie---star---guess that's a good one. (Drawls out movie-star)

*(Laughs) I guess so! But you get such a kick out of it.*

**Elvis:** Bein' a movie star?

*No, bragging about all your conquests!*

**Elvis:** Naw--no-no--jus' teasin' is all it is. I don't need to brag--it's obvious.

*Good grief--that's what I mean!*

**Elvis:** Truth's truth--can't argue with that.

*Oh boy, what an ego! You know, it's a good thing I know a little more about you than I did, I'd believe you!*

**Elvis:** I don't lie--much. (Snickers)

*Uh-huh, really, truth comes out!*

**Elvis:** Ya know, people tend to think that of me really, an' it's not so--sure I got an ego--but doesn't ever man? Am in the business of lookin' 'the best I can on screen even when it's not the-the best script in town I'm playin' in--but I have to look good anyway, really.

*I know that, it just struck me funny. I know you were teasing--*

**Elvis:** I was--if had got laid, wouldn't of told you, really.

*I wouldn't want to know, really--*

**Elvis:** Really?

*Really, really!*

**Elvis:** Really, really-real---ly?



*Like that word, huh?*

**Elvis:** Really?

*Okay, so what are you doing besides playing with really?*

**Elvis:** Aw--now she's done it! Playin' with--what? Really? (Uses sultry low voice)

*What movie are you starting?*

**Elvis:** It's called--.."Really."--

*Oh, all right. Good-bye Elvis, really.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Okay, I'll be good-I always am. Really.

*When are you coming back to town?*

**Elvis:** I'm in town.

*I mean Los Angeles.*

**Elvis:** Oh--in a few days; goin' to get some sun out here--fry ma brains some, and then I'll be there in a few days. You gonna come by?

*Depends on the weather and the job.*

**Elvis:** If you do, I got two books for you--one of 'em was given to me 'n autographed an' I want it back when you're done readin' it-- Don't write in it or nothin', please.

*When you are home, let me know--I'll try and get by there--after work though.*

**Elvis:** Okay--Did you see the magazine that came out--"Mirror"?

*No, what did you do now?*

**Elvis:** It was a survey thing an' I was No. 2--

*For what?*

**Elvis:** Popularity--with younger fans.

*Who was No. 1?*

**Elvis:** Beatles.

*Well, there are more of them than you, you know! That's not a fair survey because you're just one guy--there's 4 of them!*

**Elvis:** Yeah--haven't had a hit in a while though, makes a difference ya know-- (Said softly; and a bit bitterly.).

*Yeah--but you've had so many hits---and I don't care if they put all four of their best parts together and made one--you'd still be the best looking, have the most sex appeal and the best voice!*

(Silence)

*Struck dumb?*

**Elvis:** No-- Thank you--jus' tryin' to picture what a guy would look like made up of their best parts--

*Oh good grief! Paul is cute--got the best voice of them all.*

**Elvis:** I'm cute.

*No--You aren't--*

**Elvis:** I am.

*Nope.*

**Elvis:** Sure--you said so.

*Changed my mind.*

**Elvis:** Gawd--dammit; first you build me up ‘n then throw me down--

*You are cute--put on a wig and a little lipstick, guys would go for you big time!*

**Elvis:** Shit! (Snorted out.)

*Really, you don't have to worry about being second to anyone Elvis. There isn't anyone out there who could replace you-ever. And that is the truth.*

Really? (Snickers)

*I am not going to play that really game anymore-I'm paying for this call!*

**Elvis:** Oh--hang up ‘n I'll call back, darlin'. Really-- (Snickers)

*{He did, for 45 minutes while he was laying by the pool with a fan and a spray bottle of water "keepin' cool" he said, and joked about being almost naked and worried about burning parts that "hadn't seen the sun in a- while".}*

### **[Later in 1965]**

*Wanda: - and you are doing what?*

**Elvis:** Talkin' to you.

*Okay, is it starting to be cold back there?*

**Elvis:** Back where?

*Memphis.*

**Elvis:** No--skies clear, stars out ‘n jus' kinda nice but might rain tomorrow.

*We have stars also-no fog for a change.*

**Elvis:** I wish I was at the beach-havin' a party or somethin' interestin'--run out of things to do, seems like--

*How many records do you have?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Maybe thousand or so--don' know--

*I heard something about you the other day.*

**Elvis:** What now?

*Oh, you made a donation in town, something about making a donation to an old folk's home.*

**Elvis:** Gawd--where'd you hear that?

*Is it true?*

**Elvis:** (Silence)

*It wasn't in the newspapers-our neighbors have relatives who live in Memphis.*

**Elvis:** Oh, it wasn't here either, eh--it wasn't anythin' much. Just heard that some people were tryin' to get somethin' like that started ‘n seemed like a good idea. We didn't have a car that'd run sometimes--n man, it was no fun tryin' to get 'round.

*It was very nice of you and whether you want to hear it or not, you are a nice guy.*

**Elvis:** No--jus' needed to get rid of some money--

*Un-huh--you lie like a rug too.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Yeah--do huh--a Persian rug--you ever see a real one of them ‘n walk on it?

*Probably not, is it nice?*

**Elvis:** They’re handmade ya know, women do it by hand--(Snickers) that sounds dirty don’t it-I meant they- what do they call it? Weave--you know, like they make cloth only it’s with yarns and so forth. The real ones are wool, made from fine wool an’ all by hand-spin the wool into yarn an’ all that too. Knew someone had some in their house-very pretty but I wouldn’t want ‘em ‘cause I like wall to wall carpet.

*I heard you had white carpet-is that true?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--makes the house look bigger--’n clean too.

*I wouldn’t want to have to keep it clean!*

**Elvis:** People come in an’ do it-

*I heard you rode your motorcycle inside a time or two.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Yeah-daddy said I couldn’t bring that in here-so I showed him it would go through the door an’ come in jus’ fine. (Giggles) Liked to had a fit over that one so, jus’ parked it in the livin’ room.

*You are bad!*

**Elvis:** Huh! I’m fun! (Snickers)

End:

### **{Dreamer Elvis---1960’s}**

(We know he liked to read: kept his mind busy and filled so many hours of waiting. One such book he was reading for the second or third time was Rags of Glory. He began talking about it and had this to say-}

**Elvis:** Its kinda thick but I like ‘em that way so don’t have to go lookin’ for another one real soon. Can read a little one pretty quickly but bigger one’s take some time to think ‘bout an’ maybe learn somethin’ useful.

**Wanda:** *What have you learned so far-if you’ve got the time to get into it, that is.*

**Elvis:** (Soft chuckle) Yeah-know what you mean. “It’s only the young, the very poor, with so much left unseen who die hard.” What does that tell you?

*It’s much sadder to die with so many things left undone in a young life, and poor people often go early for lack of care or over work.*

**Elvis:** That’s good, but doesn’t it say more than that-let me explain it some from my thoughts, okay?

*Go ahead, I’m listening.*

**Elvis:** In our world, those who are young and those who are poor are usually one and the same, not always mind you, but often. For instance, in todays newspaper there was a

story about young men dyin' in this damn war goin' on over there (Vietnam) They were all between the ages of jus' 19 an' 23 an' they were all Army but one who was Navy-what he was doin' there in the fxxxin' damn swamp hole I don't know 'cept maybe he had knowledge of the rubber dingys an' so forth-they use them on account of so much gunfire comin' from the shorelines-place is full of rivers an' swamp land--an all that goes with it. So what that tells you is they are dispensable---commodities that can be replaced. Gawd--got friends with kids' dyin' over there-girls also-for what I'd like to know. Since it's not a war we went in to win-gawd damn fxxxin' political scam an' cause we're doin' somethin' they need to hide with somethin' more serious like killin' our young people! It'd be different if the intent was to win-but it isn't! Ever war we're gonna get in from now on is gonna be like that-not to win-but to make a point or to take somethin' away. Mr. Agnew talked to me 'bout that on the plane was real honest about things an' wantin' to make changes but didn't know if he'd get to do it. On account of so many were benefiting over the way is goin' on. I asked him what he thought 'bout the many youngsters dyin' an' all the killin' of so many civilians. He said he hated it, but that's the way our government and so many benefit-more that we'll ever know. He said in 20 years we'd be doin' it all over an' this time it'd be for energy resources an' after that it'd be for land and people, bodies to climb up over their sweat an' labor. Gawd--he made me feel sick tellin' the things he most likely outta not said but it was me an' he knew I'd keep it to my self--'n not say nothin' public; hard not to really, gawd awful. Wouldn't want to ever be in politics on account of how *things* get to feelin' more important than people an' their ever day needs. Any way, that statement I told you means, that. People don't count 'less they got influence 'n money, 'n friends who have those two and who can make a stink for hidin' things with. He told me I'd make a good 'n for that bein' as how I got both qualifications an' that it would behoove-what does that mean exactly-be-hoove- me to stay clear an' clean or I'd go right into the boilin' pot if they needed a good stink.

*Really-he must have trusted you to say those things-especially now! I like him, I think he is a very intelligent man, and for the people more than some. Guess it's true-huh?*

**Elvis:** He's intelligent-yeah--I-I- it was nice of him come sit with me--I mean--eh...

*Well, you are an intelligent man and besides--you are "him", you know.*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Ya know, never said nothin' 'bout me--what I do--jus' talkin' like--like I was anybody--normal ya know, nice man. Enjoyed it, time went fast--.

*I'm glad he did Elvis, and you are normal--most of the time--*

**Elvis:** (Laughs)--.if-if you say so-- We got to get a good 'un in there to clear this mess up--it ain't gonna happen soon he said. An' we may end up with our tail between our legs an' runnin' like hell! Got a feelin' it ain't gonna be good for Mr. Nixon neither--"

*If you were in the army now and were to be sent there-would you go?*

**Elvis:** Damn sure wouldn't want to-but if I was in an' they sent me, would do my best to live up to the job. I'm no different than any body's son or daughter an' this is my country even if it is somebody's crazy notions puttin' it in jeopardy! Used to be a crack shot--could hit anythin' could see-damn still could with a little practice. Loved *firein'* them big

guns! Sittin' in the tank an' feelin' it shake an' quiver-lord! Like doin' the machine guns also-great sense of power an' mayhem man. Wouldn't be easy to kill some body-but if they were comin' to kill me, I'd do it.

*God would forgive you-He forgives all the fighting men-I believe that-He won't hold killing the enemy against them. There's more to "Thou Shall Not Kill" than what our Bible has-I've read about that-in that book you gave me-*

**Elvis:** Me too, He wouldn't-He gives that option on account of He understands war and the need for it to protect other human beings. But it's not to be taken lightly-countries ought not to be involved in civil war between peoples-it's a natural thing and has to go it's course. Sometimes it's a-a-like the hand of nature--the weak go so the strong can stay. He gives us the ability to make choices an' we make 'em an' then we have to live with 'em and hope not to make the same mistake again. This country is feelin' it's power after bein' a young country-but it's not yet ready to understand the other countries who have been a round thousands of years-hundreds more' n this one. But like a young stud bull-it's feelin' it's self an' not thinking. Guess it's like Karma, this country has to over come its Karma an' that of its roots as well. We had our civil war an' look what happened-had to spend all this time an' years to come, to except the results of that war. It ain't over yet-will come back around an' it'll be like the South risin' up again. God help us! Only next time it's gonna be over seas an' here as well-too many mixtures of people here now an' only gonna grow. One day, we'll all be havin' to learn a new language--or else.

*Which do you think it will be-Russian or another?*

**Elvis:** Gonna be--eh--most likely the language of Spain I think, 'cause they are the fastest growth rate in our continent-an' bein' as how they are just off our Southern coast line-South America an' all, plus we got Mexico sittin' a neighbor too. We got so much to learn-an' so little time to do it.

*If there were a war here-and you were recalled-would you go?*

**Elvis:** I'm not in the Reserves- but if they needed me, somethin' I could do, yeah if it was our country in danger. I'd be there -on the front line. This is my country and my people; damn right I'd be there! But not as a-a-a token entertainer type; I'd be wantin' to have the full armor, weapons an' throwin' grenades! Ain't no fun standin' 'round holdin' a rifle an' marchin' back un forth, let me tell you! No damn fun--especially in a blizzard!

*Nope, it wouldn't be. Did you have to do KP and clean up too?*

**Elvis:** Regular Army honey, 'n I did jus' what they all did-once had to clean the latrine--- with ma toothbrush on account of the Sergeant thought I wasn't bein' respectful-had gum an' didn't get it put out fast enough-so he made me swallow it, do push ups an' then on cleanin' duty. (Laughs).

*How many push ups?*

**Elvis:** 50 'n then made me do 25 more one arm ones-he didn't think I could do it-but could of done more easy enough. So that's why he gave me latrine duty--with my

toothbrush. (Laughs) Guess didn't 'spect a hillbilly singin' fool to have the ba--guts to do it! (Giggles)

*I heard you had to do lots of push ups and jogging in place too.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Well--they had to test my "mettle" ya know, and then when they saw I wasn't no pantywaist, it got better.

*But if there was a war here, you would go right in or wait until they called you?*

**Elvis:** (Thoughtfully) Think I'd wait a while, but if there was a reason for me to think I'd be useful, I'd sign on again for my country, my people an' my pride--too.

*Well Elvis, if that happens, don't be surprised if there aren't a lot of people between you and that signing up! You'd be struggling to get past them!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) It'd be done 'fore anybody knew it honey, if I was gonna do somethin' like that--wouldn't be goin' through any crowds. I'd just call 'em up an' say, Elvis Presley reportin' for duty, Sir; an' they'd send a plane for me! Mr. Agnew said that--an' it's true. He said he'd heard of me in the army an' how they wanted real bad for me to choose to reenlist an' stay on account of I'd made such a good instructor as the fellas would listen to me. You know could have been a lifer an' trained the women--that'd been a good job for me--huh?

*Good grief--Yah--you would think of that! They wouldn't have had any trouble getting women to sign up!*

**Elvis:** (Snickers and laughs) Ummmm--wonder what the rules are for misconduct in their ranks?

*For Pete's sake! Most likely they wouldn't tell you--and do things to merit some personal time-punishment or otherwise!*

**Elvis:** Private instruction--I could do that! (Laughs) Some of 'em sure look good in those uniforms--always loved a gal in a uniform--specially a nurse!"

*Leave it to you to think of something to get out of it!*

**Elvis:** Uhummm--get 'em out of it alright-- (Snickers)

*How did you ever get through that service time! It must have been rough--*

**Elvis:** I was jus' doin' the time, wasn't all that bad really--had ma--family come an' some friends--un people were nice--ya know. Gawd--seemed like a-a-a lifetime ago now--a dream kinda--Man, thought--thought--'bout comin' home all time--lord-lord--

*I'm glad you made it and you came back--everything worked out for-- (you).*

(End of tape. He was speaking so softly I lost the stick on phone thing on the floor and couldn't reach it. He mentioned knowing a family who had two daughters who went to Vietnam, one had been badly injured while there and was in a US military hospital for rehab, and the other had taken her place in Vietnam- both were surgical nurses.)

My husband's young nephew went to Vietnam -he was there for a couple of years in the heat of battle and like many soldiers, was having a hard time staying mentally cool and collected under very trying circumstances, once several of them and he, was lost in a

swamp, fearing snipers, snakes and other swamp creatures as they tried to get back to their camp. They ran out of food and ate wild things they found there-and couldn't shoot game because it would alert the enemy to them. A little later it all came to a full head when some of his buddies were blown up, one who was right beside him - one round through the helmet and lost his life in our nephew's arms. He needed to return to the states, but couldn't get leave for eight or nine more months due to the need for soldiers in that area; Jimmie's sister was frantic for her son, she knew he HAD to get out of there or something awful would happen. Elvis said he knew an officer," kinda high up" and he'd see if he could talk to him; Jimmie's nephew was home several months earlier than was scheduled – it saved his life as the mental confusion and distress over all he'd seen happening in that terrible struggle for power going on over there was overwhelming that young man.

Elvis made no promises, in fact said he didn't know if it would help, but he'd try, and he assured, *"I'll pray for guidance."* We are all forever grateful that he prayed for "guidance". So many times, for many reasons and for people all over the world, some who had no idea at all that Elvis was spiritual, or that he prayed for them and prayed for guidance for himself before every show, every recording session that through music and his vocals he could touch their hearts, give them peace and a break from every day cares. Everything he heard about where he felt prayer would help, he prayed, sometimes asking those with him to join hands and pray with him. Many times he was on his knees praying beside his bed, praying in the back corner of a room, including restrooms, in his car going to a "gig", standing just aside the curtain before going on stage, hands folded before him, fingers touching, head slightly bowed, or just gazing straight ahead--*praying for guidance*. Thank you from all of us, Elvis. *Really.*

### **[1966-"I don't want to get married---"]**

**Elvis:** Don't want to get married--I'm jus' a baby- too young to get married 'n tied down with all that—Hell, can't keep my own self how 'um I gonna take care of a-a-a Lord--wife? Even the word's scary! (Laughs) Ya know, see, a man's got to have the -eh--courage to make a lifelong commitment to-to jus' one woman--That's God's law man, 'n this boy's not gonna break it! Have to be somethin' real serious if I was to break a vow that was made 'fore God. Don't want no flammin' arrows throwed my way!

*Is it true that you think Jesus might have been married?*

**Elvis:** We can't say for sure, can we? It's missing from our Bible-quite a lot actually gone--er--not put in the Christian Bible. There's more-enough for three or four Bibles that's not been translated yet. You know, they got only 3 men able to translate that ancient language the Bible is written in? Only 3-an' one of them's real old, 'n the other'n

got one foot in the grave already so you know it ain't goin' quick translating anything. It's like-- maybe the Roman Catholic Pope doesn't want people knowin' what's in there that they didn't allow in the first go 'round. You know Catholics don't even read or have a real Bible? See, they just got what their allowed--not encouraged to read the Bible for themselves. That's kind of-of like discrimination--is that the word--no--Like-like deprivation--that's it! Not allowin' them to have the full doctrine-an' even us Christians don't have it either, we got their version of it in King James. Man, there's a lot of sacred stuff we don't get to know..."

*Really-that's what you think?*

**Elvis:** Realllyyy--that's what I know!

*Okay, I know there are many parchment tablets, big pages of them, not translated or even been read by anyone-in a big underground vault somewhere over there.*

**Elvis:** Yeah--under the Pope's place--the Cathedral over there--where they got underground vaults and where they used to have prisoners of the church--mean bastards back then too--tortured and all that. Now though, storage for sacred things--in controlled environment they say. God would love to go see that stuff!

*They'd let you-if you asked.*

**Elvis:** Think so? Maybe I might do that---

*Be sure to take a camera you can hide easily--they might put you in the dungeon and torture you!*

**Elvis:** Hummmmm--be okay if it was a female doin' it.

*Oh good grief! You would say that!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Well, better to think of what- of what could be the good side of somethin' I always say--and what's a little whippin' between friends?

*Oh no! Don't tell me that-not you!*

**Elvis:** Okay, won't tell you. (Snickers)

*I'm not going to laugh or think about that.*

**Elvis:** Yeah, me neither--too hot for that kind of thinkin' today an' ain't nobody here anyway--jus' me--all by myself.

*Poor thing;-pitiful.*

**Elvis:** Actually, um glad. It's nice to relax and jus' do what I want once in a while--and then you called an' I'm jus' layin' here under the fan with a spray bottle to keep cool-an' tryin' to get a tan. Damn bugs are drivin' me nuts--flys after water or somethin' some kind of little bee lookin' things.

*You are sitting outside in the sun--good heavens--aren't you afraid you'll vaporize!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs loudly) Could happen! Goin' to start that f--in' movie next week an' if I'm tan don't have so much sh-- painted on my face!

*Well, what can we do about the plastered together hair?*

**Elvis:** What do you mean--what's wrong with it--it's the style.

*Elvis, it looks like it's been shellacked over and it never moves--a hair helmet stuck on your head--you have beautiful hair--why is it stuck down?*



**Elvis:** That's the way they fix it, it's kinda like a-a movie thing--I hate it also, at home don't do none of that-let it go where ever it wants. They do that in the makeup department-decide how it's gonna be an' I jus' go with it. What the hell-all sh--Anyway! *I'll be looking forward to seeing your hair natural and hanging in your face some day.*

**Elvis:** Hop a plane baby, an' I'll let it hang any where you want--it's pretty long too, need a hair cut-past my nose. (He said in that sultry voice.)

*Wow-that is long!*

**Elvis:** Did you hear me?

*I heard you-the only place I want that hair to hang is on your head-naturally!*

**Elvis:** Damn! Thought maybe I had your number, guess not this time--but still got time--(talking to himself softly but so I can hear-he liked to toss out those lines, trying to get a "rise" out of whom ever was on the receiving end.)

*Elvis, is it true you took your first songs from the black singers you liked?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--changed 'em some, faster, skipped some words a little--yeah--got more air play for 'em – worked out good for them too. Liked them guys, they got soul in their music-that's what I wanted--just did it faster an' moved some--

*And you were white.*

**Elvis:** Guess so--look it, don't I? (Laughs)

*But you didn't sound it!*

**Elvis:** Yeah-they fixed that quick once got to the big time-thought that woman was gonin' to pull my tongue out and whip it with a ruller or somethin' for she was done makin' me talk right to her ears. Lord-hated goin' there! Made ma belly sore punchin' me so hard-she did-tellin' me, from down here MR. Presley--down here! An' she'd punch me in the gut! She did that to make me feel where the air was comin' from--and once I got it, then it was easy. Another fella taught me how to do the background 'n other sounds--used that too-like gonna gag --man, lots of things used in singin'--like I do. Even havin' a cold helps.

*Did you ever have any singing lessons?*

**Elvis:** Not so's you could say professional...but did have some help learnin' to hold notes longer... 'n vibrato control some, less quiver, an' can sing bass some...more'n before learnin' a few things to- to help me sing the way I --eh- want to, ya know, with feelin' ... (He told me that Charlie Hodge had helped him learn to sing with more power, how to breathe and hold notes better. He mentioned how much Charlie knew, had had training and he felt gratitude to have Charlie come into his life and be there "to help me improve". People have said Elvis didn't have lessons; well, he did not professionally etc but he did let people know that his friend Charlie had been one of his teachers.)

*Really--I know you get some real emotion on them, and some of them I love to hear.*

**Elvis:** Jus' some-who else you like?

*Oh--Dean Martin and Jimmie likes that guy who does "Tiny Bubbles".*

**Elvis:** Yeah--me too. But blues is my favorite, 'n gospel. Hey, I got to go in--startin' to sting an' that's burnin' --an' I'm greasy--got to get in the shower or the dog's gonna start eyein' me for supper!

*Okay, take care of yourself, bye--*

**Elvis:** Bye-bye darlin'--talk to you in a few--tell 'em hi for me. Um gonna be in L.A. Couple months--call me 'n come by some time--

*I will, have a good trip, see you later.*

End.

### ***10/65 –Nightmares---***

*Elvis often had “nightmares” and sometimes they seemed real- he was trying to go to sleep and spoke of one-*

**Elvis:** Did you ever wake up thinking you had died some horrible bloody way?

*No-never did-did you?*

**Elvis:** Yeah. So real man, it was the smell of-of blood an' had to feel to see if had a-a wound. Felt that I'd been like maybe shot or somethin' big hit me in the gut. Had to feel--so real 'n the smell gawd, was about to throw up right then 'n scared me--I felt--felt fear, smelled fear an' had to run outside.

*Wow, you really had a nightmare!*

**Elvis:** Yeah--nightmare--somethin'--it was so real--the blood feelin' on my hands--the sticky feeling an' then the--the smell. Gawd hate smellin' blood--specially my own! (Soft laugh-giggles) An' too, my--eh--I felt like it happened, ya know--in my body.

*Guess you were really into the dream.*

**Elvis:** I think it was more. I went back some time in--in a--a 'nother life an' was there an' it happened--ever had one of them?

*No--I've had bad dreams but about life now--what was going on in my life. Not like you.*

**Elvis:** Ohh... (Silence)

*Did it go fast?*

**Elvis:** No--no--not fast; sat outside an' thought, tryin' to remember but it just isn't there--outta touch. I think I been here before--lots of times maybe why I got ties to so many people 'n places kinda...I was here not long ago--one with the universe type thing. I...died too soon....'n it was an accident but serious like bein' poisoned.

*Who were you--any ideas?*

**Elvis:** Not really--that mean much--an' actor maybe--kinda think so an' why I want it so bad this time an' it's not the same. Really--

*A guy?*

**Elvis:** Yeah---

*Famous?*

**Elvis:** Kinda yeah--but it was on account of roles--not the guy himself, like--like this time.

*Oh--it is the guy this time--*

**Elvis:** Maybe; don't know why, really.

*Shall I make a list?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) a list? Naw... It's okay. (Kind of laughs)

*I can you know, a long one too!*

**Elvis:** Really... (Snickers again)

*Really, but I wouldn't want to embarrass you!*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) No-no-me either...thank you honey, very much.

*Well, I guess you should try to sleep some...Do you still get up and walk around in your sleep?*

**Elvis:** Eh...yeah, sometimes...depends on-on what...whats goin' on, ya know....always did. Better though...been awhile now...

### ***Experiences...of the “Weird” and the “Strange”***

(For several years we lived less than half a block from the Garden Grove freeway-it was directly across from our front door view, higher than our roof line, and busy, sometimes noisy, but did not have as much traffic use then as today and we had about a two city block view of on coming traffic. One late evening I was sitting on our porch steps, Jimmie was due home any time from his swing shift. I was watching cars going West on the freeway when I saw a bright red Chevrolet sports convertible zipping through traffic. As I watched it suddenly appeared to have sideswiped a larger car, the little convertible smacked into the center divider and pieces of it flew up into the air, the rest slid into traffic on the right and that caused one car trying to avoid the collision to hit the guard rail and flip into a water drainage cement ditch below the freeway on our side. Almost the same time, the little convertible must have been hit or it hit two other larger vehicles. It was made of molded plastics and in that time period it was not as sturdy a plastic as that used today; pieces of it flew into the air from every angle...

It all happened so quickly, but to me it was more like in “slow motion” and the noise was tremendous. Traffic was stopping, a little way behind the accident was a police cruiser; the policeman came running down the right side of the freeway and jumped over the railing; he saw that the driver of the car standing on it's nose in the cement ditch was getting out of his car and seemed to be doing alright so he sprinted toward the remains of the little sports car. As this was happening I thought, “That driver has to be seriously hurt...or dead” almost the same instant, out of the corner of my eye I saw something moving quickly - it was two, kind of faded looking human forms; they were “floating” and moving fast and as they passed the whiteness of the cement ditch I could “see through them”. They came right to me; I felt them, sensed confusion and fear around me. Though it all happened so quickly, I realized they were “ghost spirits” from the accident and at almost the same instant, I heard the officer loudly say, “We've got two dead here!” That hardly entered my ears when as suddenly as they came, the two “spirit bodies”

zipped back the way they had come and were out of my view in seconds. They didn't return. I was shaken by how suddenly the entire episode occurred and that I had "felt" and "seen" those spirit forms although I had since childhood had some "unusual events" that I later learned were called "psychic" in nature. They had mostly involved animals I had spent time with though a few times I did not "know" the animal, and a few relatives with whom I had a close relationship growing up. Such things I had accepted but that car accident experience was the first I'd had with "strangers" and I wanted to know why "they" came to me.

I told Elvis about it; he listened quietly and then calmly stated, "You called them; even if you didn't know it". He went on to say they recognized me as being "in tune" and a "safe place" for them at that moment. And for me not to be scared if I was "contacted", it was a "gift and as such it ought to be treasured." He said, "I knew you were like that, special and gifted spiritually." I didn't feel "gifted, or think that particular episode "special" as it was unnerving and heart breaking at the same time, and it bothered me. Later on I went with Jimmie's older sister Joa who *was* very "gifted", to psychic classes and learned more about such things. I didn't want to develop it, but I did want to understand more about being in control of my own "gifts" if that were possible. It was - and I am. ( Now, I try not to look strangers in the eyes when in grocery stores; they don't start telling me their "life stories" or fears and problems and I can get in and out quickly!)

Later, Elvis read several passages from different parts of the Bible (**The Book of Corinthians**, that he said was "full of psychic and paranormal information") to me that scripture "named" those "gifts" we are given: some to be able to "see the spirits", some who "discern the future" and those who can "reach other people" and bring about the good in all things. He explained it so well I felt better after talking with him, and I wasn't "afraid" of being "visited by unknown to me departed spirits" ever again. And a few times there were "visits" but always for a specific reason, and most often "messages" for someone else. Those messages sometimes came in "picture form", usually whoever brought them didn't "speak" to me in words, but I "in some way *heard*" their message, the same way that it happens in my dreams...often there is no spoken language...but I "hear" the message given. I know to some, this sounds "far out" and totally crazy; if you have not experienced it, you can't understand; we can't say "what is or is not, if we have not experienced it" Elvis said, and that *is a very true fact*. We began calling each other "*strange*" and "*weird*" and could laugh about it. But, the strangest and most weird of all, is to have a "voice speaking to you from what appears to be "like a speaker of some kind" coming out of your chest! *Now that is weird!* It happened to me – once. I told, Elvis he laughed...then said, "God has his ways--n a sense of humor also!)

He told me about a "ghost" that he had seen at the foot of his bed when he was ill and had stomach flu and running a fever. He said his ears were so stopped up and he had

a “rotten” headache. He couldn’t sleep, and was just “lyin’ there hopin’ to die” he hurt so much. He was keeping his eyes covered because even the yard lights outside made his eyes hurt but then it began to get really bright in one corner of the room at the foot of his bed. He thought he was “seein’ things” because he was feeling so bad; then he could see the outline of someone standing there, and they looked like somebody from the “East”, wearing a shawl and long sleeved flowing outfit. He realized it was a woman, she was blond and she smiled at him. He didn’t know for sure if he was really “awake or not”, but he was positive of what he saw. She didn’t speak to him directly, but was softly chanting in some language he didn’t recognize and she had something in her hands that she was waving gently back and forth above him. He “kept closin’ ma eyes tryin’ to see if she’d go away, like maybe it was just an illusion” from his mind because he knew he had fever, but didn’t think it was that high to make him hallucinate something like her. She smiled at him and then slowly the image and light faded away. And he couldn’t remember if he went right to sleep or not, but he felt better the next day and he thought she had come to “heal me”. And it might sound weird or something he said, but he wished she’d “come visit me now”. He related that he “didn’t see or hear much” from those who “visited me when I was jus’ little” and it was because of the things he had to keep up with, his career and all that went with it. It “got in the way” and he wished he could learn how to “manage ever’ thing” so it wouldn’t “tie up my mind so much”. And he had enough trouble keeping his “feet on the ground an’ my heart in the right place”. He said he tried to keep his heart close to God and that prayer was the “key to that door”.

As time passed, and he was gone; I stopped trying to use those “gifts” and just as he said, “unused talents given by God, go wasted if one doesn’t use them, shine ‘em up now and then, ‘n keep ‘em workin’ right.” Some people can “read” cards and I gave it a try; it was scary when a pack of paper cards can “reveal” things, especially if it’s a person you don’t know or have details of their life, and “the cards reveal personal things” that I would rather not know or discuss. Its difficult knowing some things are going to occur...and you can’t tell most people, because they don’t listen, or they go “off the deep end”. It was upsetting to me and I stopped exploring that “gift” years ago, though occasionally something still “gets through” even with that “door closed.” I don’t think I will be chastised by the Lord for not fully utilizing his “gifts” when it’s my time to go...after all He gave us free will, ensured by his Son’s death on the cross. And as Elvis said many times, “God might turn his head to avoid seein’ us flounderin’ around makin’ fools of ourselves, but he ain’t gonna let us go too far-he’s got brakes...’un he’ll use ‘em!”

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**Psalms 9:11, “For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”**

**Psalms 9:11 Modern translation: “For He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.”**

As Elvis would say, “Could it be more clear?”

Elvis explained that when Jesus went to the cross for our sins, it meant that he was taking all blame for us, that once we accepted him as our Savior, who took upon himself all wrong doings done by us, so we would be saved, once we accepted Christ Jesus as our redeemer we were saved for life. We might slip, we might be seduced and the Devil would try he said, God would always look the other way, giving us a chance to correct our ways, because we are His children, and He is our forgiving and loving Father. Once saved always saved, Elvis said. “It’s plain in there, read the books of Corinthians and study what it says. Man, it’s plain if you understand what is written in the way it was meant to be. People will always be tempted, Christ was tempted, he accepted and went to the cross so we don’t have to; we are forgiven but that don’t mean we can go doin’ wrong and not tryin’ to follow His teachings. It just means that he loved us so much he went to the cross to cover our sins so we would be aware of how much we are loved. Love is everything; you can’t hurt somebody you love as you love yourself. That my friend is the number one Commandment; follow it and you will find joy in life.”

Elvis was a very intelligent and thoughtful man who trusted the word of God for all his needs; he never failed to give thanks and credit to Jesus in conversation, in prayer and publicly acclaimed his belief in God before his fans and anyone reading or listening to what he said. And Elvis admitted that he was a sinner, had not always lived as he should have. He also said that God was willing at anytime to accept his children’s apology and HE would never turn his face away from anyone trying to repent their sins; and Elvis usually would quickly say, “Thank God! Cause I ain’t no saint!”

Guardian Angels

Elvis thought he had at least two guardian angels that kept him safe-and felt that he had always had them; he also believed that he had been here (earth) many times, as different men, through many years time. He spoke of several incidents throughout his life where he nearly died or was in danger and something or someone saved him. He mentioned nearly dying when he was born, and again a few years later when he was very ill and his parents were afraid for his life. And then several times involving airplanes, cars and during his stint in Germany in the army he was close to dying while on duty. He said he had been at places where he thought he would be killed before he could escape, but help came at the last minute to rescue him. He spoke of having health issues that were serious, and only a miracle saved him. He said, “My life is a miracle-no doubt about it, God looks after me!” He often commented that he did not understand why he had been so “lucky” and he sincerely hoped that he was worthy of being in “this place, at this time”. And he felt that in this life one of his “angels is my brother, he never left me; he jus’ needed to be unseen in order to look after me, maybe.”

In his last year of life he mused and stewed over the reasons for his health issues, finally he came to the conclusion that maybe it was “my cross to bear to help keep my feet on the ground and my head out of the clouds”. He was referring to the fame and adulation he experienced daily because of the enormous popularity he had acquired, and that perhaps the fact he had physical problems health wise was to “sort of be a brake to remind me that I am only a human being, like everyone else, no more and no better.” And he joked that “it damn sure works!”

Elvis: “Angels can fly because they take themselves so lightly.” (Good enough to “repeat”!)

He made some comments about he didn’t think Angels actually had wings on their backs, but they could transport themselves about and people who saw this way back then couldn’t imagine how they would fly unless they were like birds and had wings. He thought angels might have been from outter space and were people who had developed power to fly about maybe.

And he decided that the Angels could not do all the things they might want to do and be burdended with keeping “their wings intact and in shape.” It was funny, but it did make sense! He said he had not ever seen a being present their self to him with wings either-then proceeded to look back through his life and count how many “beings” he might have seen. When I asked him what they looked like his reply was “People, mostly.” Then he began to read something in the Bible about angels from “out there” looking after humans on earth, coming down in forms like earthly humans and talking to them and even to “finding earth women lovely, taking them for their wives etc...thus we humans were evolving with their help. The guy was really interesting to talk with, especially when he got into some of his religious ideas (he said it was not religious really, it was history) and began to discuss some of the things he felt were the correct meanings etc; he had studied enough books, I listened and learned quite a bit through his eyes.

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Collage by Maia, ancient faces & Elvis, who knew that people had compared his profile to some of the statues of ancient times; he also had made comments of feeling as “if I been here many times, an’ in many locations.” He felt when he first “laid eyes on Graceland” that it was supposed to be my home”. Unusual too, is that the “lions” soon were sitting “on guard” before the entrance into his home. Always he would say that “Graceland is my home, I want to be there.”

Elvis was selected as one of the **Outstanding Men** by the **Jaycees** and the ceremony was held in Memphis (most all fans know about this award but maybe not how much it affected him). It was a beautiful moment in his life, for him especially because for most of his life, even after he became famous, he was put down, called names and scoffed at for his style music, and for the type of movies he had been in. He had been acclaimed for his musical talents and entertainment skills but this award was for *the man*, not the entertainer and it touched him deeply. He said he was nervous because he “had to make an acceptance speech” and he had no idea how to go about doing that. He was actually scared, so much so he was sweating bullets and had dry mouth! Just from thinking about it; I said, you go out in front of thousands of people, good grief a few dozen won’t be anything like that!



And he said “ that’s the point, I’m singin’ out there, entertaining ‘em; but I’m not used to to talkin’ in front of a bunch of folks, bein’ jus’ ME...especially not the type that will be there!” Then he went on and on about their accomplishments, their being in high places in their public ventures and he was just a singer. I have to say it was pretty funny though I never laughed; I knew he was seriously scared as silly as he sounded. The greatest thing about the getting award turned out to be the folks he was worried about meeting were impressed with his honesty, his willingness to express his thoughts on God and the fact that he was sincere, open and intelligent. And *told him so!* It made his “day” and probably for months afterward, warmed his heart and lifted his spirit. And he was so very proud of the trophy he received. Aptly enough, it was one hand from above reaching down to touch the fingers of the one reaching up-exactly as Elvis did from stages all over the United States! He loved that statue, took it with him when he traveled so he could show it to his guests. I’m surprised he didn’t show it to his audiences!

I don’t think that his close family members, or Priscilla really appreciated how deeply moved and touched Elvis felt receiving that award, being included among those he felt “inferior to”. After all, they “lived with the guy” not so much the “image”; apparently they were “tired of hearing” him talking about it and perhaps he felt “unappreciated” so he had to do something to prove he wasn’t “jus a singer of songs”. I think he just wanted to do something important, in some way and they didn’t “understand”. It was shortly after that time that he took off alone, flew to Washington DC to try to meet then President Nixon, and he bought a ticket using a credit card, got on a plane alone and headed off to do it all, alone without guards and no protection,(other than the gun in his boot). He had a good time, everyone he met helped him, men stepped up to protect him when among people, others left what they were doing and went along to take care of him, on the plane people looked after him. He had no luggage, nothing with him so people gave him things in case he needed them. Flight attendants kept him comfortable and fed... Finally, he called for Jerry Schilling, a level headed guy who worked for him to fly out to meet him with a couple other guys he felt were “okay to meet the President etc” and knew “how to act in public”

as he put it later on. I think Elvis felt misunderstood by his family, so he proved himself by doing the unthinkable...it worked, he felt more “respected” and less thought of as “spoiled, rotten child man”. And he proved he was worth something. **The President of the United States** welcomed him into the oval office and even “liked him” once they met! (It surely left an impression with his family-but maybe not the one he wanted.)

(To read more details regarding the Jaycee’s ceremonies go to: [www.elvislightedcandle.org/forums](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org/forums) index and the **General** topic. You will be glad you did!)

Elvis did appreciate being treated “like normal, jus’ a regular guy” and etc but it was difficult for people to do that, because he was ELVIS though he couldn’t see that once he was at home etc. Life was hard on them all, dealing with ELVIS constantly even though they knew him off stage that was always “there”. No doubt about it. Personally, I don’t know how he managed to stay so “normal (for him it was that)” and still turn “it on” and become the super star for the fans. He took it well, handled it so easily, as if “born to do it”- but then, wasn’t he?

At least there were a few around him who tried to keep his life “normal” as much as possible; that kept him sane; he said...to be “able to come home, shut the door and just let it all fall a-way” He also said the only way to have some time to himself was “if I lock the f...door ‘n ignore ‘em...” Which he did, sometimes for several days at a time... that must have drove some of them... to sort of the “foaming at the mouth” kind of upset.... Maybe that’s why he checked under the furniture for “planted “bugs”?”

Charlie Hodge said when speaking to a group of people who had come to hear him talk about his times with Elvis, that there were times when Elvis would not open his door or acknowledge their knocking on it to speak to him. He did tell them he did not want to be bothered “unless the house is on fire or somebody is dying”! So if they thought “it was important” they wrote notes and stuck them under his door. Occasionally, it worked but not often. He also related that Elvis liked to have personal time alone, to “renew his spirit and relax”. He said Elvis carried books around with him from

Memphis to LA and back; he also carried a Bible with him nearly everywhere and that “he was always reading it or books of metaphysical and spiritual nature”. Charlie was a loyal friend who did his best to be there when Elvis needed him. After Elvis’ death Charlie steadfastly upheld Elvis’ dignity, speaking in Elvis’ defense against the many that “dumped their trash in public”, some of whom delighted in “trashing” Charlie before Elvis was gone and more gleefully, afterward.

“Truth shines” said Elvis “look for the light!” Charlie’s was very bright!

We miss you Charlie, but we’ll see you again and you’ll be singing in that choir with Elvis. See ya there! Oh yeah, I have not taken any “wooden nickels”! Thanks for the warning.....

Two good friends having fun! I love the “clasped hands” on the microphone; instead of using a stand, Elvis let Charlie hold the microphone while he “attempted to play the guitar and sing...at the same time”, as Elvis put it.



505





Arriving at the San Bernardino Hilton Hotel before doing a concert that night; Linda Thompson is behind him, Jerry Schilling at her side behind Elvis, his father's head of white hair is visible as is a bit of Joe Esposito's face. Elvis is receiving a bouquet of flowers from a soon to be concert guest. Jimmie's brother Ken took the photograph used here. What I notice in this picture is the fact that none of the people with Elvis appear to be watching to see who or what is going on around Elvis right at that moment- they did not know the person giving him the flowers - nor the photographer standing right behind the delivery. Odd, I thought then- and now. Ken said there were more than a dozen people behind him and several more around the parking lot and back entry where Elvis' party was entering. Elvis had been getting many threats of harm to himself and his family and did- for most of his career as a concert performer and especially in his last few years.

Elvis said it was a major production just to get outside his property lines most of the time; but he did manage to get out after dark and go places and do things quite often though he still had a "small army" of men to keep an eye on things, and people. Sometimes he would say, "it's not worth the effort tryin' to get somethin' or do somethin' an' I tell 'em to go on, have some fun, go home, whatever..." He was referring to his men, he knew

they had to be on “duty” if he were out with them in public; he said, “they need some time away from me – an’ I need it also.”

After meeting **Dick Grob** who was a police officer in Palm Springs, Elvis hired him to work security, to be in charge of working out the plans for arriving and leaving, getting to and from jobs and in general, he was Security Chief and Elvis thought he was “good at his job, “thorough” he said, “he doesn’t miss a thing, I needed a guy like him for goin’ on the road, un’ every where we’ve been.”

Dick Grob has been called many things by several people, made to look like a “fool” or a “rip off artist” etc. The fact remains that the trouble he went to making sure of details about all the travel for tours and hotels and motels and ins and outs of being security chief for such a “mob” of people including Elvis, his family members, his girl friends and other friends and then all those working on stage with Elvis...Dick Grob did a good job. He gave Elvis peace of mind and he did his best to make sure security was intact everywhere they went. For all his hard work and time put into doing a good job, he deserves better press than he’s had since Elvis left. I think that Elvis was satisfied and even pleased with Mr. Grob. Elvis never once said a bad word to me about anything that he had done; that fact can’t be said about his “naysayers”!

As for things that have come out and been told since Elvis’ death, I don’t know anything about any of them, especially regarding Graceland or those persons who were living and visiting there when Elvis left us. I do know that Mr. Presley depended on Mr. Grob to help handle the crowds and the many who came in droves with hands out claiming they were supposed to get money or etc and that Elvis had “promised” they would.

I have never met formally Mr. Grob but did see him around occasionally at concerts though we never spoke more than a “hello”. My conclusions come from what few things Elvis mentioned when he was here; *not* what we heard and saw happening after concerts were over and Elvis was “holded up in his room”.

This next photo is from one of his last concerts-he was not well, but he still had that smile and he still wanted to please his fans. He was giving it all, unfortunately he wasn’t able to perform in the style that made him so popular, but he made up for it in the tremendous vocalizing of his songs. He never failed to get a standing ovation when he performed “How Great Thou Art”....

The last concert for the television special that was released to be shown after his death.





Elvis gave me a photo of himself and co-star (he said “stand in”) (I think it is **Evyone Craig** who later portrayed “Bat Girl” in “Bat Man” films). I didn’t see him sign the photo, but it could be he did. He would send me various studio photos from his films after I asked for them, where to get some etc so many times; they came with the return address of Col. Parker’s MGM Offices most of the time. Occasionally, I would get one from Elvis, usually they would be funny or he’d write something on them- most of those were lost in the van theft incident. Elvis used a “hated word” about the tan Army “outfit” in “Kissin’ Cousins” saying he thought he looked “fat”. And he added a “Please, don’t give it to anyone” (meaning a fan of his). There are several of his “guys” working scenes in the “Kissin’ Cousin’s” film, and in many of his other films as well. Red West turned those “spots” into having a movie career appearing in several other films, one being “Roadhouse” starring **Patrick Swazye**.

Elvis asked me one day what I did with all the photo’s he’d sent and that he knew I had, I told him I kept some favorites but most of them I gave to people who didn’t have any photos of him and who were fans of his at heart. He was silent a moment and then said a softly muttered, “Oh” and changed the subject. I think he was a bit surprised and I hoped, pleased. I always received some pictures from his films until he stopped making any films. I sure wish I had asked for some from “This is Elvis” done in Vegas! But that wasn’t a studio production typical movie so....

### ***Las Vegas, 1970-- Speaking of Lisa Marie---***

**Elvis:** She’s growin’ so, hard to believe she’s already a big kid, ya know, talkin’ an’ ever thing, goin’ ‘round sayin’ Daddy this, ‘n Daddy that--ya know, she calls me Elvis!

*She calls you Elvis-well, she hears everyone else call you that.*

**Elvis:** Yah, but it’s funny, she’ll come up to me an’ she’ll say, “Ev--is--eh she can’t say my name right, n’ she’ll she say, Al.vus--Ev.us--” (Laughs happily.)

*(Laughs) She calls you Evus!*

**Elvis:** Yah-uh-huh--it’s really cute. I’ll say, I’m your daddy, not Av-us--I’m your daddy. She’ll say, okay daddy--Alv.us--! (Chuckles) Man, it’s funny! Ya know what she done last week, when ah’s home, she came in, when I came in, ‘n I’m on the phone, ‘n she comes in ‘n she’s standin’ there, she wants to ask me somethin’, got somethin’ she wants to show me, an’ I’m not payin’ any attention to her; she comes up and she stands there ya know, an’ I’m still not payin’ any attention to her, an’ you know what she did, ya know what that ornery little heifer did!

*No-what she’d do?*

**Elvis:** She hauled off an’ kicked me in the leg, damn near broke my shin bone, ya know. (He said she was wearing hard soled shoes for walking.)

*She kicked you!*

**Elvis:** Yeah, she wanted to get my attention, an--an' I wasn't payin' any attention an' I don't--I forbid her to come in an' interrupt me, by talkin' to me or somethin' ya know, when I'm on the phone. She's to be quiet until I say, excuse me; let me talk to Lisa, till I ask her. An' an' eh--she-she-- (Giggles) she kicked me in the leg, damn near broke my leg--but it got my attention!

*I bet it did!*

[He laughs that wonderful happy laugh--]

Elvis told me that he wanted to give his little girl a “firm foundation in life”, wanted to be sure that she knew there was more to living than just acquiring “things because things don't last; love, kindness and faith nourishes the spirit- and that lasts forever”.

**1973 Elvis is being philosophical about his life, past and future and explained why he was “pretty” to his little daughter.**

*Wanda: So what you're saying, women have always been a big influence on you?*

**Elvis:** It's true for every man--women give us life, take care of us, and teach us- an' then they cut us loose to make it on our own. Un we spend our time tryin' to find a replacement for all that-really. For every man there's a woman out there 'n we got to find her.

*Okay--so you guys are looking for a replica of your--mother?*

**Elvis:** No--That's not what I said! We-We're lookin' for a woman who will take care of us, teach us from her perspective and help us make it out there in the big--world. Understand?

*And you think they or women in general, fulfill that need?*

**Elvis:** They fill a need--all right! (Snickers) An' we all got that! Lordy do we!

*Yeah--so you say. And after all this time, you're still looking?*

**Elvis:** Now--guess so. But--don't think that's goin' to be my reason though--

*Uh-huh--so now it's going to be fun and games for Elvis?*

**Elvis;** I like women--jus' don't want to--to--commit to anyone forever-not again. Learned ma lesson well--don't need to have anyone tryin' to re-educate me at this point in my life. Man, I got too much to do, think 'bout an' actually, it's kinda nice not to have those worries any more. Got my baby when I have time, 'n that's all I need--gonna just spend my time takin' care of her, teachin' her an' havin' fun with her. Gawd, she's my life, damn it, my whole life an' wouldn't want it any other way! No man, she's so-so precious an' I'm so fxxxin' lucky to have her!

*She sure looks like you-more and more as she grows--put your stamp on that one buddy!*

**Elvis:** Think so--really?

*Really, really!*

**Elvis:** Daddy thinks so also--(sounds pleased as punch) can see she's startin' to look a little more like me some--it's the eyes an' the way she kinda turns her head sometimes. But she looks a lot like her momma too. I see it.

*I think she'll be more like you though-it's there now and taking over.*

**Elvis:** Good-- (Deep sigh) Eh--.'Cilla asked me to get a divorce.

*Recently? (I still remember how chills ran through me when he blurted that out...for some reason it felt to me kind of like feeling a cold wind warning of an approaching big storm. And it ended up being exactly that for him.)*

**Elvis:** Yeah-talked to John 'bout it 'n guess we'll have some kinda papers to sign an' then that'll do it--I'm jus' gonna let her have whatever she wants--jus' want Lisa able to come when I have the time.

*That's good; it should be 50-50 and you should have it s specified exactly-I know that from the office.*

**Elvis:** Yeah, that's what he said too-jus'--never thought it'd have to be this way. She's gonna find out it's not so easy on her own--maybe need to let her fall a few times, got to learn ya know.

*That's right-you can't always run to pick her up either Elvis. Not to tell you what to do, that's my opinion. She wants freedom to make her own mistakes-so let her.*

**Elvis:** It's not goin' to be easy-gonna let her think 'bout it for a while 'n then see if she really wants to be divorced. Don't think she realizes that cuts off ever thin' except what the court says is right. Um not gonna be standin' behind her any more, that's what she thinks she wants-freedom. Gawd--didn't know bein' married to me was a- a fxxxin' prison but guess that's how it seemed. Um a damn stupid fool-blind, that's it-jus' blinded by ma' self an' what's goin' down 'round me. She said I was blinded by the fxxxin' spotlights an' that gleam in the women's eyes lookin' at me; guess maybe she's right--in some ways.

*You think so? I don't--besides you two have been separated for a long time--*

**Elvis:** Really--me neither--sure-like to see them laughin' an' getting' excited when I'm on stage doin' stuff for them--but it's not like that really. Its jus' all in fun--ya know, always was. Course sometimes there's one out there--that--spins ma head some an' sure want to meet them. But that's jus' fun too--nothin' serious an' the women know that from the start. They make the call--not me. I jus' let them decide an' so don't, eh ---that's - isn't takin' advantage of--or--use'n them 'cause I can--is it?

*Not really--especially from your point of view Elvis, they are after all, adults and should realize what they are doing. I have seen enough of them, heard them talking long enough to understand what's going on. They all seem to have the same thing in mind-they want to meet you-they want you to notice them and they want to be with you. And most of them don't care if it's just a one-night stand. It's the idea that gets them.*

**Elvis:** Oh--I thought it was my--good looks and sex appeal. (Snickers)

*It is that--all right--but they see the image, the myth up on that stage because that is what you present to them-I've seen you picking out certain types to play to--can't deny that boy!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Sure--don't deny that! Its part of the show-I use it--but it's innocent fun--off stage I'm not makin' those moves--really.

*Some people can't see the difference though-to them you are that guy, day and night.*

**Elvis:** Tell you a secret--I am, for them! (Laughs)

*Gets you in trouble sometimes-huh?*

**Elvis:** Like that kind of trouble--(Snickers) Sometimes- other times it's borin' as hell.

*Truth comes out--HE gets bored!*

**Elvis:** Damn right I do!

*Glad to hear that--really.*

**Elvis:** Getting too old to be actin' like a playboy stud-I'm a daddy fer gawd sake! Lisa told me I was so pretty the other day, 'n she said, "Elvis, how come you're so pretty? 'n she named off some of the guys an' said, they aren't pretty like you-how come? 'N I told her it was cause her grandpa and grandma were pretty too, so they had a pretty baby boy jus' like mommy and me had you, and you're pretty. So she asked, they -they will have not pretty babies? An' then I had to say that all babies look pretty and grow up pretty--they just have different kinds of pretty an' everyone is different. God made us all pretty in different ways and that was so we could tell each other apart and he could also. Every person, honey, is pretty an' if you look an' listen, you'll see they all are really pretty outside and most people are pretty inside too, 'cause God wants us to be pretty and do pretty things. That's the best way to be happy, try really hard to do pretty things so people will see how pretty you are inside. Should of seen her eyes--God! Could of fell into them they were so--so open an' trusting-deep man, pools of--of Heaven!

*That was pretty good daddy, simple, direct.*

**Elvis:** Thank you, um tryin' 'n it ain't easy-Lord!      End

### ***Elvis: Children...***

"Children are God's way of teachin' us adults...he gives us them so we can see right before us and understand what he meant when his inspired word was written that says, "Be ye as little children, come unto me..." Faith and trust, that is what all children are born with - toward their parents or those who love and care for them. "All things are possible if--- ye only believe." "He used children *as an example for the relationship between God and all human kind, like he says* "Unless you become as little children, you will not inherit the Kingdom of God for such is the Kingdom, the Lord God prepares a place for his children. Animals will be there also, for the Lion will lay down with the lamb, and the beasts of the fields will be led by a child. There

will be no killing in Heaven, there will be no hatred or envy and love will prevail forever. Man, I wanta go...I want to sit at the feet of the Lord Jesus, listen'n to him talkin', an' sing with that glorious group of people -God, imagine who's gonna be there! An' finally...man, finally...I will get to stand up and sing with 'em! Oh beautiful day! Lord- Lord...it's gonna come to be on account of God said so and he promised. One thing for sure, God keeps his word! That's proven in every thing goin' on today... and when we read about yesterday also. You can be damn sure he keeps his word when speakin' to his children... Us...all of US! Glory, oh glory!"

**Elvis:** "In St. Luke it says, "With God, all things are possible." We have to believe, believe'n is everything ya know; the Bible is very clear an' there are more than 80 verses where God states his declaration for havin' faith...that is believing it will happen. That's what faith means, we are to believe without doubt...as we are his little children. It is important for adults not to tell a child we are going to do this or that, or they can have something you know they won't get, because they innocently believe, having faith...and we are like "gods" to them when they are small; so we adults can't let them down. God feels the same about us, we are his little children, and he does not want to let us down...and won't, if it is right for us. We wouldn't grant our child's requests if doing so would hurt them in some way, would we? God won't give us anything that will hurt us... We ask for somethin' we can't handle and are denied, and then we blame him...but maybe he saw the future and it wasn't good so he thought better of it. We usually find that out, because we go off and try to answer our own prayer because we think we know better 'n and get slammed down for it 9 times out of 10! I know from experience, so listen to me...I'm older 'n you anyway..."

(From his gates at Graceland; lessons from Elvis to his fans waiting to see him. He often would stroll down and speak with them in earlier years but as he got older, worn out and not feeling so well, he might stop if going out or in his car, but he didn't walk down. I know the fans understood; some said he wasn't "feeling well" and "he needed to rest more". They just loved him wherever he was at in life.

***ELVIS: ON WOMEN--73***

*Wanda: So, what makes you think you can be a judge or--wait--let me rephrase that-- Explain what women think as much as you seem to feel you can? Got an answer?*

**Elvis:** I study human nature – an' met a lot of women.

*So, that “study” gives you authority to make the conclusions you do?*

**Elvis:** Why wouldn't it? Lord, women aren't that complex, really.

*Oh really! Well, then how come you seem to have such a hard time getting along with some of them?*

**Elvis:** I don't--if it's not--eh--right, eh goin' good between me 'n whomever--then it just ends-- and usually on good terms--'cause they get it.

*Get what?*

**Elvis:** Where I'm comin' from--that I don't want nothin' too serious--jus' companionship 'an someone who wants to help me get through the day--an' night--(Snickers) an' that don't cause no more trouble than I got anyway.

*So what do women want--from you?*

**Elvis:** (Laughs and giggles) You know the answer to that one! Lord!

*Besides just sex Elvis, what else?*

**Elvis:** Oh, what I can get for 'em, be it things or a step up to something they want--you know usual stuff.

*And what about those who stay a long time and hope for more?*

**Elvis:** They know from the start it ain' goin' that way-- I tell them what they want to hear but also tell them that's it too--just talkin' 'bout things don't make them factual.

*Cold--didn't think you were- but guess I was wrong. You don't leave much room for anything but a casual relationship- huh?*

**Elvis:** Think what you want, but I know what I'm doin' 'an why; smart enough to know it won't change--tried it straight an' it didn't work out. Not jus' once either--several times--women always want more 'n I can give 'em--love ain't enough, they want total commitment - and I can't do that---I know it now- it just won't work out- an' I'm not gonna change my life just so some woman can tell me what to do. Now, I said it, you happy?

*That's honest.* (He meant that women expected him to change his life style; he loved meeting people, men and women. He realized that most women could not handle the many other women who wanted to meet him, speak with him, etc and a lot wanted to “get to him” in other ways. He liked meeting people, talking with them, and that often didn’t set well with “girl friends” who wanted his full attention and he said, “Got bent out of shape ‘cause I was talkin’ to another woman!”)

**Elvis:** See, I know you--woman! You wanted to hear me say that, an' so I said it--see--now what do you think?

*Smart aleck- you!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs loudly) Gawd! Oh gawd--ever time, man, ever time!

*One of these days some nice woman will come along and knock you off your totem pole dude! I hope I am around to see you roll over, sit up and play dead!*

**Elvis:** Don' go holdin' your breath baby; 'n member I told you!

*Okay, now that's settled, what's on for today?*

**Elvis:** Oh, jus' goin' to take it easy for a while, big night tonight- some names comin' over an' too, Lisa's on her way 'bout now, or should be if the plane's on time. Can't wait to see her! Man, she lights my life. Now, you want to know 'bout females--that's one can turn me upside down 'n backwards jus' smilin' at me! (Snickers and giggles) Gawd--love that little 'un of mine man, I do fer sure!

### ***From a later conversation 1976--***

**Elvis:** (Snickering) eh--Lisa is eh, probably the most important thing in my life. eh--I never would've believed it, ya know. When-when I was growin' up, always figured I'd be married, I'd have children. Always wanted a family--eh--I-I like children, eh--I like their innocence, their trust, 'n loyalty, their--eh--ya know, you can--the Bible says you should look at things through the eyes of a child, well, all ya haffta do is be around them,



an' if you spend any time with them, you realize what that means because they have such a trusting, open way of looking at things and people, and their view of the world is so precious, and--if we could, as adults, could see things with the un-cynical eyes of a child our world would be a better place. We'd solve our problems, because we'd all love each other, unquestioningly. And, that's what I like 'bout children, their so loving an'--they don't question your motives. I always thought I'd have children, I miss her, I miss her a great deal. An' --eh--I miss her-- it's eh, very difficult to--eh--to say good-bye when she leaves--and--she says to me, she says, Daddy, why do you cry when I leave, ya know, it makes me cry 'n then we both cry and eh--when I get older, it's gonna mess up my make-up! (Laughs)

**Elvis:** She-she's really something--really somethin' -- An' one time, one time--not too long ago--I-I..I had my make up on--I was ready for the show, an' eh--somethin' happened, don't know what it was now but-- but--I-I had--eh--tears started to fall ya know, an' she looks at me an' she says, Elvis--Daddy, now, you gotta stop that, 'cause, because your make-up is gonna run! (Laughs)

***While in conversation about two years before his death Elvis told me this-- (between giggling and snickering, he loved it so--***

**Elvis:** I was teasin' her, tryin' to get her over (she wanted to come see him and go to the country-Graceland and he had to say no) bein' so upset with me ya know, an' was callin' her ma little country red-neck hick chick" an' she got really mad sayin' "Elvis--if you don't knock it off--- your corny, red, naked chicken is gonna come through the phone an bite your nose off!" (He laughed happily.)

Lisa always wanted to stay with Elvis, travel with him and she didn't want to go back to Beverly Hills and school. Her daddy was as precious to her as she was to him and both would hurt when they had to part ways. Elvis was excited when he knew she was about to come and often picked her up himself when he could. They were two kids together, both of them spoiled and he tried his best to give her "good roots" and "faith to sustain her through life, a sense of belonging" he said, "to God's great world, one with a future after we leave it--not jus' it's over-kind of thing. Want her to have a future to look forward to, a spiritual life with love and understanding. It would be hell on earth to have nothing but a cold end in death and that's it! Life don't work that way--the love lives on and the spirit remembers. God planned for us afterward, gave us a vision and promised everlasting life an' I want her to know these things" I know that he did try to do that very thing, I'm sure she has some memory of those times, and when they are needed, they will come back to comfort her. Because he promised he would always be with her, forever and all ways.

There are some who were around on tours etc; who say that Elvis “lost interest” in his child, didn’t want her around him and didn’t let her spend much time with him, that she was often at Graceland and he was not there much to be with her and he slept a lot at times while she waited on him, etc. Elvis didn’t want her to know he wasn’t well, and he tried to keep certain things about it away from her. But they are wrong to think he didn’t care—he loved her so much, he was protecting her from what he felt would hurt her emotionally and perhaps he didn’t feel he could handle her knowing he wasn’t doing well. He gave her all the attention that he could and he loved her with every ounce of his body, heart and soul. There is nothing that he wouldn’t have done for her, including giving his life should he need to. It broke his heart that he was not going to be able to see her grow up and do for her all the things he wanted to do. He put so much of himself into working, doing his job, providing the money for everyone, doing *what he felt a man ought to do, take care of his family* and to Elvis, that meant make the money to give them things etc; and he was trapped by his fame and the money he could bring in from that fame. He couldn’t see a way out, didn’t have the courage to quit—to do so would have hurt many people, changed their lives and he just couldn’t do that to “all those people” and then there were his fans---who gave him everything he had when he had nothing but empty pockets and a “big dream – but it wasn’t nothin’ like this--all this--” he would say with awe still echoing in his words. In the end he had faith in God and trust in her mother to make sure Lisa would be okay. All kids have to go through some tough years, Lisa had a lot to deal with for a young child, she made mistakes but not big ones and she’s done well at recovering from any damages that came along. She is so like her father, kind, gentle and understanding and she expresses herself like him so often. I have to smile when I read or hear something she says—because there he is, “*alive*” *in his little girl*. I love it!

### ***Elvis and Lisa go shopping--1974***

I drove to the courthouse in Los Angeles a time or two and one of the ladies who worked there told me about having seen Elvis Presley and his adorable little girl on Sunset Boulevard when she had ran over to pick up a gift for a friend. She was walking down the street when from out of one of the small boutique shops the most handsome man she’d ever laid eyes on came striding out, dressed all in white and carrying a store bag in one hand and holding the door for a beautiful little girl about 5 years old with the other. She was frozen in place at sight of this Adonis looking man she said, when he nearly mowed her down as he was too busy looking at his little girl and talking to even see her. The child yanked his arm and pulled him back seconds before they would have collided and he looked startled. He said “Excuse me, I’m sorry” then they two went quickly to the car parked at the street. He put his child inside, and then went around to the driver’s side and all the while the lady was staring at him. From over the top of his

car as he was going to get in, he paused, smiled and said, “Honey, I think you’re good lookin’ also--” Then got in his car and drove away. She said, “I swear that was the handsomest man I have ever seen anywhere-and that smile-oh my-I had chills all over me when he actually smiled at me- and then called me “honey”. She said she realized who he was after he was putting his daughter in the car and she heard the little girl call him “Elvis”-and seeing him right there, on the street, made her life worth living!

In 1973 Elvis asked me to do something for him and since I could, I did. He wanted some information from court records, information that he needed to know regarding a disputed matter (not related to the paternity suit that went on for years). It was sensitive information and perhaps I should have said no, but it was Elvis and I know he wouldn’t have asked had it not been very important to decisions that he had to make regarding his personal life. Since I worked as a legal assistant and was often at the records office, looking up things, it was easy for me to do it. And it turned out to be a good thing; it saved him from having to do something that he didn’t want to have to do; but was afraid that he might be forced into doing it and would fight back if he had to. Everything worked out for him and he didn’t have to resort to “drastic measures”. I can’t say even now what it was about, he asked me not to; knowing that he would not have to be “mean” and go to “battle in court ‘n throw sh-t” was a load off his mind and I was really glad *I could help him* because he had done so much for us. I still feel good that I was able to get the information so he wouldn’t have to “go to battle” in public, even though it was not an “ethical” thing to do at the time, but it was Elvis asking. *See*, even I couldn’t say no to him! *Darn, it must be true! (As it turned out, the other party backed down, didn’t “fight him” and everything worked out the way he wanted; he was so relieved. Laughingly, he said, “Man, we’d of had to roof ever’ house we owned!” Meaning his temper would have blown the roof off! [The information had nothing to do with the “paternity suit” that kept “resurfacing for years”.]*

**From the Interview Tapes – not used before. 1976**

**Elvis:** So, is that all of the list now?

*Wanda:* Not quite, some of the other questions are longer ones, you'll likely want to give longer answers---these are short ones.

**Elvis:** Okay--let 'er rip.

*All right, this is one you marked "red"--so if you still feel that way, we can move on.*

**Elvis:** Red? Oh, you mean, to omit? Eh--ask me anyway.

*(Laughs) It's not anything bad.*

**Elvis:** Really--why'd I do it red?

*I don't know- you tell me, here it is. When you choose girlfriends, do you pick by looks or age?*

**Elvis:** Gawd. What kind of question is that? What's age got to do with anything?

*Tell me--what you think.*

**Elvis:** I just see what I-I like, that's all--sometimes it's their eyes, smile or maybe they look at me a certain way--shy 'n kind of hopeful but not – eh, not out to make a big deal of it, really. Mostly it's the eh--how they feel 'bout themselves kind of, an' too, I look for what--I like--

*Which is?*

**Elvis:** Beauty of – of form, face and foundation.

*Foundation?*

**Elvis:** Yah--good bones--legs an' like 'em to have nice posture ---an' it don't hurt if they are good lookin'--(Laughs) An' attitude--it's important 'n like to talk to 'em--look in their eyes --ya know.

*So it's beauty mostly--right?*

**Elvis:** I guess so--but beauty is in the beholder's eye--everyone is different. Bein' a man--sure I see the body, the face an' if the attraction is mutual or not--can tell quickly enough, really.

*Okay, how about age?*

**Elvis:** I like 'em young-- (Snickers, then laughs) Got ya! Huh! (Laughs)

*So, anything over 18 is okay?*

**Elvis:** Why?

*I'm asking you -*

**Elvis:** Really age don't matter that much--it's the heart 'n soul of a woman that counts. Sometimes get to meet ones older, but not often. Mostly meet younger women on account of their not--eh attached ya know, don't have a jealous boyfriend or husband lurkin' in the shadows or nothin'. Don't care about how old she might be long as she's proud to be a female an' takes care of herself, an' don't have no drug or alcohol problems. An' too, my schedule is hard to fit into a woman's life --- they got lives ya know, an' younger one's still tryin' to fit one on for size, they're still lookin'. So that's the ones I get to know most of the time. I can't jus' go out and find somebody out there, ya know- it's--

be like-a-a well, don't want to think what that'd be like. Got more women 'n I can handle anyway--(Laughs) Lord-Lord seems like--I'm a hunk of cheese left out for the mice an' they're looking to get a bite out of me!

*Okay, so it's not the young ones you personally seek out- or want brought in, right?*

**Elvis:** I want 'em all- damn it! (Growls it out like on stage, then laughs) No, don't look for young ones in particular but wouldn't turn 'em down jus' cause they might be younger 'n me--It'd be up to them what might come of meetin' me, really. Is that okay – did I answer it right? (Snickers)

*Yeah, you checked it red anyway, so it's up to you – personally, I knew what you'd say.*

**Elvis:** Really! Damn, done tol' you too much! Gonna let you see the real “Elvis” one of these days-- (He mutters)

*Oh, a threat! Good! Will be looking forward to meeting “him” then! (We both laugh)*

(He told the truth here, younger women were what he “got to meet” because they were single. He said, “Can't help it- um jus' a freak, goin' 'round givin' 'em a look at ma show 'un lovin' ever minute of it!” (He laughed happily.)

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### **Quote from Elvis about Elvis:**

“I got capped teeth, ma jaw bones ya know, don't line up so throws off ever' thin' an' so can't smile normally even when tryin' to do it. Ma hairs dyed or it'd be gray like ma daddy 'n always got some kind of rash or somethin' breakin' out like on ma neck or face--- Lord woman! I ain't no perfect specimen 'un don't see ma self that way! I dun no why ever body's lookin' at me 'n--'n whatever--- um just a normal guy really! Gawd!”

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### **October 76 Excerpt from interview – Not used in We Remember, Elvis, revised 2006**

*Wanda: So, you sound like you're getting sleepy-ready to say bye now?*

**Elvis:** Ummmm naw, won't go to sleep, jus' relaxed, that's all--ask me somethin'--

*Well, want to answer a question or two again? Or are you up to that?*

**Elvis:** Yea--up to now--what?

*We were at the part where you were explaining your image compared to the man- talking about all the women who think you are--excuse me, “God's gift”--I think it was--*

**Elvis:** (Snickering) Oh--hee-hee-hee-that! Lord!

*So--what's the first thing you think when one catches your eye?*

**Elvis:** (Very laid back, softly said) Well, if she eh--catches ma eye--(Giggles) then I jus' run this fim in my head 'n see if she fits the part--”

*Film in your head-what type of film is that?*

**Elvis:** (Snickering) You know--porn---naturally-- or... un- naturally-- (Giggles)

*Oh for Pete sake! That's not true!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) No? Not really--may be some--times, can't never tell what a man's gonna be thinkin' in his mind (Snickers) I got a good imagination! Know that don't you?

*I do--really though, that's what goes through that pea sized brain of yours?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers-giggling) Insults won't get you nothin' today!

*Statement of fact--*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Gawd may be so! Naw--I look at her 'n see how she looks back--.'n if it's mutual then maybe I might talk to her if can get ma nerve up enough to do it--sometimes they eh--it's hard to do. I mean when they are--eh--well, look out of my reach, ya know. Really, like they might be kind of--eh--

*Better than you?*

**Elvis:** 'N---no, that's not the word I'm reachin' for here--maybe it's--sophistication or somethin' like it.

*I can't believe you at this point in time, would have any problem walking over and saying anything to any woman! Tell the truth now!*

**Elvis:** (Very subdued) I am--sometimes--I- I can't an' other times, it comes easy--if I know they want to eh- get to know me. I can tell some, but eh – not all time--it's not *me* they're here for ya know, I'm not that eh--- silly--really.

*Wow, he's humble too!*

**Elvis:** Aww-knock it off! I'm bein' right with it here--so stop thinkin' other things--sure if she's pretty an somethin' I like, yeah I'll get her number or somethin' if I can, but only if it feels right at the time. It- eh often it's not right--the feelin' I mean.

*Is that why you have someone else tell them you're interested?*

**Elvis:** That's not wrong, is it?

*No--Whatever works- right?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) You got that right!

*Okay, hey- it's almost 4:30 and Jimmie's on his way home by now--I better get something for him to eat-in case he hasn't stopped on the way. So try to get some sleep..*

**Elvis:** Okay--is this breakfast or dinner?

*Whatever he wants.*

**Elvis:** Gawd--woman says that to me--Lord! She's gonna get *me* to tell her--Laughs) There's your answer baby-- Bye-bye-- (Hangs up giggling)

(In another conversation he said that he was a “leg and ass man”- and he laughed.)

### ***Elvis recalling his mother - 1976***

[Excerpts from phone conversation]

*Wanda: I have no memories of my childhood- or my mother – a few flashes like movie clips- very short ones- It's amazing you remember so much of your childhood.*

**Elvis:** Hummm-- ya guess 'cause maybe it was kinda dramatic--you know, somethin' happenin' that made things stick in ma head. Hell, I dun know--jus' do.

**W:** *I think it's a good thing--do you remember your mom as she was then- when you recall the real early days?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--holdin' me, an' singing' to me some--do-- (Sighs) She was a- a beautiful woman--face an' all-- I remember her eyes--soft 'n brown--big soft eyes--smilin' at me-- yeah-- (Spoken very softly- I had the phone crammed in my ear to hear him.)

**W:** *I've seen a picture of the three of you, mom, dad and son when you were small--in On Tour I think--right?*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh--gave 'em that one to use--always kind liked it tho' it wasn't a – a thing to remember right then. Don't have a lot of 'em from back then--didn't have a camera or nothin'--

**W:** *She was very attractive; you get your looks from her I think--*

**Elvis:** Think so-- I kinda look like her sometimes- people say but more like daddy's side I think.

**W:** *She liked to dance--*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Yeah, we'd dance all over – when had the first big check--we danced. It was--was a good thing--money, ya know.

**W:** *Sure--*

**Elvis:** Gawd, it was a check--made out to me 'n more 'n I ever --ever thought 'bout havin' all at once ya know? Whew--lordy--”

**W:** *Good times a comin' huh?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--thank you Lord! Least we had some real good times an' got Graceland for--for she left us--thank God.

**W:** *She loved that place--it was very beautiful and you did it Elvis. Her special son made her so proud.*

**Elvis:** I'd give it up- all of it jus' to – to- (Sucks in his breath, could hear him swallow hard.)

**W:** *I know.*

**Elvis:** Lord, I better get ma ass up an' downstairs--gonna be ever one there, ready to go -I ain't even up yet--lord gawd--

**W:** *Have a good time buddy; I'm sure they're thrilled to be down there waiting for you! Bye- now.*

**Elvis:** Yeah--guess so, bye-bye darlin'. Tell 'em hello for me 'n I'm doin' okay--”

Elvis was doing most of his rehearsing and a recording at home in Graceland's “jungle room” as its known today. He felt more comfortable at home and he could do his recordings the way he liked- when he wanted, and if he felt like doing it and he said that he wasn't feeling well, but he looked “good” and there was no one telling him he couldn't do this or that; he liked to have his band in the same room with him, his back ground singers there too and he could have the say over what happened musically. He felt that

the studios had become too technical, separate soundtracks for everything and the music lost the energy, and the spirit of the song was lost when that happened. So he refused to go back to the studio- RCA came to him, allowing him to do it his way. Big truck loads of equipment parked outside his house, cables running into it from any window or door possible, and Elvis was tickled about it...though he said he wasn't going to give them an inch. Some of his best work was recorded there, where he felt at ease, in his beloved home, working with his friends and those who cared about him. Some of the songs recorded when only he was singing and playing piano or his organ were what I feel is the best versions of those songs-gospel mostly. It has been said he wasn't the "best" piano player or guitar player, but the energy and emotion in those recordings came straight from his heart and soul, making them priceless treasures from Elvis.

Elvis loved his "den" he called it, but fans know it as "**The Jungle Room**" at Graceland; when Lisa was small she would take naps in the big Hawaiian style chair that Elvis claimed as "his chair" when home and it was the chair where he would sit and hold her for "talks" or "lessons". On the television "tour" of Graceland **Priscilla** was showing **Larry King** around and he commented on the décor of the "Jungle Room"; Priscilla said, "Oh, no way would that stuff be here if I'd had anything to say about it!" Elvis bought that furniture after she had moved out; his father had come home, made some comments about seeing really ugly furniture in a store window and so when Elvis drove by, he had to stop and look at it. And then bought it for his den; it reminded him of his favorite place to go from home – Hawaii.

### ***Ginger---1976***

**Elvis:** It's been great, the fans an' all are really somethin', ya know.

*Wanda: How are you feeling?*

**Elvis:** Tired-- (Laughs) Naw--I'm okay really. Jus' dealin' with the-the same old stuff.

*I heard you had a new girlfriend – someone you just met?*

**Elvis:** Not really--you know me (Laughs) eh--did meet a nice young lady a few weeks back- eh--maybe rumors are 'bout that?

*Could be-somebody you met at home--*

**Elvis:** Oh yeah--her; she's beautiful--got brown eyes, fascinating kinda--remind me--me of someone else--

*Okay. She's on tour with you?*

**Elvis:** No--maybe later she'll come--eh--her sister came over--so she came with her an' eh-actually it was like meetin' someone I already knew – like in the past or somethin'.

*How old is she Elvis?*



**Elvis:** Old enough--what'd you hear? (Laughs) She's 21 or so I think, didn't ask yet--too scary (Giggles) you know, askin' a woman her age 'n all that.

*When did that ever stop you! (Laughs) That young, huh?*

**Elvis:** Never said that--she's younger'n me for sure--think that makes a difference?

*Depends on the woman, and the man too, I guess. I think it shouldn't if she's not so immature and too much younger, you know.*

**Elvis:** She's not really--she's mature, talks nice 'n intelligent. She likes me! (Laughs)  
*What's not to like?*

**Elvis:** Well you know, got this problem with ma health ya know, don't look 30 no more an' been sick kind a lot lately too. An' I'm different--she don't know much 'bout this business an' all that--or me--ya know. Funny thing is I know her daddy from years ago--  
*Really! That should help-she must know something about you!*

**Elvis:** Yeah, sure of that! She said it wasn't like she thought- me, ya know. I'm not--not what she thought--heard, is the word, guess.

*Well, she'll find out, you can tell her what you want her to know-you don't have to spill your guts--not that you do.*

**Elvis:** Do though, huh? To – to some people.

*That's normal, everyone has people they can talk to more than others.*

**Elvis:** Really--

*Really.*

**Elvis:** I like her-- too soon I know, but-but don't want to waste any time--don't have the time for that no more--tourin' all the time like we do. I hope she--will come with me--all time--I-I --someone -- my life--feels like-- Some one--ya know, need someone to- to have to-to be with me, help me. I-I miss--miss that.

*I hope she will; I worry about you being alone sometimes. Even though you aren't really- I know that too.*

**Elvis:** It'd be nice to to have a friend, someone special. Hell, truth is, I-I-I'm lonely--I'd just like – like to have somebody to share my interests, to be there for me – someone who'd be dependable--not--not be fussin' at me for things--don't ask me what kind of things!

*I think I know-so don't worry about it!*

**Elvis:** She's kinda young--.maybe too-- so- so not gonna hold ma breath or nothin'--  
*That's a good plan--stick to it, honey. Don't let your feelings get hurt rushing things.*

**Elvis:** I'm gonna try--. eh---Linda 'n me--it's come to – to things got to change--I want her to have a -a life--ya know. Not jus' hangin' on to me--so- so whatever you hear--don't bother with it, okay? Don't ask me nothin'--

(Elvis was trying to get Linda to leave on her own; he didn't want to hurt her more than necessary; but he felt she knew him too well and because he had health problems he

didn't want her to know about, he preferred she not be there and see him "goin' downhill" he said. For her sake, he wanted her to go, to have a normal life "out there". Linda loved him, and he knew this; still, he felt the need to get her away from him, because he loved her also, and felt the need to "protect her from me" he said, "I'm gonna be her worst nightmare.") In the end, he had to resort to as he put it, "bein' mean"- and she left him; but she never stopped caring about him; even though his methods broke her heart and for a time, it hurt and she was upset and angry at him. Later on, I think she understood he could not stand to have her see him "fallin' apart". He said, "She knows me too well..."

*Okay, it's your life anyway. So please, try to keep it nice and even, and enjoy it.*

**Elvis:** Will, much as I can--thanks honey, appreciate it, really. Eh--the other one--she ain't wearin' trainin' pants or nothing-- (Laughs)

*Welll! I would hope not! (Laughs)*

It turned out, she was barely 19; he was a bit taken aback by that- but she was very mature for her age, he said. And she "likes me"-- He felt so "old" and "worn out" and the fact that this beautiful young woman "likes me" impressed him- he was infatuated right away, but she was one of the first of the "new women" of that time frame, not so willing to be a "doormat" for her man, or be "bossed around, told what to do etc.". He had his hands full trying to come to grips with it all. Then one of his friends mentioned how much she reminded him of a young Priscilla, how alike they were in appearance and style though Ginger was taller. Elvis stepped back, took a good look at the situation and realized, he was trying to "go back, to get back what used to be, me an' 'Cilla, ya know, so- so now I know what attracted me so--it was – was jus' wishful thinkin' , that's all." I guess he changed his mind quite a bit; his housekeeper **Nancy Rooks** says in her book, "**Inside Graceland**" that he mentioned he had "spent thousands on her and she still won't do what I say!" (She refused a few times to go on tour with him; it was boring standing around waiting etc so he let her bring family members along to keep her company; then he felt "crowded" with them around.) So if "love" didn't work and "money" didn't work – what else was there? He was telling friends that he wasn't going to marry her-and he realized he wasn't in love really. **Ed Parker** told me that Elvis "couldn't get things exactly as he wanted them" and that he told him he was not getting married. The first time we talked more than a few minutes, Ed said, "You do know him!" And from that moment on he was very open with what he had seen and heard going on. I liked Ed; he was truly a friend who had Elvis' *best interest in mind*, and "not his own agenda" as some other "friends" of Elvis' claimed. Guess it was another case of "monkey see, monkey do" since that was their own "game plan". Ed was honest, telling *privately only what he saw and heard*; but trying all the time to **actually be of help to Elvis, who had trusted him more than some of those he had on salary**. He also said that Elvis appeared to be afraid to be alone; Ed was concerned, didn't quite know what scared Elvis, but he had the impression that Elvis was afraid or very worried concerning the tours and some of the people around him, looking after his needs; Ed stayed with him

longer than he had planned as a result and it really bothered him to have to leave Elvis but he had engagements he couldn't cancel. I think Ed was haunted by that the rest of his life.

Ginger related that Elvis asked her to marry him the last day or so of his life; he might have been trying to give her the best memories that he could. Considering that by his actions and comments to friends in those last weeks of his life, and though he tried to hide just how terrible he actually felt, and spoke of wanting to take time off, get some rest and get "healthy again", he *knew* his days were numbered and that she might have the burden of dealing with being his last girlfriend for the rest of her life. As his father said of Elvis not including her in his will, "I already gave her a lot of things, 'n most of the time she's with me but 'um not gonna marry her, not now--she's on the way out." For a little while, he had another young lady in mind, but he didn't have the physical strength to handle a new relationship and go out and work tours - and wisely, he realized it. Apparently, he decided to leave things as they were – that whatever was to be ---would be-- End

### ***1975- Dixie and Anita & Elvis' young heart---***

*Wanda: So you had a steady girl in high school-Dixie?*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh, an' then there was another one later on saw quite a lot of for a while, 'n then was on the road an' makin' movies so we kind of went separate ways--

**Anita Woods---***she was a DJ. Right- that's how you met?*

**Elvis:** Kinda yeah, saw her picture an' thought well, now, there's a star – she was a singer – not a d. j. really. Had a record out an' doin' things, ya know, makin' appearances.

*Okay, so that was work related – then she was your steady?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Honey, she was a good friend--an' I liked her a lot but there was others too-- You know me, can't hardly say no ever time!

*Really! Changing your story now--huh?*

**Elvis:** Naw--really. (Laughs)

*So what did you do when you went on dates-?*

**Elvis:** Damn sure didn't sing to 'em! (Laughs) Jus' went to the movies-used to go to gospel singin's a lot – my girl friend wasn't outta school yet – ya know, so we didn't go out much – I was out workin' an' tryin' to get somethin' goin' with the records--she was kinda upset 'cause I wasn't home much – an' too, she saw some of the girls all hanging after me a time or two. Kinda made it difficult to explain all the time.

*Same old; same old, huh?*

**Elvis:** Guess so- can't blame 'em though – wouldn't like a bunch of guys hangin' 'round any woman of mine neither-- No way man!

*That career of yours is a very jealous lover Elvis- guess you've learned that well.*

**Elvis:** Uh-huh-- (Sighs) got everything in the world 'n still sittin' in the same place--alone; gawd--crazy isn't it? I mean, how you give up somethin' just to have somethin'?

*I guess its true--*

**Elvis:** I know it is! Gawd do I! Don't want to do this now- When I was younger thought it'd be easy – I mean, you know – having so many beautiful women linin' up an' all that – never even crossed my mind I'd feel like I do now – lonely you know, sometimes I feel like it's – eh – kinda like I live in a different world entirely an' people just visit 'n then they go back to their world only I can't go--gawd, does that make sense?

*It does – I've thought of you that way – how your life is different and I wonder how you manage to stay so--level headed and accepting of everything. I guess you are used to it--it's been that way for years, hasn't it?*

**Elvis:** Yeah--was just 19 when all hell broke loose – by the time was 20 couldn't go out without somebody lookin' out for me an' you know, when it got really tough- was when had that – the hits an television an all- when I had to stay in hotel rooms way up- lookin' down on ever body goin' out to eat or- or where ever --seems like hours an' hours of bein' alone. I'd get depressed man, too often! So started lookin' for nice girls to- to keep me company – you know, not what you might be thinkin'--jus' someone to talk to, maybe eat dinner with or somethin' anything to keep from bein' so--alone 'n thinkin' too fast, too much, ma head'd be spinnin'--. An' the journalists started out makin' it into somethin' dirty--like I was a-a well, you know what they said. Wasn't that way really, I mean sure, I'm no saint or nothin'- 'n yeah, I eh- well, anyway, wasn't like it was somethin' I was doin' with ever thing wearin' a skirt! Gawd- wasn't that way much- a lot of 'em sure, but nothin' like they said! Got so I hated seein' journalists--an' had to keep puttin' on a smile for 'em! Got so felt like ma whole f--kin life was a damn movie script-bad one at that!

*If you could go back through your career, what year would you choose, any idea about that?*

**Elvis:** Yeah...1956...that was the year man, things happened so quickly, I-I- it's kinda all a blur...kinda wish could recall more'n I do...weird man, jus' too weird...how it all happened.

*I guess so...huh...*

### ***One of the Last Conversations--7-1977***

*Wanda: Where are you-sounds like you're in an echo chamber somewhere?*

**Elvis:** Sittin' in the tub--naked-- (Snickers)

*Well, wouldn't think you'd be wearing one of those fancy suits in it!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Naw--that's fer sure-damn things too expensive!

*Yeah, and they might shrink!*

**Elvis:** If they were gonna do that--would have before now much as I sweat out there! Man, not a dry thread! Took 'em off un had 'em drippin' on the floor!

*Sometimes you do look as though you had a bucket of water poured over your head.*

**Elvis:** Feels it too. Gawd, don' know what's the matter with my back, been killin' me to sit or lay down-walkin' don' feel too good either. Nothin' seems to phase it much.

*And you told your doctor what--*

**Elvis:** Aww--he don't know, said maybe need to drink more water or somethin' an' if that don't help he'll give me something that will-thinks it's my kidneys but don't seem that way-it's like my back bones or somethin'--

*Maybe you should get some x-rays and have an orthopedic doctor look at them.*

**Elvis:** A bone doctor?

*Yes--someone who specializes in your skeleton and ligaments. That's what holds you up--that and muscle--and you've got muscle, doing what you do, you have to have that.*

**Elvis:** Not like used to though, getting' kind of weak (Snickers) in the knees--maybe. (Laughs) (Then curses and says,) God, even laughin' hurts today!

*I do think you should have x-rays Elvis. It doesn't take long and then you'd know if you have thrown something out of place--it could be a slipped disk instead of just a sprain or pulled muscle.*

**Elvis:** Yeah, he said I pulled a muscle or somethin' but this is goin' on a long time now an' it jus' seems to get worse 'stead of better. I got some shows comin' up an' it's goin' be hell if this don't get better soon. Gawd damn it, always somethin'! Somebody outta jus' shoot me in the head an' get it done!

*Now don't say that! Thoughts are things; don't go sending some out to some nut case!*

**Elvis:** I know, don't want that. Told you 'bout that-huh?

*Yeah--and it wasn't funny.*

**Elvis:** No--Wasn't funny fer sure--but nothin' happened an' I'm not worryin' 'bout that kind of shit. Jus' a little concerned 'bout these shows an' this fxxxxn' back!

*So how many toes do you have?*

**Elvis:** What?

*You do have some, don't you? Toes?*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) Good gawd woman, how many you think I have?

*Maybe eleven, or so--*

**Elvis:** (Giggles) Freaks might, huh?

*You're no freak! Just wanted to get you to laugh and you did.*

**Elvis:** Smart ass huh! I got 10--an' um gonna have a lady I know come over an' fix 'em for me. She does pedicures and manicures an' will come to ma house. Helps keep my toes from getting' sore so much. Done more 'n the fxxxxn' doctor ever did for 'em!

*I don't doubt that--I don't trust doctors all that much. The one who did my surgery was good, and he couldn't believe I was sitting up that afternoon and doing so well.*

**Elvis:** Well--wasn't 'cause you let me know nothin' 'bout it.

*Now, don't go getting your feathers all ruffled up! Nothing happened and I promised to tell you if ever anything came up like that again. Okay?*

**Elvis:** (Laughs slightly) Okay

(Loud knocking can be heard)

*Aw-oh-somebody's knocking on your door.*

**Elvis:** Nothin' new there! (Sounds irritated.) Told 'em I was gonna soak awhile damn it. *Got the door locked?*

**Elvis:** Surreee--um not lookin' for company! Wish had a bigger one-do out there but didn't want to go down yet; jus' sittin' here tryin' to get the damn TV to work.

*From the tub-don't touch it!*

**Elvis:** Got a remote but damn thing don't work haff the time-send rockets into space but can't make a remote that works! Damn! Hardly nothin' on the damn TV anyway though.

*Well, just relax, practice scales, quit fretting--you're there to relax...Right?*

**Elvis:** Kinda yeah--sittin' in the damn tub sweatin' like a Tuesday nite pimp needin' a fix- *Got your bubble bath though-huh?*

**Elvis:** Can you smell it-French Rose Garden an' man, it made my eyes water at first! Settled down now though; .got mineral salts in it--supposed to be good for me.

*You sound pretty good, how do you feel today, rested some I hope?*

Like playin'--but got no playmate--jus' my rubber ducky an' Yessa's hand puppet-she gave it to me for Christmas. Used to give her a bath with one like it-this one's a little raccoon--cute, got scrubby bumps on one side an' fur on the other'n, it's arms--eh -legs are long and stretch so's you can do your back easier--(Snickers) Feel better if had someone doin' it for me though--

*Where's Ginger?*

**Elvis:** Went out-got a little upset with me 'n went out--she'll be back though' 'n bring me somethin' to smooth it over. (Snickers) Don' know 'bout that girl--she's got plans an' they don't go with mine--but she'll figure it out sooner or later (Snickers) sooner 'n she thinks! Scared the shit out of her other day; she won't forget it!

*Troubles in paradise--story of your life, huh buddy?*

**Elvis:** Little trouble like that jus' makes it more interestin' – jus' wanted her to ask me, not tell me or jus' go an' say nothin'--

*Sounds like Elvis-so how's the kid-enjoying being with her daddy?*

**Elvis:** Daddy's enjoyin' bein' with his baby-she's havin' a great time an' wants to go with me on tour-she says I need her--an' she's right 'bout that.

*It's great you have such a good report with her; see, I told you it would work out and that she'd be thrilled just being able to come home and be with you. I hope you give her lots of private time, just the two of you.*

**Elvis:** I try to-we take walks around the property, sit way off from the house 'n talk and she tells me all kinds of things, an' about what she hopes she will be when she grows up.

*I see-that's good-she trusts you with her secrets. She sure is starting to look like you.*

Uh-huh (Snickers softly) I like it.

*I thought you would-you know, I like it too. I hope she's a dead-ringer for you!*

(Laughs, then swears) Sorry, didn't mean to do that in your ear.

*I think you need to make an appointment and go Elvis. Is it a dull ache or a stabbing one?*

**Elvis:** Both, when I move it stabs ‘n then settles back to just a damn pain.

*Well, you need to see a doctor about that-and not the one you see now-okay?*

**Elvis:** Yes mommy, I’ll be your good little boy ‘n see the skeleton doctor-maybe he can make me a new one, ‘n this one can jus’ come out for Halloween.

*(Laughs) Now who’s the smart aleck?*

**Elvis:** Ass--

*Okay, I know what you said.*

**Elvis:** Yessa likes to sit in the dark an’ look at the stars with me--she knows where lots of them are now and we lay out there at the pool an’ watch the sky. See’n some weird things up there flyin’ ‘round. She’s got good eyes an’ sees far into space. We fell asleep out there other night an’ damn mosquitoes liked to eat us alive! ‘Tween them ‘n chiggers man, we been itchin’ like dogs ‘round here!

*I remember chiggers-glad we don't have them out here!*

**Elvis:** Yeah, we got plenty of bugs-but you all got things we don’t have.

*I can’t hear you when you turn that motor on, so I’m just going to let you go and you can enjoy soaking, all right?*

**Elvis:** Huh? Just a minute, can’t hear right now, tryin’ to shut this fxxxin’ thing down. (his fan).

*I was just telling you I have to go, so I’ll talk to you another day-enjoy the tub.*

**Elvis:** Oh really, you have somethin’ to do? Okay--call me again--early.

*I think you might have something to do, don’t you? Like call that doctor?*

**Elvis:** Later, I will, closed now though-I will, promise.

*Going to hold you to that one buddy!*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) No, I will, it -it hurts like a son of a bitch an’ messin’ with my life.

*So is Lisa playing now? (He sounded so lonely all of a sudden-I couldn't hang up.)*

**Elvis:** No, she’s gone shoppin’ an’ to get some clothes for the tour (Laughs) she’s makin’ sure I take her with me! Used that one before-no clothes, ya know.

*I’m sure she has plenty of clothes!*

**Elvis:** She’d out grown them--n so she ‘n Pat went out-their bringin’ me somethin’ too.

*Ice cream bars? Push-ups?*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) No---Bar-B-Q!

*Aw-oh, forbidden fruit!*

**Elvis:** Once in a while don’t hurt nothin’---ya know, we sat outside last night for a while off down at the barn ‘cause it’s darker there ‘n can see better--the sky, ya know. “n she told me all ‘bout what she’s gonna be when she grows up. (Sounds so pleased)

*And that is?*

**Elvis:** It’s a secret-I can’t tell no body--jus’ me ‘n her. (Laughs)

*And daddy told her what?*

**Elvis:** That she could be anythin’ she wanted to be, but that I would like her to marry a nice guy an’ have children so I could be a granddaddy-Lord have mercy! Gawd, -- that sounds old when I say it now! An’ she said, she promised she would give me

grandchildren an' she got real serious an' said she wanted to be--eh--Lord! Jus' 'bout said it-good secret keeper me! (Snickers) Any way, I told her she could do that too, but I'd like to see her find a nice good lookin' guy, get married, have a home an some kids and then think 'bout other things.

*Okay that sounds like a plan--.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) yeah, she was okay with it too. "n she asked me if I wanted to have any more kids an' I said, I didn't know, what did she think about it an' she thought about it 'bout a second – 'n took hold of me really tight an' said No, Elvis, let it just be me for you! An' she started cryin' so ya know what happened--we both was cryin' an' I told her she'd be jus' for me always. Didn't want any more kids but her 'an then she was huggin' and kissin' me and tellin' me I'm her little daddy forever and ever. Oh shit--that's enough of this! Gawd, I'm a fxxx'n big baby--! (He sounded choked up, on the verge of crying) um sorry--gawd-- (Said in a soft husky voice)

*Elvis, that's great though, its okay to care so much it hurts-and to let people know that too. That's what we love about you, you care and aren't afraid to show it.*

**Elvis:** Oh, I thought it was my good looks 'n sex appeal that got to you all. (Said very softly)

*That too, but it's the inner guy that I like the most-that other one is just for show.*

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Fer sure!

*Well, I have to go-I'm working half a day today and have 3 big wills to type and they have to be perfect! That'll take me hours--*

**Elvis:** thanks for callin' me back sugar, it helped, I feel better 'n 'um turnin' into a prune-Well, time to get out then-bye, have a good time with your little girl buddy. Love you lots.

**Elvis:** Love you too darlin', please call me again soon. Bye-bye.

*I will; don't forget to call for an appointment!*

**Elvis:** Yes ma'am, I won't forget.

End

Unfortunately, Elvis didn't ever get around to making that doctor's appointment-he had another more important one; he went to meet his maker.

He had earlier been on tour doing some 55 shows, some of them filmed for a television special later on, during which he worked with back pain that was "killin'" him and he had injections of something like Novocain down his spine so that he could go on stage and do the shows. His abdomen was swollen because his inactive and enlarged colon was no longer doing its job, pushing up into his lung cavity, making it difficult to breathe and sing as he wanted. His liver and kidneys were failing, he felt ill, sick to his stomach and threw up if he ate "more often than he admitted", said **Ed Parker** who went on some of the last tours. But though Elvis looked bad, felt bad he was still out there doing his best, giving everything he had to his fans, those people who always came, who



never let him down and of whom he said, “might be the only real friends I got some times--they never let me down.”

On the last tour he would do his finale salute and goodbye to the fans, then walked out of their sight and nearly fell down. A few times he did fall before his men could grab him; that is how much effort he put into doing those shows—hiding the truth so we his fans, would enjoy being there he gave us the very best he could at every concert.

There were days when he was in such misery he was taking a lot of medications for his numerous health problems, and one day was feeling so ill he knew he could not perform well; he asked his aid to tell the Colonel he wanted to cancel the show but the Colonel came up and went into Elvis’ room where his doctor was busy, shoving Elvis’ face in what appeared to be ice water to several people who witnessed that scene. The Colonel came out a few minutes later and growled to worried men standing by, that HE didn’t care what they had to do; ***nothing mattered- “except that man has to be on that stage tonight!”*** [This statement was also mentioned in **Larry Geller’s** book(s)] Elvis went out, was not himself the first few minutes, but he was doing his best, all that he could do under the circumstances. People who were there felt his misery, saw the tears and anguish he felt when he struggled to hit notes that normally were easy for him. One man who was close to center 5<sup>th</sup> row front said, “He had us all crying, we tried our best to give him strength, cheering for him and we could see it helped; he couldn’t see us but he knew where we were and made a point to wave, smile and bowed his head in acknowledgment. Thank the good Lord we got those seats!” (Yes, and thank you and your friends, sir; he noticed and spoke of feeling the love and support coming from the people in the audience. ) He said, “I couldn’t of made it without ‘em, bless their hearts.”

Later it was noted that the ice water used on Elvis’ face had been laced with astringent and his face, eyes and nose had been shoved into it repeatedly--to “wake him up” and get the swelling out of his face; it is unknown if it was his doctor that “laced” the water or someone else had; and it was told that Elvis was begging them to cancel the show, saying he wouldn’t be able to perform properly, that he couldn’t get enough air, he was weak, worried about fainting, and he didn’t want to mess up on stage. (One of his biggest fears was that he might pass out or die on stage--he didn’t want “to scare people like that”.) But Elvis did the show--and all the rest, working even though he was bleeding internally and proof of that was found in the bed where Elvis had slept; but those guys working for him made jokes about Elvis “just deflowering young maidens” when Elvis’ good friend **Ed Parker** questioned the bloody sheets. Elvis had already been whisked away for the next concert. He did them all-- went home to rest, went to Hawaii for a short vacation, and then came home to spend time with his beloved little girl. He had but a few weeks at home, before another tour was to begin; he said he didn’t want to go, he had not packed the personal items he normally took along and he was not interested in rehearsing, and in fact, appeared to have lost interest in singing. It’s said he spoke with his security chief

about the tour, but he had not scheduled nor made changes to the shows; it was noted by those who normally would have discussed plans that he had no interest in talking about it. His personal aid who normally would help him get ready to go said that Elvis was “mentally some place else and didn’t want to talk about the tour.” But Elvis had another appointment---and he kept it. Just hours before he was supposed to leave on another grueling tour schedule he died---“at home,” with his friends and “everything was all right”.

The autopsy performed on Elvis revealed his enlarged heart had stopped, possibly due to a seizure brought on by a lack of oxygen to the brain (the exact cause of death may never be confirmed, he had so many serious medical conditions), and that *his colon was completely blocked, swollen, and was not functioning- probably for days*--- the treatment (colonics) that were done off and on for years was no longer available for him because his colon that was so enlarged its walls had become fragile, could have punctured easily; that would have been a devastating crisis. It was noted that he had 3 compression fractures in the vertebrae of his spine, (similar to having “shin splints” which are considered to be like tiny fractures of the bone). This was a painful and difficult condition for someone who was working as Elvis did in those last performances, some of which were filmed for the television special shown in October of 1977. It’s also known today that migraine headache sufferers often develop a type of “scaring” of their brain cells and be prone to blood vessel bleeding and seizures.

To do that last tour Elvis lay down his ego, his vanity, his personal sorrows and pain, and he gave us, his fans the last gift of those performances- with a loving heart, knowing I believe, it would be the last time he would perform. Many noticed that the last scarf he gave out was done in a ceremonial fashion, as if it would be the last time.

**[Please read “Demystifying the Death of Elvis” in the last pages of this manuscript.]**

So like Elvis to put himself through it one more time; it was one of *those* moments, he “*had to do it, to leave us all a gift only he could give*” to make up for having to say “*Adios, till we meet again*” for the last time.

*Thank you Elvis, no one can ever match the gifts you gave-no one. Really!*

**Elvis:** (Speaking of the things being said and written about renowned people after their death.)

***“You know, you can tell how great a man's life has been by the number of people trying to tear him down, it's a shame because that man has loved***

*ones, who have to go on living, knowing the distasteful and derogatory tales are out there for all to read and hear. Usually those doing the talking don't even know the man, but look through their own lives and thoughts to judge him by, then hold up the dirty sheets for all to see when -if their own were held out, they'd be spotted and dirty also."*

**Elvis:** *"I want to be remembered for being someone who made people happy, gave them a time of peace and joy through what I have done with my time on this earth. If I can do those things, even just for a few people, then it's all been worth it – I've done what I'm here for. If I can do that, the vultures an' buzzards can have what's left- 'n their gonna have a real good time doin' it too-bet on that!"*

Judging from the number of writers, including "friends" etc and their harsh and often degrading comments about those last months of his life-he must be one of the most degraded and maligned human beings of our time. Sadly, his prediction did come true... those "bones have been picked clean" and still some who ought to be wiser now, still keep looking and fabricating when they can't find anything to improve their own presentation.

### ***Gone---but still with me forever--JulieSharonRose, England***

Elvis Presley has been a part of my life since I was a baby; my mum Eileen is an Elvis fan from the 50's. As a baby mum told me I used to roll her Elvis records around on the floor, gives new meaning to Rock & Roll, doesn't it! My earliest memory of him is sitting on my mum's lap to watch the film "*Speedway*" at about six years old and I enjoyed it even then. Also I've made a few good friends through loving Elvis.

I remember the day he died, I was asleep and mum walked in the room in the morning with tears in her eyes saying it was on the news that Elvis had died. I still remember the horrible stunned feeling which gave way to tears.

I still have my 1977 Elvis Annual that my granddad brought me for Christmas; it's one of my many treasures I cherish. Elvis was part of my growing up experiences too, I remember my first trip out on my own alone-I went to buy my 1978 Elvis Annual. I returned nervous, but triumphant clutching my book. My granddad used to playfully laugh when I told him I loved Elvis; he would jokingly reply me too!

Granddad Joyce said to me one day, that when he died he would visit me in spirit and bring Elvis with him to see me. I never knew if he was serious but when granddad

passed on and I was asleep that night I did feel as if someone sat down on my bed gently-who knows if it was Elvis, maybe it was.

I've always wanted to visit Graceland, Elvis' home in the USA, but sadly have never had that chance, but I am determined and if ever Good Fortune smiles on me, set aside a peanut butter sandwich for me Elvis, because this old Brit will come a visitin'!

[Post script: Julie's dear mum passed away rather suddenly a while after Julie composed this piece; I dedicate this to their beloved Mum who was surely met by Julie's dear granddad.]

Proud to be a Presley fan---Forever. **Julie Sharon Rose**

**Leona Miles Rogain**, Arizona, received in 1980

A friend became ill and couldn't use the tickets he had to see Elvis in concert, (1976) and his wife who wouldn't go without him gave them to me. Elvis was splendid when he walked on; everything perfect and he looked happy. He bantered with the audience, his band members and the girl singers throughout the show; he appeared to feel great and did a fantastic show. He was on stage a few minutes over an hour; the audience roared when he said he had to go, so he did another verse of his closing song. We were in the 15<sup>th</sup> row and didn't get down to the stage, too many people crammed down there.

Elvis was whisked away by his men very fast; we knew where they were staying so we headed there. He was already inside and out of sight, but people were coming to hang out and stare up at where they expected him to be staying. After about an hour he walked out on the balcony and waved; we were nearly blown over by the screams! We had a great time; I wish we could do it all again.

**Miley Anderson**, age 12, 1978

I went with my sister to see Elvis, he was so handsome. She said not to scream because it hurt his ears when so many screamed at once, but I heard someone screaming and it was me. I never felt so much feeling inside me before he walked out there, it was like being turned into someone besides me

and when my sister told me some of the things I was doing, I couldn't believe it. I guess it's true, other girls were screaming and carrying on in ways they wouldn't if it were not Elvis. He is so handsome and he loves everyone and it shows in his eyes and how he sings. My mother said he was too old for me, but I said I am getting older every day and one day he will see me differently, I hope.

I have been taught that God answers prayers; I wanted Him to keep Elvis strong and not let him get old and run down because I want to meet him again but closer up next time. I hope it is not too much to ask. (in Heaven)

God was thinking good when he designed and made Elvis; then he broke the mold my sister says.

(Post script to the excerpt of her letter above)

Thank you Mrs. Hill for working so hard to make your book (We Remember, Elvis) and to have the beautiful last photo of Elvis in it. He was tired and worn out but he was handsome to the very last day; his heart was full of love and it showed in every picture of him but the best of all in that one.

Miley

PS. If I have a son one of these days, his name will be Aaron Elvis.

*(She wrote to me a few years later to tell me she had a little blue eyed boy and both she and her husband loved Elvis and they did name their son after him!!! Elvis would be delighted!)*

**1967---Elvis' love for all of you—**

**“I get lots of letters, cards an' they send me things, ya know, some of 'em are handmade, knitted stuff – one time got a sweater (Snickers) it was pretty blue 'n white but it was big 'nuff for two of me! (Laughs) Musta been somebody thinking I was big as on screen or something! Yeah, keep stuff, people think 'nuff of me to -to send me things, write to me an' tell me 'bout how they feel, their life 'n all-- Some write to to cheer me up, make me laugh. Just seems the thing to do -eh-keeping them an' some of 'em I like to read now 'n then--gives me hope--, if it wasn't for them, my fans I would have none of this--it's mine because they like me 'nuff to buy records, see the fims--so I don't want to throw nothin' they give me away-- kinda like hearin' from family-- love 'em, really.”**

***1977 ---It was worth it all ---***

**I've been doin' this since I was nineteen you know, 'n it's been a trip. Man, it's been--something! I was eleven the first time--it was in church 'n I sang "The Old Rugged Cross" with momma an' daddy. I had a solo part an' then I sang at a fair--won 3<sup>rd</sup> or somethin', not 1<sup>st</sup> like's been told--.did "Old Shep" with my eyes shut whole time 'cause it scared me so. An' then I sang with some of the gospel groups 'round town 'n nearby once in a while when they'd let me at rehearsals or somethin'. At revival meetin's in the early years--my teens. That's what I thought I'd be, you know, just a group member. One of the guys, you know, an' when I was 'bout nineteen did the record--thin little scratchy thing for Momma. Don't know what ever come of it--must got lost or left somewhere, don't know. Maybe broken--they split real easy.**

**I was pretty excited when they called me in. Man, it was a dream comin' true! I didn't know what it meant, but it--there was a feelin'--inside me--somethin' was gonna happen. I jus' knew it--somethin' was tellin' me, get ready--its coming! I'd lie awake thinkin' of it all--all sorts of things. Dreamin' you know, but nothin' in all of 'em was ever--equal to what happened. To what keeps happening! Just couldn't picture this--not in my wildest dreams; fantasy and--and man, had some wild ones!**

**(Laughs) Real wild! Kid dreams, fantasy and-and most of 'em have come true in many ways. I wouldn't trade this life for any body's existence. No one I know man, equals my life. I love it! Ups-downs-whatever, it's been great. I'd do it all again-there are a few little things I'd do differently, but mostly, I'd do it just the same. (Pause, takes deep breath) Damn, I'm a fool-huh? (Laughs, then serious, softly says) It was worth it all, every tear 'n every heartbreak, every fear-- It was worth it all. Elvis Aaron Presley**

***If Elvis could feel this way about his life, how can we doubt that he enjoyed and loved his life as Elvis Presley?***



**1975**

**Elvis:** How long you 'n Jim been married now--?

*Wanda:* Well, in October it will be 15 years--

**Elvis:** Hummm--'n you all still --happy 'n ever' thing?

*Wanda:* Yep- I picked a good one- or maybe we're just lucky! (Laughs)

**Elvis:** Yeah--guess so. (Silence) Wish some of that luck'd rubbed off on me--guess it didn't---

*Wanda:* Things happen for reasons we often don't understand--good and bad-- someone I know told me that--not too long ago.

**Elvis:** Maybe-- ya know, startin' to quote me--better look out- people be sayin' you're crazy! (Laughs)

*Wanda:* Well, they might be right- sometimes I even think that!

**Elvis:** 'bout me? (Softly asked)

*Wanda:* (Laughs) No Elvis, not about you! You're about the least crazy person I know!

**Elvis:** (Snickers) Gawd, you ARE in trouble woman!

It was weird when visiting in Memphis and then going to Tupelo; two different people commented that I resembled Elvis' side of the family- some of his women cousins and one mentioned I reminded her of Elvis' aunt who lived at the house. I have never seen her in photos or person, so maybe I do...or did way back then...



*Wanda & Jimmie, as usual; squinting in the glare of the overcast sky in So. California;*

*We Okies had a perpetual squint most of the time.*

We lived in several places in So. California; beginning with the beach area of Huntington Beach, Costa Mesa and Laguna Beach areas. The weather was so nice in those areas, never too hot or too cool and it rained often so it kept the outdoor areas clean and the air fresh. We loved it near the ocean.

Everything began to change a lot after Elvis died; there were so many memories every where we went. It was hard missing him and so we looked for some place where there were no “land marks and personal attachments”. And have become “desert dwellers” though we have a great view of the valley, the mountains and can see for miles in 3 directions...we still have memories. To the South East is Palm Springs where Elvis lived off and on when in California. To the East is Idlewild Mountain range where he played, relaxed and filmed and to the North is Big Bear Mountain range where he filmed and visited off and on. And South West is the mountains that hide Laguna Beach in the Orange County area where he rode motorcycles and one time on the Fourth of July we were parked along the Beach Highway to watch the fireworks along the beach when a group of motorcyclists came by. Traffic was slow, we got a good look at the motor bikes and riders; one of them in full leathers and a helmet with a smaller rider dressed the same behind. It was Elvis and Priscilla riding with some of the guys, one of which also had a female rider behind. We were tickled to see them and when I told him later, he kind of laughed saying that was one of the biggest mistakes they’d made as traffic was at a dead stop further down, so they took a side road and went another way home. (Bel Air probably though he did not say.)

Everything down in the beach city areas has changed so much now it is difficult to find “memories”; the house we lived in for about 8 years is totally gone, and all of its neighbors. There is so much being built up its like going to a strange city and getting lost would be easy. I am glad though, because it didn’t bring up any hurt being there, and I do not ever plan to go back. Our memories are in our heart and mind...and forever-because we have shared them.

### **Wisdom from Elvis-**

Elvis: Ya know, when you meet people you feel comfortable with, ya know, you and they have the same “vibes” an’ understand one another, it’s a good thing. Because human’s need other humans to interact with; I learned that early in life, bein’ an only child, ya know. You bein’ one kinda makes us even..I mean in how we grew up feelin’ like no one else our age understood unless they were only young’uns also. Understand?

Wanda: Yeah, but I can’t remember feeling lonely; I ‘m sure there were times, they just didn’t stick in my memory.... You on the other hand, seem to feel lonely a lot-huh?

Elvis: Not so much now, but when I was little an’ there wasn’t anyone about to play with, or they didn’t want to play with me. Got that a lot some times, because...eh...like bein’ different or somethin’...I jus’ didn’t fit in to most eh...group playing.

It probably was because you didn’t have brothers or sisters...I was a tad-reticent and it was hard for me to fit in-especially in my Junior year at school. We moved several times; that meant different schools and kids... I can understand, that’s for certain!

Elvis: I know, man it’s tough bein’ weird-laughs.

Yeah...they thought I was “stuck up” or so the popular girls told me-she-the leader...complimented me on all my lovely clothes. I was speechless but did tell them my stepmother had made them. That was the last time I can recall them speaking to me, not that I cared if they did or not. They thought I was “strange” or so I heard.

Elvis: The weird talkin’ to the strange...Gawd! (He began doing far out other worldly noises and we cracked up laughing.)

I guess that people who used to live in Memphis feel the same as we did when we took a look back at our old “homestead”. The area around Graceland is so grown up, nothing like when he bought it now. There are shops, housing and traffic on that old “highway 51”. Elvis wouldn’t be happy about it, he enjoyed the space and quiet, though he was sort of complaining about being able to “hear the traffic” sometimes. As he said, “Life goes on, like it or not, so better to adjust instead of fussin’.”

He would be awed by how many people still come to see his home, his monument for being. He would be humbled, and I know he would cry with gratitude and happiness that “his people” still remembered and loved him. I like to think he is able to know, that he revels in it and that he is doing the things he wanted to do- be there for everyone when they need help, a hand to hold, a hug and maybe to cry with.

I asked him that when he died, would he want to return right away. He thought a moment then said, “No, ‘cause then I’d be able to go help the folks who might need it; you know in spirit you could do a lot more’n in person.”

I believe that he is doing just that; when we least expect it...”*out of the blue here comes Elvis....*” I’ve heard people say that, and I’ve read their stories...I am a believer! And he did give me the “key”....

(For a long time after Elvis died, I would dream of him. In those dreams he never said anything, just looked deeply into my eyes. And would hold out his arm, fist closed as if something was in his hand. Finally, in the last dream I had of him, I reached out to take whatever it was he held. When I looked at my hand in the dream I saw an old fashioned style key. I looked into his eyes; he nodded “yes” and slowly disappeared. I woke up, looked at my hand, my palm was bright red...no burning, nothing, just red as if I had held something tightly. I realized he was giving me the “key” to his life story. I wanted it to be free so all his fans could have it-and it is.)



The front entrance to our little house, a 16 ft tropical appearing porch “paradise”a but it is in the desert mountains and very dry. Jimmie’s coyote/ dog (Rose)standing by; I liked to sit at the little table or the red bench and have a cup of tea after the horses are all fed; about 7:00 am. I like the early, early mornings just before sunrise. The “white” area is the rest of the house which is a mobile, plenty of room for us and our critters. I chose it! We like living up here “on top of the world” kind of view of our valley’s way down below. And no one can get up here where we live unless we are expecting them and unlock the gate way down below. After living in fast growing communities for so many years-it nice to have “peace and quiet” as Jimmie says, the only noise not animal or birds -is far away unless he’s out making something, running saws, grinders and etc...



**Taken at Big Bear located in the mountains, the day of the green Jade Cross unexpected gift from Elvis-**



Those pine trees up there produced huge pine cones! I have some of them and keep them in the big basket that held the dried flowers and leaves that Elvis sent to me when he learned I had emergency surgery. It's been years ago I was up there, many fires have come into that area since and a lot of the big trees were burned; fortunately "mother nature" has a way of growing new again, even after severe burns come across her lands.



*A necklace and bracelet set Elvis gave me that he said were “colors you should wear”. It’s kind of funny when I think of his “choice” of colors- I had always preferred them!*

*It’s silver and would tarnish easily if not worn” and I haven’t worn it in years-it is very tarnished. He said he had worn the necklace once, a choker on him. If there are photos of him wearing it, I don’t have one. I am looking for a photo- it was the early 70’s in Vegas, he said some one gave him this necklace when he noticed them wearing it. The “bracelet settings” were attached to a black leather wrist band that fell apart from age. I’ve always intended to “fix another leather band and wear it-but been too busy-*



## SOME OF OUR FAMILY PHOTO MEMORIES



## STARLA

*Our daughter, Juliann Starla*

She was taking her band, **Lonestarr** around So. California, playing at the nicer clubs in and around the area, writing songs, practicing, practicing, practicing; they used the upstairs big room, kept the neighbors sitting outside in their yards to listen for a few hours a week. But never did have any complaints about “noise” – just the opposite, people wanted to hire them for events.

See her video songs on Youtube: she was about 19 when she wrote, played on and recorded this in her home studio. She wants to see what people of today think of her musical style. Maia who designed, contributed to and set up our [Elvislightecandle.org](http://Elvislightecandle.org) website made the video. She is very talented and designs all kinds of wonderful website “marques” and videos. Reach her at: [maia@newearthstar.org](mailto:maia@newearthstar.org)

To view her video and hear her songs go to:  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/StarlaHill?Feature=mhee>

Band members: guy with hat: Steve Nogar, Producer of their album, “Live Ta Night”. Steve’s father, Thorne Nogar recorded several songs for Elvis at Radio Recorders, (later known as Annex Studios) in Los Angeles, including some used for the movie “Jailhouse Rock”. Steve gave Starla one of the old Radio Recorder microphones that Elvis had used when recording. The studio was soon to be closed down; Steve’s father had passed away but the studio has been saved as a monument to all the early artists who recorded some of their hits in LA; it “reeks of history and celebrity” said one who had visited a few years ago. Some parts of “Jail House Rock movie when Elvis was “recording” were shot at this studio in the old section now known as “Annex” Studio 56.

Left to right: Art Kansa, bass; Larry Bloom, steel guitarist, Starla, Michael Barnes, lead guitarist.



PHOTO BY MARK EDSON

STARLA & LONESTARR

In March, 2012 the historic and world famous studio that was first known as “Radio Recorders” and later as Annex Studios, caught fire at 7000 Santa Monica Blvd. Many famous people came there to record at that site, including Elvis Presley in 1957. Other artists also recorded there, including Jimmie Rogers, Sam Cooke, Nat King Cole, Bobby Darin, Louis Armstrong, Pat Boone, Sam Cooke and many others, either when it was called Radio Recorders or later on Annex Studios. Elvis recorded some of his early hits, “Jailhouse Rock”, “All Shook Up”, “Loving You” and “Teddy Bear” and those are just a few of the hits recorded at 1041 Annex Studios. ( Elvis’ daughter has also recorded some of her songs at this studio.)

The firemen did arrive early enough to save most of the complex of buildings and the famous history, much of the artifacts and walls filled with photos of the famous who sang there was saved. The site had become a major tourist attraction due to so many famous singers coming there to record.

In the early years of “Radio Recorder” there were no recording facilities located in Los Angeles area that were available for sound tracks for movies, television shows and recordings, so a great many show biz personalities had used the studio from before the early 40’s, the place as the Firemen said, “reeks of history” and it would have been a great loss to lose it. Fortunately, most of the fire burned in the oldest section, formerly called Annex Studios, most of the artifacts had been moved from there to the newer area, and the loss was not devastating.

When Lonestarr did their recordings in the old Annex Studio, it had a lot of history hanging on the walls, photographs of famous singers, including Elvis of course. We have not been back up there in years, but anyone coming to Hollywood to sight see, should go and visit those memento’s before some tragic incident takes it away! It’s the history of musical genius of our lifetimes.



Performing at Knots Berry Farm- crib sheet list on floor.  
Lead guitarist Michael Barnes in the back ground...

**Next page: Starla's room, she's not yet 16, at home, where her walls were covered on two sides with Elvis and her other female "favorite" entertainer- "Uncle Elvis" was pretty much the star attraction! These are stuffed animals he gave her over the years, she still has them. The big donkey had baskets on each side -full of flowers and was the first stuffed animal she received when she broke her elbow jumping out of a swing.**

**The little kitten in her lap suddenly "showed up" under her dad's truck, parked on the busy street in front of our house; the kitten was barely 6 weeks old and alone, right behind the front tire near the curb. If her dad had not see it, it would have been killed when he left for work that August 22nd morning, 1977. It was as if someone brought the kitten, caused Jimmie to see it on that barely light morning, so that little kitten could comfort and bring smiles to "my little Julie" who was devastated by the loss of her "Uncle Elvis". She named the feisty little tomcat "August". Elvis had teased about being a "wolf in sheep's clothing" and that kitten was jet black of outer fur with a snow white under coat- a "sheep in wolf's clothing" -weird or merely strange?**





**August, the little kitty is lying in her lap, all big ears and bright eyes. The stuffed animals came from Elvis; her walls were plastered with poster pictures of him; she still has most of the collection, rolled up in tubes for safe keeping. And she collected images of him-whatever it was; it had to show him in good form. Detractors were “in danger” around her. He had laughed happily when I told him she was very “protective of her Uncle E.”**





*The box guitar from “Uncle Elvis” Juliann Starla at 10 years old, with the guitar from “Uncle Elvis”- one used in “Change of Habit” film; she learned to play it, secretly wrote a few songs and “recorded” them while inside her closet. She was shy about her dream to become a singer/songwriter. I was looking for blank cassette tapes and I picked one from some I knew were blank, or so I thought. I didn’t recognize the voice or the song on the tape, played it again and suddenly realized, “its Juliann!” I put it back in her room, (the “family stereo system was in there and all the tapes etc). She was a bit “put out” that I had heard her singing, though I told her I was surprised, and I liked it very much. It was a song about a cowboy and his horse- and was the beginning of her “becoming Starla, the singer/songwriter of the family. “Uncle Elvis” provided the “key” and gave her the guitar as an incentive.*



*Juliann Starla with her poodle from Uncle Elvis – “BeBe” is 3 years old, Juliann is 6 years old.*

*She said after his death, that had he lived, she would have been content just to go see him and listen to him; and wouldn't have thought about having a career in music herself. And then he was gone; she wanted to be able to feel the excitement of performing and thought it would be a lot like being in one of his audiences, and hoped that she would have fans that would be happy to come see and hear her and the band. In 1981 they were attracting crowds and she received fan mail; one letter really did amaze her – it was from a couple who had just had a baby girl. They wrote to tell Starla they had named their new daughter after her!*

**Elvis spoke about the needs children had**, explaining that parents were like Gods to a kid from the time they are born until they reach the age of young adults and sometimes even longer. Parent's main job was he said, to give their kids hope, a future and the ability to take advantage of their inborn talents. He said kids should not be criticized by parents when they are trying to accomplish something. They ought to be encouraged to fulfill their dreams and hopes by having parents who gave them confidence and helped them dream. When a child does something wrong, he said "don't yell at them and belittle them, sit them down and listen to their reasons, their thoughts" and he said, if more parents did that, they would learn more how to handle their kids problems. All kids are not alike, he said, but their dreams are the same regardless of background or race born into and it was the parent's job to help them do what they are here to do. "Every person born comes with a plan to follow, maybe they don't ever realize fully what it is, but some do and work hard to achieve that goal they came to fulfill." In dealing with children he said, "It works out best if you listen more than you tell, watch and learn; kids need guidance, not dictators"



*Everyday hug your kids, 'cause you may never get another chance in this world of sudden changes. Life is short, fill it with love and understanding...it'll feel good just being here."*

*Elvis was a wise man.*

*A favorite picture... "real men do wear pink!" said Starla.*





*And look super good doing it! This guy wore a pink suit coat in the 1950's!  
Imagine that! I kind of doubt anyone would have "called him out" either!*



*Birthday cake from Uncle Elvis; she picked out that little red suit herself! And an electric guitar for kids when she was barely 6 years old.*

*Bottom photo of her and her band performing at **the Crazy Horse Club-** In Southern California. They always drew big crowds and dressed up for performances. The club owners/managers loved having Starla & Lonestarr perform because they looked good and drew a crowd.*

*She and her band played the famous (and infamous at times) **Palomino club** in West Hollywood, Los Angeles, Ca. And had quite a following up there too;*

*They would give away several of their albums in drawings and that was a hit with the people there to see them. **Tommy Thomas**, the owner of the club made a point to say that he liked having her come in because the band wore nice outfits, she looked like a “star”, put on a good show and brought in good crowds who were there to enjoy the music, visit and have a good time. They didn’t bring in troublemakers or cause any problems for him.*

*I made a few of her costumes and decorated them with a little “glory”, (sequins and “glitter”). Some were skirts and tops-and one time while at the Palomino Club in summer and pretty warm as that club only had water coolers and with humidity, they didn’t work well...especially on stage area. So she was doing her thing and the band was playing behind her when I saw that her skirt was about to slide off...the tab I had sewen on (Velcro) was coming off due to her sweating up there under the lights! I quickly wrote a note and handed it to her but she was almost not gong to take it-finally she got the message and then she excused herself to the audience and said, “I’m losing my clothes-they won’t stay fastened: I’ll be right back-don’t want to shock anyone!”*

*Some fella in the crowd yelled, “Aw, stay on—we don’t shock easily!”  
The audience laughed.*

*Her group quickly filled in with song and music.*

*When she came back after someone had a safety pin...he met her at the stage with a long stemmed red rose he had bought from a fella that came around selling them. Anyway, her “failing costume” was a hit! She said to the audience, “I should have costume failure more often!” because she got cheered for coming back on the stage. I have to say, Elvis would have loved it-she learned a lot from him about how to “charge” up an audience.*



One of Starla's first **Press Enterprise Newspaper** clippings and a special gift from "Uncle Elvis", the ***Mickey Mouse*** watch Elvis gave to his "little Julie" for her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday; he had one like it with a leather band, and he acquired it by "trading" a watch he was wearing for the ***Mickey Mouse*** watch another fellow he'd met had on. So when he asked me what she'd like- I said "maybe a watch, something sturdy and simple"; he called up a friend who worked at ***Disneyland*** and bought one for her, but had a white gold band put on; it was "sturdy" and "a girl would like it" he thought. She still wears it now and then - it keeps perfect time 34 years later.



Starla Hill

## Starla, Lonestarr to be attraction at Fair on July 3

Starla Hill, a Riverside singer-songwriter, will be the feature of the Starla Hill Show, 7 p.m., July 3 at the 37th Annual Moreno Valley Fair.

The country-western star and her six-piece band, Lonestarr, will be the Fair's Thursday attraction.

Starla cut her first mini-album "Live Ta'Nite" a while back, and has recently been doing videotapes.

The young star was given her first guitar lessons when she was three years old by the late Elvis Presley, a friend of the family.

**Elvis: “ I don’t believe in concidence...things happen for a reason, sometimes we don’t get it right away but if you take the time to think it over and figure out why things went the way they did, you will see the little pieces fallin’ into place...making it happen the way it did. I wasn’t anyone but for some reason God looked down an’ saw His handiwork and He made things in my life happen. Now why, is the question; it wasn’t a ....concidence...chance really had nothin’ to do with-with what my life has been. No way man!”**

## **FATE....**

I was just turning 16 and just about out of high school and working as a file clerk in Tulsa, Oklahoma; my Aunt **Lillian Love** was office manager. One day she came in from lunch carrying a newspaper, opened up to a full page ad featuring 21 year old Elvis Presley's face nearly life sized in black and white. "Look at this!" She said," Have you ever seen a more handsome man any where?" Several ladies gathered around and began "oh-ing" and "ah-ing"; my aunt announced, "He's at the Coliseum tonight; its completely sold out-- and---Wanda June and I will be there!"

She hadn't mentioned him or going to see his show to me; most likely wanting to surprise me--- and she did! I was different from her in several ways, she was into what money could buy, and she spent a lot on nice clothing for me and traveled around the United States; I went along several times. However, because I was raised a strict Pentecost; "no way would I be going to see that "son of the devil" up there wiggling around like he was possessed!" Those words were barely out of my mouth when with a disgusted look my way she held up the tickets that were 2<sup>nd</sup> row center, and said, "Who wants to go with me?" I was nearly mowed down by those women, some of whom were married, a lot older than 21-and all of whom were rushing to grab that extra ticket!

Wouldn't you know, because she was dating a lawyer who was also a city official she and the other lady got *to meet* Elvis backstage before the show-and he kissed them both! When I told him that story about how I could have met him way back when he was a "mere child"- he "tee-he-heed" and then said, "An' I spent the night there---alone!"

**[Was it fate - that *seven* years later I had another chance---to meet him?]**

I've thought about things a lot in the past few years since Elvis left; it still is as if Jimmie and I were somehow destined to meet, stay together all these years, have our daughter who along with us, became a member of that huge group of people who were in some way tied together as if destiny was our future here at this time on earth. We were so fortunate; we had "contact" with the being that was called Elvis Aaron Presley. A lot of people did have contact, more than anyone will ever know or read about, that's certain. It felt right, now it just feels a vast number of things and ways, a few being loss, heartbreak and longing to be able to "go back and do it all again" as Elvis commented about his life, saying he wouldn't change but a few things, otherwise he would do it just the same. I don't know yet if I would say that of my life, it's been a real "trip" also. And there was a lot of separation and torn up times as well, but they were during childhood and I haven't any really painful or even disturbing memories so as he would say, "It's okay, I ain't bleedin'."

The best time of our lives (we 3 took a survey) all of us say, was when Elvis was alive and we could go see him perform, talk with him via telephone and look forward to the next time we could see him-even if it was only on stage by that time in our lives. Starla can barely remember being at the **International Hotel**-now the Hilton, she was only 9 years old but I remember. She was seated at the front of the table where we were seated just above the lower tables that were near the front of the stage. We looked down onto those and the people seated there. It seemed like hours before the show began and it was loud at first, then the curtains closed and we waited for Elvis who came walking out looking like a "god" as one lady said. I had brought little opera glasses and when Starla saw me using them, she took them out of my hand and I didn't get them back until the show ended. She sat there with them glued to her forehead a few minutes and then wheeled around and asked, "Is THAT Uncle Elvis?" I said yes and she watched him from then on, not saying a word. He left the stage; she spun around and asked is he coming back! I said no, the show is over." And then she gave the opera glasses back. I had to laugh at her reaction to seeing him "live on stage" because I felt exactly the same when I first saw that guy walk out-it was very hard to put the views of him as he was "off stage being normal" together with the dynamic man on stage- even for an adult. He *was* bigger than life on stage-and it was ELVIS out there, doing his thing. Wowing **his** people, the fans!

A lesson learned from our "Elvis experience" is: If you get the chance to do something totally out of character or way out there in "maybe some time" – don't wait!! Make the memories you will enjoy the rest of your life. I have met so many people who could have seen Elvis-but for whatever reason, they put it off. Then- it was too late. Life is here NOW; it doesn't wait for any thing or anyone. And time speeds by; its regrets that drag on and on- when you "could have and didn't".

Written on a sign in So. California that stands in a group of trees off the 60 freeway is a weather worn hand painted message that says it all.

“Elvis was here! Nothing else matters.”

Elvis had a lot of jewelry, in this next photo you can almost see the “white” gold curb necklace that is the one he took off and put into my hand the last time I was “allowed” to see him in Vegas. I could see the shows, but was never allowed to go back stage or up stairs or any where else he might be seeing visitors or friends. Things had become very, very tight around him; his “body guards” and “handlers” were on guard day and night. People Elvis had befriended and who had been welcome to visit with him were denied on a routine basis. Elvis probably never knew to what extent that had become the norm because most people who were his friend out of show business etc, were protective and guarded where he was concerned. None of us would tell him because it would “upset him” and cause discord and strife in his “world”. I am not the only one of those “friends” who witnessed the changes; however we were all willing to “follow instructions” to make his life easier.

That necklace was “borrowed” by a lady friend who never gave it back to me; she said she left it for me on the dresser in our hotel room. However, it “disappeared” never to be seen (by me) again though I have in times past heard that “someone who used my name” was trying to sell in Vegas, that necklace and was also trying to sell other items said to have been Elvis’. I never saw this person, nor do I know for sure who it was...pretending to be me...but I do know about that silver necklace that “vanished” from our room the same day he gave it to me... I would NEVER sell anything he gave to me-nor would my family, unless of course it would for some dire event or circumstance and we were desperate. Those things happen sometimes, so I hope that whoever it was selling things, managed to get enough cash to help solve her problems. I still have the photo and video film where he is wearing it- it looks better on him than in my jewelry box!



Singing “I, John” after rehearsals-with his group-

He said sometimes he had to shave twice a day; his beard grew because he stayed up nights more than during the day and he “claimed” that hair grew faster when we sleep and since his days and nights were reversed-he had to keep an electric razor around or else he’d look like a “were wolf”.

Yeah-right! But it was kind of rare to see a growth of hair on that face and he wasn’t making movies!

I asked him why his beard came in black...when he actually was nearly a blond and he said, “Mind over matter baby, an’ to me, it matters!”

It must have “mattered” a lot! He didn’t want “racoon eyes” so he had his eye lashes and eye brows dyed black as well as his hair. I still remember how “hairless” he looked in Blue Hawaii and I wondered about that; he looked so very young when he returned from the army days; like a teenager. He truly was a “changeling” at times in his life.

He kept me laughing telling of his “horrendous” experiences in the movie days when they’d bring in a “box of tools” and set about pulling the hair out of his nose with pliers and an electric sanding machine to sand the skin off his face. He said a guy had to be “hairless” for the cameras or it’d look like “brush and trees” growing out of their nose. I remember commenting about him not having a bush of hair on his chest when he did “Blue Hawai” and he said, “They used hair remover an’ lightener on it, so no roots showed, ya know. ‘n when it came back, it was darker an’ thicker ‘n had to use the damn stuff all the time after that.” He said the smell of it made him throw up. (Hair remover creams) He was “going natural” as he put it after he stopped making films -he let his eye brows grow out. But he didn’t let his nose get “bushy” and he tried to be clean shaven all the time, and his beard did grow in quickly! And it wasn’t “blond” either! He did dye his eyelashes or rather; Charlie Hodge dyed them for him. He also did a good dye job on Elvis hair, although he had some kind of funky hair cuts at times; but Larry Geller could fix that.



## In His Own Country---

*I recall Elvis saying when so many things were coming out in print about John Kennedy after his death, “You can tell a man's worth, his greatness by the number of people trying to cut him down when he's dead.” He lamented the tales, some unsavory, and said, “You know the man has children who will have to live with this the rest of their lives. The written word is sharper than a serpents tooth, and never dies, lurking forever, always ready to spring forth at any time. It's a shame that people have to know every detail of a man's life, relishing every spot when their own lives, if held up for inspection would be found full of stains.”*

*The following is taken from the King James Bible, Matthew 14:54, and after my alterations, Matthew 14.57. I used this in “We remember, Elvis”, and am using it again.*

*“And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their own synagogue, and they were astonished, and said, “Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works?”*

*Is this not the labor's son? Is not his mother called Gladys? And is he not the one with relatives on relief? Did he not come from “Shaker Town”? Where for did he get off on being so high and mighty – called a “king”?*

*“And they were offended in him, but Jesus said unto them, “A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own home.”*

*Truer words than we might think---his own “home life” was at times more complicated than anyone other than he who lived them might ever know. He said he liked to go “home to Graceland” that there behind his gates he could “shut my door ‘n lock it.”*

**ELVIS:** “God lives in each of us; the heart is the home of the spirit and that is from God, given to each of us. So take some time, listen to your heart talkin’ because it’s God speakin’ to you. People get so busy, doin’ this an’ that, rushin’ around, stewin’ over things we forget to be quiet and listen to Him speakin’ to us...and He will if you want to take the time to listen. God never intended us to forget where we come from...it’s His hand that made us, put us here in the spot we are in but it’s what we do with it that is important...so listen! He has a plan for each of us but if we don’t take a minute or two to listen think about it an’ then follow what our heart tells us...He will stand aside and let us fall on our faces...or on our ass... (He chuckles) Don’t be stupid; we are given all we need to get things goin’...but we got to “wait on the Lord, for He is all wise and knows what we need...we might not agree right away, but in the end if we bend our will to His wishes, it’s the right thing an’ you’ll be glad you took time for prayer and patience. It don’t ever hurt anybody to get on your knees before God; ‘n’ while you’re down there, thank Him for all the blessings you already have.” (1972) Talking to fans who were at his gates at 1:30 am waiting for him to come home from the studio. Thanks, Stacy!

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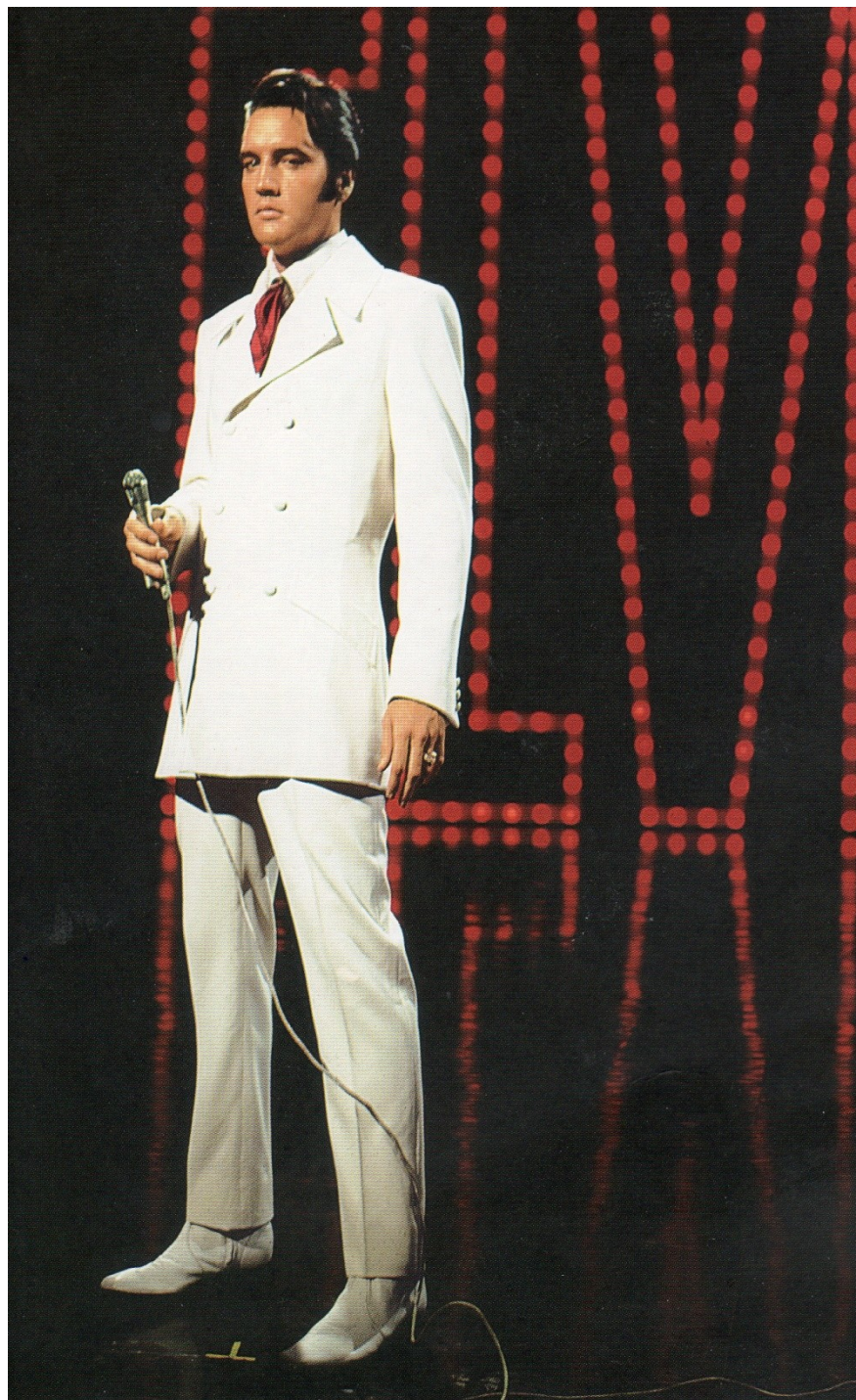
Christ's testimony of John

The 1951 King James Bible, Elvis gave it to me. He had underlined many passages throughout that had personal meaning to him. It was obviously a well used Bible, with the cover coming loose and pages folded and marked with his notations both in printed hand and long hand script. Most was underlined in red but a few were done with a black pen and also a blue pen. Many of the things he underlined are the examples of how he lived, what he thought and the ways he interacted with people he worked with, met some where, his fans, and those he lived with on a daily basis. He tried to emulate the man he admired, had great love for and a strong belief in, every day of his life, and many people who realized his spiritual nature have commented that he truly practiced his beliefs. Such as when people “wronged him” in some ways as happened in his last months of life, he forgave them. This Bible's underlined page speaks of how to “treat” one’s enemies, etc... proof that he practiced what he studied and believed.

There were a couple of pages from fans, probably given to him at concerts by those able to get to the stage edge. And there was a sort of prose like poem written in printed hand by him -it was composed of his thoughts on what he had been reading from the Bible. One small folded paper contained a request from Elvis to his Lord, he wanted understanding, trust and love to remain between he and his separated at the time, wife. From all accounts since his death and before, his request was “granted by his Lord” because they always were able to “put up a good front” for their little girl, who says she didn’t notice they weren’t a couple anymore because they were together a lot and mainly, she thought “they just had a lot of houses”.

He sometimes commented about how so many people wanted to “take him down” and wondered what it was they actually thought and why. The passages he has underlined in the Bible are about loving your enemies and doing good unto those who do harm or try to do harm to you. The last one underlined asks “why doest thou beholdest the mote in thy brother’s eye and perceivest not the beam in thine own eye?” and that is what he quoted in speaking of his “distracters”. He said he had a “lot of flaws” but that he kept them in control as much as he could, “God willing” he added, “an’ the best way to do that is praying, it don’t hurt to get down on your knees now an’ then – God don’t judge anybody who’s askin’ him for help...he blesses them.”





*Photo from the televised Singer Special when he performed “If I Can Dream” on his “Come Back Show” 1968*

## ***The Elysian Song***

***“The aspirant, under the guidance of his teacher or master***

-St John designates this being as an Angel – enters a temple to undergo many trials wherein his strength, will power and perseverance are tested to the utmost. If the disciple is victorious, his reward comes as his spirit is bathed in Elysian air and he is companioned by angelic beings of transcendent beauty and splendor.”

**{C. Heline, “New Age Bible Interpretations, VOL. V.”}**

The Elysian song is known as the song of the Angeles, the celestial choir and sounds of the divine that may be heard when one is attuned to them, usually in deep meditation or prayer.

Surely, by the definition of the above quotation, Elvis Presley’s life was an initiation of the “Elysian Song”. He underwent “many trials wherein his strength, will power and perseverance” were “tested to utmost.” As a child he was visited by Heavenly Beings who showed him his destiny, and told him they would be with him until he no longer had need of them.

Elvis’ Aunt Lorene recalled a very young **Elvis**: “...on one occasion when we missed him and finally he came down out of the pasture and said he had been talking to Jesus. He had tears running down his little cheeks.”

**Mary L. Jones** was seventy-four when Wanda June Hill visited her in 1979. Mrs. Jones held dear to her heart the memories of an Elvis no journalist could have invented (as so many have tired). She is a simple woman, with simple memories of a young boy, bared by poverty not of his making, struck to the bones by the cruelty of a time and place far from his true home. Mary lived next door to Elvis and his parents in Tupelo, Mississippi – next to the same one room dwelling in which Elvis had been born and over which the strange blue light shone on the night of Elvis’ birth, lighting his father’s way to the well. Later, she then moved into the same housing project as did Elvis and his family when he was 13. Mary shared with Wanda her recollections of Elvis as he was then, and also the tragedy

in which he lived in that time past, when Elvis Presley (the singer) was still only a dream from a Shaman's Pipe, a faint song in a lonely boy's heart.

***In Memory of Mrs. Mary Jones---***

Mary Jones sat in her rocking chair, spitting tobacco into a nearby jar, as she unrolled the canvas of her memories, and painted a tender yet graphic story for Wanda on that rainy day in 1979.

**The following is Wanda Hill's condensation of Mary Jones' conversation with her:**

"Mary knew Elvis from his birth...Elvis adored his mother, cried after her and always obeyed her. He was very small, thin and sickly and he had fevers and colds often, and very bad coughs every winter. Mary would worry about it, give him medicine she had for her own kids and gave him hot drinks and food. Elvis was so polite; often he wouldn't take anything until he had asked his mother. When he was three he nearly died from fever, he was paralyzed and couldn't breathe normally. Gladys (Elvis' mother) was beside herself, there was no money for a doctor and Vernon (Elvis' father) was gone for a while, working on a road gang, after being accused of "forging a check, changing the amount by a couple of dollars" after selling a pig. Young Elvis was traumatized by the "loss of his daddy" and that added to his mother's worry. An old black woman took Elvis, wrapped him in hot towels and kept him alive. She breathed into his lungs (artificial mouth to mouth resuscitation) and then when his fever cooled she began putting him in tubs of warm water, making him move his legs and arms and taught him to walk again. Gladys was working in the cotton field and left Elvis with the black ladies who watched the little kids. Elvis ran around all day naked, brown as the Negro babies he played with while his mother worked. The black woman would put him in the pot they had washed clothes in just before Gladys came in, then they dressed him and he was "spiffy for his mamma come evening time". Elvis was the favorite of the black women, "they sang to him, played with him and cuddled him all day and he got stronger and stronger and was happy that summer..."

(Speaking about Elvis) "Mary said, "He was such a sweet boy, so good hearted and kind and was especially nice to old people and kids and needy people." Mary's son was killed in Korea. Elvis had followed him about and worshiped him as he grew up in Tupelo. When her son died, Elvis was a singer and doing well. He heard about it and came to visit her. He brought her \$500 in cash and gave her a \$400 dollar check to buy her son a tombstone. He brought her a bouquet of red roses, sat in her house and cried over her son, told her how much he had thought of him and how he loved her and felt close to them all these years. He said when he left that he thought she could use a new

roof. The next day roofers came, put one on, then painted her house and put down new carpet-it was a two room house next door to one of Elvis' old places in Tupelo."

(As a small boy Mary said) "Elvis used to sneak off from home to go to a creek that had a small cove with still water and he went there to pray and to talk to Jesus, he said. He also said he talked to the "angels" on the water and they sang to him. He told his mother when she came and caught him, and she said he was evil, doing evil things and whipped him. She also spanked his hands with a board once because he was "using devil sign language" (hand signals of some kind). Elvis was small, yet he didn't cry even though she hit his hands until they were bright red. He told her when she started crying, "It's okay Momma, you don't understand, it's okay". Then he cried too and hugged her. Elvis also liked to sit in the moonlight and stare at the sky, but when asked what he was doing he would say, 'getting moon beams in my heart' and said he could hear music in the heavens – beautiful singing, angels on high. His mother told him never to tell people because they would say he was evil, crazy and lock him up. And his grandmother said Gladys often washed his mouth out with soap when he did talk about hearing voices and seeing things. So Elvis learned to keep quiet and only told a few who understood about people with the "gift" as Mary called it. Elvis she said had "the gift" and had it in abundance. She told him to treasure it, that it was God talking to him. He hugged her and said, "Thank you Mrs. Jones, I know." He'd say to her, **"Someday, I'm going to tell people all about God and they'll listen to me! I'm going to make them listen to me all over the world!"** And they did-he reached the world with his gospel singing.

"Mary related that when Elvis was about twelve he was crying, she asked him what was wrong. He said, 'Mrs. Jones, I got nobody to talk to and I need to so bad.' She said to him. 'Talk to your momma', and he said, "My momma don't understand; I can't explain it –she just gets upset. I can't upset her with this. I got nobody! I'm scared that no one will ever understand. Do you know Mrs. Jones, what it is to be all alone in a place that is not ever going to be your home? I am going to be there – and I got nobody to understand.' And he cried uncontrollably. He was so upset she tried to speak with his mother but Gladys didn't appreciate her comments, saying that Elvis was imagining things and she thought it was because he didn't have brother and sisters to play with. She told her he had nightmares that caused him to be afraid to fall asleep and that young Elvis was "sleepwalking and dreaming" and he would grow out of it. She also asked Mrs. Jones not to talk to Elvis when he was upset, just to send him home to her."

Elvis' mother, **Gladys Love Presley**; "(As a child) Elvis would hear us worrying about our debts, being out of work and sickness and so on. He would say 'Don't you worry none. When I grow up, I'm going to buy you a house and pay everything you owe at the grocery store, and get two Cadillac's; one for you and daddy and one for me. 'Little as he was, the way he'd look up at me, holding my skirt...you know, I'd believe him.'"



In a January, 1978 interview with ‘*Good Housekeeping*’ magazine, Elvis’ father, **Vernon Elvis Presley** spoke of his son, and the insight he had concerning him.

“I believed Elvis’ career and contribution to the world were fated from the first. For during his early life, certain things happened which convinced me that God had given my wife and me a very special child for whom he had very special plans.

“Gladys and I were so proud of Elvis and enjoyed him so much that we immediately wanted more children. But, for reasons no doctor could understand, we had none...When Elvis was about 10 years old, the reason was revealed very clearly to me in a way I can’t explain. I can only say that God spoke to my heart and told me that Elvis was the only child we’d ever have and the only child we’d ever need. Elvis was a special gift who would fill our lives completely.”

“As soon as I realized that Elvis was meant to be an only child, I felt as though a burden was lifted. I never again wondered why we didn’t have additional sons and daughters.”

During his son’s life, Vernon had difficulty accepting Elvis’ metaphysical beliefs, and yet, after Elvis’ death, he came to acknowledge what he had really known all along, what had been whispered into his inner mind, about this “very special child.”

**Ted Harrison, from “Elvis People, the Cult of the King”,**

“He believed in UFOs and read voraciously the esoteric theories which referred back to Atlantis, a brotherhood of masters, and visitors from Venus...A poem by a London fan entitled, ‘Message from Elvis’ talks of ‘our friends the Milky Way, mysterious in the sky’ and ends:

I know those years on earth

were really just a trial

for each to find a mate

of their eternal style.

For death is not goodbye

for we shall meet again  
to share eternal youth  
on some Nebula plain--

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**Larry Geller, in his book, “If I Can Dream”**

“Elvis believed that he was working under the aegis of these masters (*The White Brotherhood*), including Jesus. He felt somehow connected to them and thought they had helped him...In Elvis’ mind, his life was being directed divinely by the brotherhood of masters and illuminated beings, enlightened entities that have existed since time immemorial.”

(Larry's books are available through Amazon.com or by ordering through his website listed in the index sections of this book.)

*(The use of the word “white” represents a spiritual meaning as the color of white is a pure color and representative of the spirit – The “Spiritual Brotherhood”). wjh*

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(The following was transcribed from a telephone conversation between Wanda Hill and Elvis in 1973)

*Wanda: You look like your father’s side of the family –and your mother’s also-they are all nice looking people.*

**Elvis:** Yeah – you know, I look like my people. We all look pretty much the same, straight nose and all, and we are blond. I don’t like being blond – I wanted to be different. It fits this incarnation – fits what I am here on Earth-to be dark, I mean.

*Wanda: You mean your former life? Your eh-what did you call it?*

**Elvis:** My former entity – my home out there –where I am from.

*Wanda: How did, I mean, when did you figure out that you are from out there-as you say?*

**Elvis:** When I was about ten they told me.

*Wanda: Who?*

**Elvis:** The two men who talked to me-have talked to me since I was five when they first presented themselves to me and said, “I am that I am and you are you –we will be with you, as your Lord is with you until you have no need of us again.” And they showed themselves to me-as Light forms, and one of them touched me and I felt Light inside me-floating sort of. And the other one said when he put his hands on my head, “You are now and you will be for all time.” I didn’t understand then – I was scared, but they said not to be and told me to speak of it to no one. But I told my mother and (he laughs) she washed my mouth out with soap and spanked me for making up things and lying. So I never told her anymore about them.

*Wanda: How often did they talk to you? Just when you were alone?*

**Elvis:** At night-when I was alone and sometimes when I was in the-the closet.

*Wanda: The closet?*

**Elvis:** Yeah –hiding or-or being punished or something-you know.

*Wanda: So you heard voices – what did they tell you to do?*

**Elvis:** Nothing--- just to listen. They played music for me, showed me things – instruments like in sounds, and they told me about my home and who I used to be and still am- and that I would- would-would be a great person in this life-and they showed me a guy dancing kind of, on stage under lights dressed in-in white, with colors all around, and they said-said to learn. I didn’t know what he was doing-the man, you know, but then I later saw karate and I knew immediately then-it was me-they had showed me the future.

*Wanda: What else-what did they tell you about?*

**Elvis:** Oh, many, many things. Most of it too far over my head-I was just little-but it made a deep impression. I had dreams-dreams about being on stage and singing-but I didn’t realize it was me- it was like I was seeing a silent movie. And...(he pauses.)

*Wanda: You mean no sound? No music?*

**Elvis:** No-no at first none, then they talked to me, told me to listen hard-in a quiet place to listen. And so I got so I listened to everything –music especially. I loved the

way it made me feel inside—so-so good. I don't know the words to-to ever tell anyone about it. It is like unto a great sense of-of soaring, of freedom and a-a rushing of my-my emotions through something that-that sort of (is) like being cleansed. I can't tell you – it's a feeling. But I can tell you it is the best feeling I have ever had that was mine alone, a personal feeling not shared with another...not like sex...I'm not talking about that kind of emotional feeling; though I would liken it to that in intensity. But it is better-better! ...It's divine, celestial, Godly. I don't know the words. Sometimes I feel so stupid – they are right there, and I don't know them! In fact, the English language is so-so lacking in expression; all of them (languages) are as a matter of fact. It's---this is silly, I know, but sometimes I feel like I could talk, speak, whatever, in some other tongue, but I am not sure what it is. You know? It's like, I know it, but I don't consciously know it or something. Like maybe, I used to, but have forgotten.

*Wanda: Did the men who talked to you speak it?*

**Elvis:** I-I---don't...know. Maybe they did and I heard it in English? Hell, I don't know-

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**From the magazine 'T.V. Movies Screen', 1972 interview with a young woman, who is describing her visit with Elvis:**

{“He stopped every few minutes as if he were lost in a daydream. Sometimes he spoke so softly that I could not hear him. It was almost as if he were praying or chanting instead of talking to me. I left the room and when I returned he was still in the chair. He seemed to be in deep thought. Some of his words seemed to be in a language other than English. I didn't recognize the other language. I tapped Elvis. He moved quickly which startled me. “I'm sorry” is all he said as we walked into the next room.”}

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**(Continuing with the same conversation from 1973)**

*Wanda: When did you start hearing music: Where you on stage in dream then?*

**Elvis:** Oh yeah- it was-it came slowly. Simple at first, then I began, as I listened to the radio and such, to hear more and to put my own ideas together, and I wanted so to have a piano or something –Momma taught me at church and I loved that. So they got me a guitar-it helped, but I heard more complicated things.

*Wanda: How old were you?*

**Elvis:** Six or so—yeah, six. Funny, now it all makes sense. I wish they'd talk to me now.

*Wanda: They don't?*

**Elvis:** No –not much – it's not like it was –kinda hard to hear them now- so much is in my head –you know-the music, the noises of the crowd. I can't hardly hear them for it- I can't-can't shut off the noise.

*Wanda: Who else knows about your voices?*

**Elvis:** Oh Charlie- some of the guys-they think I'm crazy though-they-they don't understand-its way over their heads. They think I'm talking to ghosts or something-they don't-don't have any grasp of it. But that's okay – I don't need them to understand anyway.

*Wanda: You know, you are pretty weird –but I want you to know that it does not seem strange to me, only curious. I've heard voices, seen some strange things and so you seem pretty normal to me.*

**Elvis:** (Laughs) the weird talkin' to the strange, huh?

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**Wanda Hill described to me two photographs of a young Elvis that were shown to her by Mary Jones:**

“He was so pathetic looking...so thin, sad eyed and woeful in all but one. In it he had caught a big fish and he was grinning and his eyes were shining as he held it up so proudly. Vernon his father stood beside him, so young! He was really slouchy-poor looking. Elvis was standing with his fish, wearing shoes that looked old-one foot turned on side as if they hurt his feet and his pants were patched on the knees. His shirt was too big and his hair too short and he had on a hat that was too big also. But he had the happiest smile and eyes –one of the few pictures of him young that looked happy.”

“She had another of Elvis and her son. Elvis was little, looking up at him adoringly and the young man was giving Elvis a toy pistol which Elvis wore in a holster and belt that was about to fall off his little hips. He was barefoot but there were patches

of snow on the ground. The bigger boy had a coat- Elvis had none and was bareheaded. Their old car, sat in the background with a flat tire on the front. It had snow on the window and hood.'

**Elvis to Wanda:** "Sometimes when it's late and I can't get to sleep, or else I've woke up early 'n everyone's quiet, I lie here thinkin' bout before-before now. It's kinda scary considering I mean, I wasn' anyone special, just a poor white trash kid with nothin' goin' for him 'n not much better ahead either. I mean, I wasn't smart! I'm pretty stupid in many ways. I'm not a brain, hell; I damn near failed in school. It's a wonder I graduated – they took pity on me! Was already a year older and behind a grade so-so they passed me on. It sure as hell wasn't cause I was smart or anything.

And then, what was I doin'? Goin' to school, workin' with "lectritions" learnin' wirin', studyin' how to repair appliances and such 'n deliverin' stuff for a hardware. Man, a real definitive goal in mind! But you know, I dreamed. I dreamed of doin' something big. I wasn't sure what – then too, I wanted to sing, get in a gospel group, or somethin' and I really did. I spent every minute in music, went to every singing I heard about and could reach. I listened to the radio – momma said, 'Son, you're goin' to have grow yourself some more ears the way you're listening so hard.'" She was right. Tried to hear everything – not miss a show. I wanted so much to do something big, to have things for us and for the family. It hurt me to see how some of 'em lived. We were so much better off, even though we didn't have much either. We were living like kings in comparison.

Really hard to picture-huh; but it's so. Some of my relatives were farmers -most of 'em, really. Sharecroppers and such; you don't get rich farmin' somebody else's fields - not then, not in those times, I mean. My family didn't 'n I don't recall anyone else doin' so either. Back then, to me don' well consisted of havin' a roof over my head -that didn't leak! Food on the table three times a day, a car that would run 'n cash enough left over for gasoline 'n maybe a movie on Saturday night. To me, in those, days, wealth meant havin' money left after all that!

It's funny, I've never forgotten those days, the feelings and wants from those times, 'n hope that I never will. Keeps my feet on the ground 'n my head out of the clouds; because when people forget where they came from they also start thinkin' too much of themselves and that's when the trouble begins. You never get so high and mighty, full of self but what you can't get knocked down. It's better to keep a level head about it in the first place.

I've been doing this (performing) since I was nineteen you know, 'n it's been a trip, Man, it's been something...I wouldn't trade this life for any body's existence. No one I know man, equals my life. I'd do it all again - there's a few little things I'd do differently, but mostly. I'd do it just the same. (Pause-takes a deep breath) Damn, I'm a fool –huh? (Laughs, then becomes serious) It was worth it all, every tear an' every heart break and ever' fear. It was worth it all.

*(If after all he had to “put up with” and the physical ills he suffered, he could feel so strongly and look so kindly on it all, how can we not be relieved and yes, happy that he could see past the hard part- and glory in the wonderful brightness of it all. “Yea though I walk through the valley of Death, I shall fear no evil. Thy rod and thy staff protect me, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord all my days. Amen” He said this with some slight variation of the original wording.)*

Those comments were made by a grateful, considerate, thoughtful and enlightened man, one who lived his life gently, with kindness to others, determination to do “the right thing” when he could, and who handled his trials and errors with grace and dignity, taking the blame for whatever happened because “It's my life, I live it, so I am the one who made the mistakes, what ever they are, no body else did it for me. So, just pick up the pieces an' go on tryin' to do better. That's what life is about, tryin' to do the best you can with what you've got.”

He was the first to say he was not perfect, and as a human being he tried not to cause problems for anyone; he said he tried to live his life in such a way as not to harm anyone, or cause them pain or bad memories. He tried not to offend God or cause anyone else to do something that would hurt them or “mess them up mentally”. And he said he prayed daily, sometimes more than once when he needed help within himself. And he felt blessed by God for being allowed to be Elvis Presley, and that without the people, his fans that “never let me down” he could not have had or accomplished all the things that he had done. When asked if he thought his fans were proud of him he said, “Lord, I hope there is somethin' I've done they're proud of-I'm real proud of them!”

(Elvis had worked in Memphis and was learning electrical wiring, crawling beneath old buildings and some newer; being young of course he'd get that “job” he said, telling that he was “covered in cob webs” like he'd been “cacooned by somethin' big!” when he exited from under there. His daddy had mentioned that being an Electrician would be good job security, so Elvis had taken his advice, until he said, “God tapped me on the shoulder 'n said, “that ain' it son...” un started makin' me into what I am today.”)



Collage by Maia. Elvis and his “lil’ darlin’, Lisa Marie

I asked Elvis if he could be anyone else, who he would want to be. His answer was a surprise; with much thought he replied, he didn’t know anyone he’d want to be like more, except Jesus. His reasons were that Jesus had everything all together and changed the world. I said, in a way you have been, Elvis. He was silent a moment, then he said, “Don’t ever compare me to Jesus Christ! I am so far removed from – from him and his contribution to our world as we know it. Don’t do it, don’t even think it!” He did not raise his voice, speak in harsh sounding tones, but I felt totally “slapped down” by what I felt from his words. When it came to Jesus Christ and the Bible, Elvis was very, very respectful, he believed firmly in the Bible’s message for mankind. He said it was a guide, a reference book, a means of giving us a road to a happy life, filled with love and enjoyment. And that it was given to us by heavenly beings that were like angels but walked among us and kept a record of what Jesus had said and done. Though he had been here but a short time, his message when explained would fill huge books. The disciples were the “tape recorders” of that time and I learned from him that they had not written their stories soon after Jesus was on the cross, but many years later. I was surprised; no pastor and nothing I had read had ever told me that, until Elvis did.





Anaheim Ca. 11/76 He had just apologized for “sweatin’ up here like a fool”. But we in the front row with this view didn’t mind. He looked tired and should have- he had already been playing several places in our state, we stayed in line for tickets, we were at every concert in So California; some went into Arizona. It was as if we *had to go see him*, because we might not ever get another opportunity.

***In 1970 Elvis was chosen by the National Jaycees Association as one of the ten most outstanding men in the U.S. Whom it considered to be the most outstanding in their field of endeavor for that year. This function was held in Memphis, Tennessee, in order for Elvis to be able to attend. He was awarded for his outstanding contributions to the humanities. A visibly shaken Elvis approached the podium and with tears of gratitude, glistening in his eyes, he spoke to the assembly:***

*“I’ve always been a dreamer. (As a child) I read comic books, and I was the hero of the comic books. I saw movies and I was the hero of the movies. So every dream that I ever dreamed has come true a hundred times. And these gentlemen over here (gesturing to the nine other men chosen by the Jaycees), most of these type people who care, who are dedicated, - do you realize that it is not impossible that they might be building the Kingdom of Heaven? It is not too farfetched from reality. I learned very early in life, that without a song, the day would never end. Without a song, then you don’t have a friend. Without a song-So I just keep singing a song. Thank you very much.” (EPE)*

**(For more details about the Jaycees award and ceremonies go to:**

**[www.elvislightedcandle.org/forums](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org/forums) Look under the “General” topic.)**

And so Elvis lived the path of the spiritual initiate, as witnessed by the many hardships he endured from a very young age without complaint, and consequently was graced at key moments in his life with direct experience of the Angels, and their Elysian song, which he in turn sang to the masses.

Question: Did you ever wish you had not been Elvis Presley?

Answer: “Uhhh....it’s not a...eh... (Snickers) that’s a hard one to answer ‘cause ever’ body sometimes has doubts ‘bout their- eh...choices an’ past decisions...in my case...Gawd, I don’t know of anythin’ I’d rather have been...done with... uh in my life. Really! Lord knows I love doin’ what I do...what ever that is. (Laughs) eh -you know, really I’m doin’ the best job in the world! Sometimes I can’t sleep for thinkin’ how lucky I am. Man, nobody has the life I do...think ‘bout it...who could compare to their life, this one I got? You know anybody? Man, I sure as hell don’t!”

In his last months of life he questioned what to do, how to make things better. His health was bad, he was in pain every minute of his life and there was no end in sight, no way to fix his physical problems. He said, “I got all the money anybody could need...but money can’t make this right.” He wondered if a year off would help but decided that would not be known until he’d tried it and he had obligations to meet, bills, salaries and then there were the contracts and commitments that he had to fulfill or owe money for not doing them. He said he had insurance for the tours but they

didn't cover it all should he have to cancel any shows. There was too much at stake, he just couldn't quit and leave "a mess of bills and debts".

I asked if he ever wished he could run away somewhere and hide. He said he had thought about it, but that would mean he would have to give up everything, and everyone he knew; he didn't think he could do that. He said "I been with people all my life, don't know if I could make it out there (in the world) alone, ya know. On my own... Gawd, I never hardly been anywhere by myself...it'd be a hard thing to adjust to that." (Laughs) "Lord, what would I do by myself if a- a some body come up and said I know who you are! I'd have to run or want to real bad! Man, it'd be just tradin' down, ya know, it'd still be full of "can't do that's; it'd be tough, really."

Rumors say he managed to fake his death and is out there on his own, doing whatever, traveling and etc.... but is he? Could he manage alone? Could he be happy knowing he had broken so many hearts, hurt so many people and sneak around and not be able to be with his family in a normal, open way, actually see his baby grow up, get married, have kids? And could HE live alone? He always said he wanted more kids... Would his family be happy living "the lie" with him? Having to continue their life living a lie? Would he want them to? It would be like trading one type of restricted living for another just as he expressed in 1976. His daddy died heartbroken because he lost his son so early, his grandmother lived on without her "boys". It doesn't seem like something he would choose, but then no one can say definitely what another person would do or would not do because "we can't walk in another man's shoes"... a very true statement.

**Proving he could still do those moves...**



*Photos by Pat Kilpatrick, 76*

**He would do these kind of leg stretches for fun, often during a fast tune, and early in his Vegas shows he began doing all types of leg stretches, some nearly splitting his pants, and at times actually splitting them! He often incorporated Karate moves in his shows, dancing across the stage, striking poses and at times looking quite “deadly” in those gracefully executed “killer Karate” poses. Anything to add excitement and interest to his shows, and he was good at doing that! He had the tailor who made his costumes make extra duty stitching for those pant seams as he put it, “in critical areas” so they wouldn’t “bust out an’ embarrass people”. He said he wore underwear that was like “tights” anyway-“just in case”. He had some of those “cases”! He was always funny when it happened and a couple times he changed pants/outfits off stage-that was pretty funny too! Everyone on stage would watch and laugh at his antics just out of sight of the audience.**

Many celebrities who had various shows of their own have come forward to say that in their opinions Elvis was a Master Showman who shook the world with his style, talent and abilities to move an audience. Elvis thought as many artists do, that to get acclaim from one’s peers was one of the highest forms of achievement and he was pleased when he learned of some other performer/actor/musician liked his shows. In his way, he encouraged and gave inspiration and personal assistance to many performers of all ages. The Osmond’s remember with fondness the times he came to their show, gave them praise and even a little advice about costumes etc and how much they added to a performance. And when they opened their first show in Las Vegas, Elvis sent flowers to their mother who was very supportive of their artistic efforts and ambitions. Elvis often said that his mother always gave him encouragement, advice and suggestions that helped him get through those early years out on the road trying to get a “name for myself”.





*Anaheim 76*

**From the song: ‘The Impossible Dream’ as sung by Elvis Presley:**

*“I know if I’ll only be true to this glorious quest, that my heart will lye peaceful and calm when I’m laid to my rest.*

*And the world will be better for this that one man, scorned and covered with scars, still strove with his last ounce of courage, to reach the unreachable star.”*

[www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org)

Maia Christianne author of **Blue Star Love, From an Amazing Heart of Grace.**  
What's New on ELC. Introduction. Blue Star Love. Elvis, the Man.

Pass on the Light. Heart to Heart, Into the Light, Digital Gallery.

Beautiful Flash Presentations by Maia, (and more)! To write to Maia Christianne:  
Post Office Box 1357 Kappa HI 96746 To send e-mail, visit Websites and more-

[www.newearthstar@spiritmythos.org](mailto:www.newearthstar@spiritmythos.org)

[www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org) An informative, spiritual and entertaining look at the man known as Elvis Presley, the king of rock 'n roll. Some people will be surprised and delighted to learn of Elvis' spiritual side, his search and longing to have a deeper understanding of the Bible, other religions and how best to live accordingly. His take on many subjects related are unusual, interesting and prove that he was a thoughtful, kind and loving man who only wanted to bring happiness to the people who enjoyed his career efforts. He felt it was his purpose in life, to sing and entertain and doing so, to give joy and good memories to those who came to his concerts, and even through those "fims" he was so tired of making. Some of those "fims" have become classics, beloved by his fans, and loved by children around the world. People, who don't understand English, watch his films and listen to him singing – some learn English to further appreciate his songs. They all say they can feel the warmth and love coming through his vocals and they love learning more about him. The [www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org) website is the perfect place to learn more about this man, who is still the "king" of rock 'n roll.

To write to Wanda June Hill Post Box 1060, Nuevo CA 92567

Website: Go to **Elvislightedcandle.org** and to the **elvislightedcandle/Index page,**  
**and visit the ELC Forum page where there are various topics for learning more.**

Click on **Wanda June Hill Remembers Elvis.** Join the **ELC Website-** and you may join in discussions and post your opinions, and topics of interest to other fans.

You will also find another friend of Elvis'- **JoAnna's** page where she shares her memories, cards and a few gifts from Elvis.

Maia Christianne has been a wonderful friend to me for all of these years. Without her special talents, deep spiritual beliefs and devotion to all that is good and gracious in our world and that of the spirit Earth, I would not be where I am today within my own self and my world.

I met Elvis, knew him but without her to guide me through the many questions and wanderings I had concerning the Elvis I knew to be spiritual, mystical and a teacher of his beliefs and knowledge, I would have been unable to gather, prepare, and have the courage to release it to this world's people without Maia and her husband Simeon making it possible. I know that Elvis is smiling on them and on me.



All of those who find ELC's place on the net can read and better understand Elvis, his dreams, his belief in God and spiritual growth and he is grinning that grin and I believe he is aware and has chosen to stay in touch with today's world and his fans, old and new. Since this work has taken me so long a time, he's bound to be saying, **"Man, it took you long enough, damn it!"** W.J. Hill

**BOOK LIST:** *Written by people who knew "the same guy" we wrote about on: [Amazon.com/books](http://Amazon.com/books).*

**"Me 'n Elvis, by Charlie Hodge, 1984**

**"Elvis & Kathy" by Kathy Westmoreland, 1987(Check her website for more Elvis)**

**"Elvis' Man Friday" by Gene Smith, 1995**

**"Ann Margret, My Story" by Ann-Margret Olsen Smith**

**"Inside Graceland: Elvis' Maid Remembers" by Nancy Rooks, 2005**

**"Me & a Guy Named Elvis", by Jerry Schilling, 2007**

**"If I Can Dream" by Larry Geller, 1990**

**"Through My Eyes" by Larry Geller**

**"Leaves of Elvis' Garden" by Larry Geller, 2008**

**"I Called Him Babe: Elvis' Presley's Nurse Remembers" by Marian J. Cocke**

**"Elvis After Death" by Raymond A Moody**

**"Elvis, Linda and Me" by Jeanne LeMay Dumas, 2006**

**"Elvis in the Twilight of Memory" by June Juanico**

**"The Gospel Side of Elvis" by Joe Moscheo, 2007**

**"We Remember" by Joe Esposito, 2006 (Celebrity tributes and memories of Elvis)**

**"My Life, Before, During and After Elvis" by John Wilkinson**

**"The King & Dr. Nick, What Really Happened", by Dr. Nichopouplos, 2010**

**"Remembering August 16, 1977" by Spike Collamore, 2006**

**"Might As Well Laugh About It Now" by Marie Osmond, 2009**

**"Gladys and Elvis" by Elaine Dunndey**

**"The Rebel and the King" by Nick Adams (Alyson Adams, daughter)**

**"Blue Star Love, From an Amazing Heart of Grace" by Maia Chyrstine Nartoomid**

And so many more are listed on [Amazon.com/Elvis Presley](http://Amazon.com/Elvis Presley); those above are the books I have read in part or all, the past 30 years – for at least 25 of those years I could not read any books about him and did not want to talk about the past; it took the realization that life can be "shortened" even for me- to relive those days when Elvis was "as close as a phone call". I discussed rewriting the first book with a dear friend who told me to rely on my own memories and get them written down, rather than risk having my memories "changed" by something someone else had written about what they thought or experienced - and then gather first hand information from other contributors. It was good advice. I am glad I listened to Grandma Suzy; she and Elvis were "always right".

(After Elvis' death it seemed that everyone who could spell his name came out with a book of some type-very often filled with comments and "revelations" they acquired by "knowing him" in some fashion. I realize that publishers were eager to get that type of information about Elvis Presley who had more or less been sheltered from such things until the last few years of his life. And as he said, "good things don't sell" and it surely was true for several years after he was not here, his leaving, left the door open for anything that made a sensational headline or got some notice-but mainly it was anything that would sell. I didn't read those type books, though people would tell me this or that and ask questions, most doubted the "stories" told. I think I can safely say that most of the things I heard about were generally NOT anything that Elvis would have considered "fun" much less be inclined to do... Most made him seem very juvenile and silly...He would have been embarrassed to know people were reading that he might have done such things. Though he was always quick to say, "I'm jus' a guy, no better 'n no worse." I've noticed that for every such book written, there are others that show what he was really like, a decent, kind and loving guy who liked to laugh, tease and work "like a dawg" on stage for his fans of whom he said, "Never let me down...God bless 'em all!")

***Written by Flora Haas a gifted poet who lived in Texas, 1980's-90's,  
presented here in memory of Flora, she was one of his most loyal fans---***

Love was given a manly face, eyes as blue as the sky of a summer day---

A smile that took our breath away-But made us know a good friend had come our way.

Love was given a voice to sing, a voice that reached down to our soul---

And tugged at our heartstrings, made us laugh, cry and tremble with emotion

Love was given grace and beauty-Grace of movement that brought joy---

Beauty of form that left us ecstatic, with the longing to kiss and hug this precious boy.

God gave us that love in Elvis that we might see His loving hand reaching out to us,

His children---As Elvis shared his love with us all, day by day.

God took him home, our dearest Elvis but--Elvis left us with so much of himself---

We need never be too lonely or sad--For he lives for each of us, in our hearts, our souls -

Daily renewed as we listen and watch---knowing this special Love called Elvis, Lives!

**Elvis:** *“Sometimes a friend is all you can expect to keep throughout your life---so if you find someone who wants to be your friend, keeps your heart safe an' don't make things tougher than they are, do your best to keep 'em close an' don't be afraid to share your heart with 'em now an then, that's what friendship an' love is all 'bout anyway, just loving your friends, family an' tryin' to be nice to your enemies too. Sometimes that ain' easy, but it's part of livin' an' all we're expected to do here--- like the good book says, “Love your enemies--be good to those who would harm you-- turn the other cheek, ya know-- 'n it don't hurt to duck now an' then--”*  
*(He chuckles*

Taken in-

1976 Long Beach Ca. 4 foot in front of us, toes hanging over the stage edge and he says, “I’m thinkin’ of jumping”. He was looking right at JoAnna, Starla and friends, and Pat’s camera. He did a super show; he didn’t feel his best, he looked tired but he was in great voice. Photo by Pat Kilpatrick.



He is wearing the diamond cross necklace Linda Thompson designed and had made for him; the center design is two hearts touching in the middle. Elvis loved it and wore it often on and off stage. He also wore the emblem hanging from a “knotted cord” shown here at every concert we saw for nearly the entire year, 1976. It had been a special gift from “the love of his life” he said, referring to his little daughter. I’m not certain what the emblem is or represents, he didn’t say.

I’ve recently heard that he had earned two 8<sup>th</sup> Degree black belts and wondered about that- I know he mentioned wanting to earn higher degrees but he was having problems with his joints in his hands, wrists and knees and that prevented practicing as much as he would need to do. Dr. Nick says in his book, that Elvis was “uncoordinated”; it could easily have been due to the arthritis he had from being so active on stage. Or perhaps came from when he was barely 3 years old, was running a high fever and nearly died; he told me that his mother said an older black lady “wrapped me in hot cloth, and kept me

breathing. When I was better somethin' was wrong with one of my legs, I couldn't stand and walk like before so that lady soaked me in some hot water and moved my legs back and forth like walkin' while momma held me up some; it worked because I'm okay, jus' got that shakey leg thing sometimes." He turned his tale into a funny story, going on to talk about it shaking on stage "an' made me a star!" From what he said, it sounded like he might have had polio in a mild form, but he didn't say that. When he was tired, it was noted that he did limp slightly; he passed it off as having a "sore foot".

From the first time I saw him in person I thought he was "abusive" to his hands and fingers especially, due to the sports he liked to play, and breaking boards did not help keep those hands in the best of shape. Later on, when he was doing live shows and recording more, he had rough finger tips from playing guitar that had some type of new style "strings that wouldn't break so easily" and joked about playing until his fingers bled and he had to "quit" because it (blood) was messing up his shirt.

He was known to get into doing something that intrigued him and do it for hours and days and sometimes months, then the "new wore off" and he'd be into something else. And that penchant for "wearing out whatever it was" tended to make some of his friends exhausted, and then a little put out when he suddenly "got over" whatever it was. Elvis said he had to "do ever' thing fast. I don't have time to wait for things; if want to do something, I got to do it now." I think about those words and other similar comments and wonder if he had thought or somehow known, all his life that his days "were numbered".

I have come to believe that there are people born into this world who do either consciously or not, have knowledge of their time here...and often act accordingly.



*Jimmie, his dog Olga Jean who was a young stray we found and no one ever claimed, and most of Patches an Australian Sheep dog that we “took in”. Olga is the “top dog” of our little pack of 5 dogs. This photo was taken in 1992. Jimmie worked as an Operating Engineer for several years and had just come home to be greeted by his “girl” who loved to sit in the swing with her “daddy”.*







Me and “Smokey” who had been a young stray “unwed soon to be mother” living on whatever she could find, mostly potatoe chips the neighborhood kids shared with her when I found her; she was the first to greet me when I returned from a 33 day book tour in 1979. She “made it” onto the jacket cover of our book - that cover jacket was all I had besides a lot of photos of Elvis to take on that book event -we didn’t have books ready for delivery yet! I was 37 years old when I got back, but felt like “100”; the book sold out within a few months of its release. And no, we made no money off that book; it was beautifully done, hardback with great photos and cost a lot to make-published by a small company and the deal we made was we did not want to “make money” off Elvis and so the book was made to last, unlike many that were rushed out. That book tour was an eye opening experience and I wondered how Elvis managed to keep doing those Vegas stints- 2 shows a day, night after night for a month -and how he held up so well on road tours. He was amazing.

Plainly it is obvious that I was and am, just a normal, regular looking person - You can see my natural gray patch of hair easily in this picture; Elvis teased about it, but said “You been touched by an angel an’ that’s a good thing”. I stopped trying to keep it from showing though years later I began “lightening my hair so all the gray I was getting would blend in; it was a big ordeal and took up too much time, besides that by then I was spending all my time with horses...brushing and washing their mane and tails, to heck with mine! The scar on my chin was the only serious “wound” I ever received from riding horses- I about 14, was riding bareback on my Uncle Raymond’s mare down a gravel road in Kansas, when a pickup with two guys in it came flying past; they yelled



and the driver slapped the side of his door startling the mare who bolted forward like a rocket leaving me rolling down the graveled slope of the roadside drainage ditch. They did not stop! I picked gravel out of my skin, face, arms and legs for hours- after I walked down the road looking for the mare that was waiting under some trees munching grass and looked up as if to say, “What took you so long!” I didn’t realize there was a visible scar; it was sewn up by my World War II uncle, it didn’t hurt much. Really...

***In Tribute to Virginia Lee McDonald Perry, THE breeder of true white horses-***

*About our true white stallion-and true white horse descendants-*

*Artic Foxx, Arabian/Tennessee Walker; a true White horse; he is here because people asked to see him. 15 hands in height, at his last performance his tail hung almost 11 ½ feet! He loved to flip it into the air when showing off. (The name Arctic was already in use before he was registered, so we chose to keep the pronunciation by using “Artic”.*

Artic Foxx, an Arabian/Tennessee Walker cross who is a rare color in that he is of pure white hair, pink skinned with *no spotting of color anywhere* on his body, has eyes so midnight dark blue they are black and natural golden yellow hooves; he is not an “Albino”...a term that only means a pale blue eyed white horse with pink skin. (A true “albino” would have pink eyes – in the equine family, those foals usually do not live; if they do, they are not “true” albinos.) Equine research says that a horse like Foxx is born once in more than 100,000 births, and is an unexpected result from two dark colored horses. Foxx’s muzzle looks dark though it is not; he has a nearly white nose with a little pink skin showing through. “*The Lone Ranger’s*” “**Hi Yo Silver**” was also one of these rare true white dark eyed horses; we were lucky enough to meet the woman who had foaled and trained him, **Virginia Lee McDonald Perry**; she was the very *first woman to ever take top awards* for training and riding an “*All Around Horse*” in **Madison Square Garden’s Stadium**; at fourteen she owned and trained the horse who was the sire of “*Tarzan’s White Banner*” foaled in 1949, ‘*Hi Yo Silver’s* original name, She saw articles about our true white and contacted us; she was still breeding white horses and had been trying to get another true white horse for years. She said our Foxx looked just like the horse she had as teenager, “*Banner*” (Hi Yo Silver). We went to visit her in Yucca Valley, Ca. and saw her stallion and mares. She came to see Foxx at a parade and accepted the *First Place Trophy* for him with tears shining in her eyes; it brought back good memories, she said. (The last year of her life her dream was realized. “*Star*” her favorite white mare, “gave” her one - a colt!) In the early days the film sponsoring company (*General Mills*) had bought “*Banner*” for the movies and television shows in 1949. They changed his name for “*The Lone Ranger*” film and series; he was also used in an early western film with **John Wayne**. “*Banner*” lived to be 34 years old and died while sleeping in his stall at a studio stable facility north of Los Angeles. He can be seen in several 1950’s and early

1960's films, and of course, in *The Lone Ranger* television shows and films, quaint though they maybe.

Foxx was the only stallion like himself standing in the United States for several years. And he consistently won awards at every event he entered, including parades. He loved to perform, did dressage, danced to music, Spanish marched and bowed on cue and he had excellent training. He was a “ham” - he posed for any one he saw with a camera! We still have him though he is no longer a stallion; he still loves to perform and dance for his “fans”.

We didn't get horses until the 1990's. Starla was not doing music and had a job, Jimmie was working with heavy equipment, and I needed a job; I had always wanted my own horse after learning how to handle them from my Uncle Raymond, so I boarded horses a while, then took in some rescues, did some training and loved working with them.

I had listened to Elvis tell about his horses, how much he enjoyed their company, doing for them and having fun riding but I didn't know he had taken lessons so that he could properly sit and ride his Walkers; after his death the lady who took care of them and kept them ready for Elvis said she had taught him Dressage and he dearly loved riding those gaited horses. It shows in the sheer delight and joy of his face in the photographs I've seen of him riding them, perfect posture, good seat and the properly held hands and reins of a “well trained student”. It was great to see that he did care for and loved his horses- so much he learned to ride them properly and “hit the mark” of a true horseman or horse woman. I wish we had been horse owners when he was here, I would have liked him to see our Foxx and if he had wanted him, we would have loved to have given him Foxx. Elvis would have looked super fantastic riding our Foxx – they would have been perfect for each other!

(In 2006 we were lucky enough to have a professional horse appraiser spot Foxx at a show; she gave us a free evaluation of him, saying that with his training, perfect conformation and elegant carriage, he as a “proven” stallion ranged in value from \$60,000 and upwards as his skills, and showman ship in the ring and his maturity advanced. Plus, he was so unique in color and eyes; she had not seen or heard of one like him in many years. We were stunned! However, to us, Foxx was more than a valuable horse; he was one of our “kids”: he was just turning 9 months old when we acquired him. To us, no amount of money was “enough” and had we not been able to keep him, we would have found him the same type home as we had provided...money would never have been “the option”.)



***Artic Foxx & Diane Dodd\*** trainer/rider for Foxx performing Dressage movements at an event. His tail is 11 feet long when out behind him on the ground. (I didn't ride Foxx- didn't learn his cues, to ride him, one had to do the proper cues – or he would not work for you.) Diane did what she called "Cowgirl Dressage" – she rode with a "Western" saddle; they won a lot of awards; he is retired, as we are; but he loves to have "guests" and still wants to go in the trailer. I hope to send him to his former trainer and rider soon; Jimmie couldn't part with him- it is hard to do, but Foxx is still young, and he would love to be "out and about" showing off for anyone who shows an interest. A very "weird" or perhaps merely "strange" thing occurred at an event we took him to in 2003. He was waiting to get ready to perform; people were coming by to look at him, trying to find "spots" of some color on him. A few were people that had their own horses there; one of them commented; "He's the Elvis of the horse world!" She had seen him at other events and said she had taken photographs because he was so unusual and such a "crowd pleaser".*

*We had never met her; she knew nothing of our past “Elvis connection”. Hardly had she said it when I remembered Elvis talking of his horses; I had mentioned that “I’d wanted a Tennessee Walker as a teen but we probably would always live in town and I’d never board -out a horse of mine – “Well,” he said, “Who knows, maybe one day you’ll have one.” ---Fate?*

*\*(Diane Dodd Training Center, Moreno Valley, California) Excellent trainer/horses love her!*

**(Post note :)** Foxx developed a painful basal cell cancer in his left eye; we took him to an Equine Hospital in Chino, Ca. and they did the laser treatment to try and stop it and he had another good 4 years. But this last summer, 2011 was very hot, the cancer returned as we were told it might; he was in pain, suffering day and night and could not see out of that eye. We had to make the decision to end his pain so in the early fall, we did.

He was 18, still looked beautiful and was willing to go out and perform. “Life gives us great joys; we should never waste a moment of them because often they are just here for a short while.” As said by Elvis. I hope that Elvis will choose our Foxx for his ride if he gets a chance to “lead that army of God, ridin’ the best damn white horse available an’ carryin’ the mighty sword of God!” Foxx won’t let him down!

(If you ever have a pink skinned light colored horse, provide good UVray protection via a fly mask, keep the horse out of the sun in a stall if possible, just shading it is not good enough, those rays reflect off the ground, can go through untreated glass and cause skin and soft tissue cancers in all animals, *including human ones*. We tried to protect him and failed; we live in a highly dangerous UV ray area in So. California. Light skinned horses need to be sheltered indoors out of the sun as much as possible when not performing; let them out during the night to exercise. And if they must be outside in sunlight or cloudy days (UVrays pass through clouds) keep good quality UVRay protection fly masks and fly sheets on your horse. And on your pink skinned family members! *Sun screen does not stop UV rays...* today some clothing has been treated, but it is still not 100% safe. Dogs and cats with light skin can also get sun damage to their skin and eyes, especially blue eyes though all colors are affected.

*Began protection with your children the day they are born; UV rays are stronger today than yesterday, and tomorrow won’t be any less damaging. Our earth is very slowly moving closer in orbit to the sun-the weather will continue to change accordingly and we must try to adjust to fit the circumstances. Life goes on; enjoy it but be careful! Elvis spoke about this after reading a book about our earth’s early beginnings-and its future.*



Artie Foxx, Tennessee Walker/Arabian at 5 years of age. That tail became 11 feet long and he was so proud of it, he waved it high in the air like a long rope banner when performing for “his fans” and when parading he danced and tossed that tail high. He loved fast, lively music and danced to the beat. His hooves were naturally deep yellow; they have clear hoof polish on them here. He had fans that showed up regularly to see him; he always remembered them when they came to see him perform and not because they gave him “treats”...but because he knew they enjoyed being around him. Animals recognize quickly who truly likes them and those who pretend they do.

He had a beautiful head and neck line, with eyes so midnight blue they appeared to be black. I wish this had been taken at just a little different angle in order to show all of his high points. Before dressage training began Foxx had a natural Walker gait, and he was fast! Once dressage training began he could no longer use his walker gaits as it was not allowed in dressage programs. He adjusted quickly.

Elvis read this passage to me when speaking of the great battle to come in the last days of earth. He wanted to lead the army and was enthusiastic about it! From his King James Bible-

### ***THE WHITE HORSES OF THE BIBLE***

**“And I saw the Lamb of God open one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one say, Come and see! And I saw, Behold I saw,**

**A white horse with eyes as black as the depth of all the seas. And he that sat upon him was called faithful and true. And in righteousness he doth judge and make the war. His eyes were as a flame of fire; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with vesture, red as dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God.**

**And the armies which were in Heaven followed him upon the white horses, were clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he had on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.**

**And I saw the Kings of earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the white horse with eyes as black as coal, he went into their midst and smote the Kings of earth, for his sword was the Word of God.”**

Other biblical translations are that the “white horse” has eyes that are as azure flame (blue burning fire) as he is ridden into battle.) The TRUE PURE WHITE horse has darker shades of blue and more rarely, so dark as to appear jet black eye coloring, but when lit by the sun are seen as a very dark sapphire blue, as spoken of in Biblical contents.

Artic Foxx had the dark sapphire blue that appeared to be black unless lit by the sun, or with strobe lighting. His hair was true white with no color pigment and it reflected light so that he appeared to “glow” in sunlight.

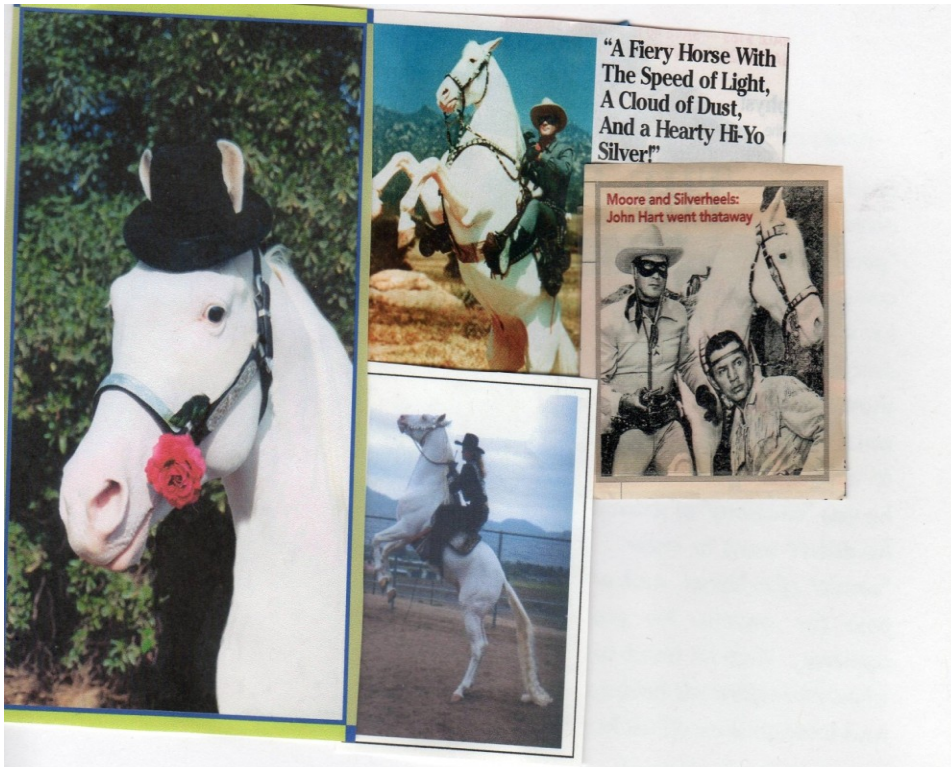


### **Horse owners and those who hope to be-**

There are white horses around, most have spotting of skin or hair on their bodies and some will have blue eyes, brown eyes, and occasionally both eyes, or just one will be multicolored, they are not true whites. There is no living pink eyed horse that I know of, nor did the University of Kentucky Equine Research department know of any. Until they saw our white horse they had never seen a *living* true white before, although they had done a lot of research on “white foals” who were born dead or died shortly after birth. These foals are always from a mare who carried the “lethal white” gene being bred to a sire *who also* carried the gene, any color mare (or stallion) can carry it; their foals if born white, often with blue eyes, did not live very long if at all. Foxx was not a carrier, we had him tested early and he was “clean”. Our mares did not carry it and all outside mares were tested and negative also. The Research Department said that BOTH DAM AND SIRE had to be positive for Lethal White genes if their foals died shortly after birth, usually after trying to nurse or they did not nurse at all. These foals will pace, trying to nurse from anything but if fed they will die. They are born without a colon that functions and so cannot pass stool or gas. Please ask if the stud has been tested, and get your mares tested also, said the Research Department. All it takes is a few tail hairs and a little blood to get a complete report. And you will never have to go through the pain and agony of watching a beautiful little white foal pace for hours from the time it stands to the time it collapses and dies. Believe me; you will NOT want to go through this kind of pain and heartache. I helped a friend whose new born filly, beautiful and true white with blue eyes, pacing and rubbing her nose on anything and everything as if looking for something to eat or drink...yet she would not even try to nurse her mother, who stood waiting patiently for the entire time it took her baby to die. There were no vets available in that area at that time; there is no cure for those type foals-not even today. Our vet said, “It is like a curse; the bad luck of a coin toss to get one with dark eyes when that white gene is dominant.”

There are a lot of white horses, but most have some dark skin on their bodies, they are white...but not TRUE white. A true white is totally pink skinned... A true white will have dark eyes, light color hooves and no dark skin anywhere on its body. They have the white gene dominant and can if

bred to the right color mare, pass it on to their off spring. Avoid the gray colors, and ask if the damn or stud has gray parents when breeding for white. Gray will always dominate when it is in the background of a breeding horse, male or female, when trying for a white so check out dam and sire first!



Foxx's Valentine card-he thinks he looks pretty good in that hat!

Top middle photo; Clayton Moore and Hi Yo Silver. Blk. & white photo is from the movie "John Hart Went That-away" Clayton Moore and his Indian side kick SilverHeels.

Middle bottom, Foxx and rider practicing for a show; it took a few tries, but he learned to get those front legs up "like HiYo Silver"! And he sure loved to hear that intro—he was always "ready to run".





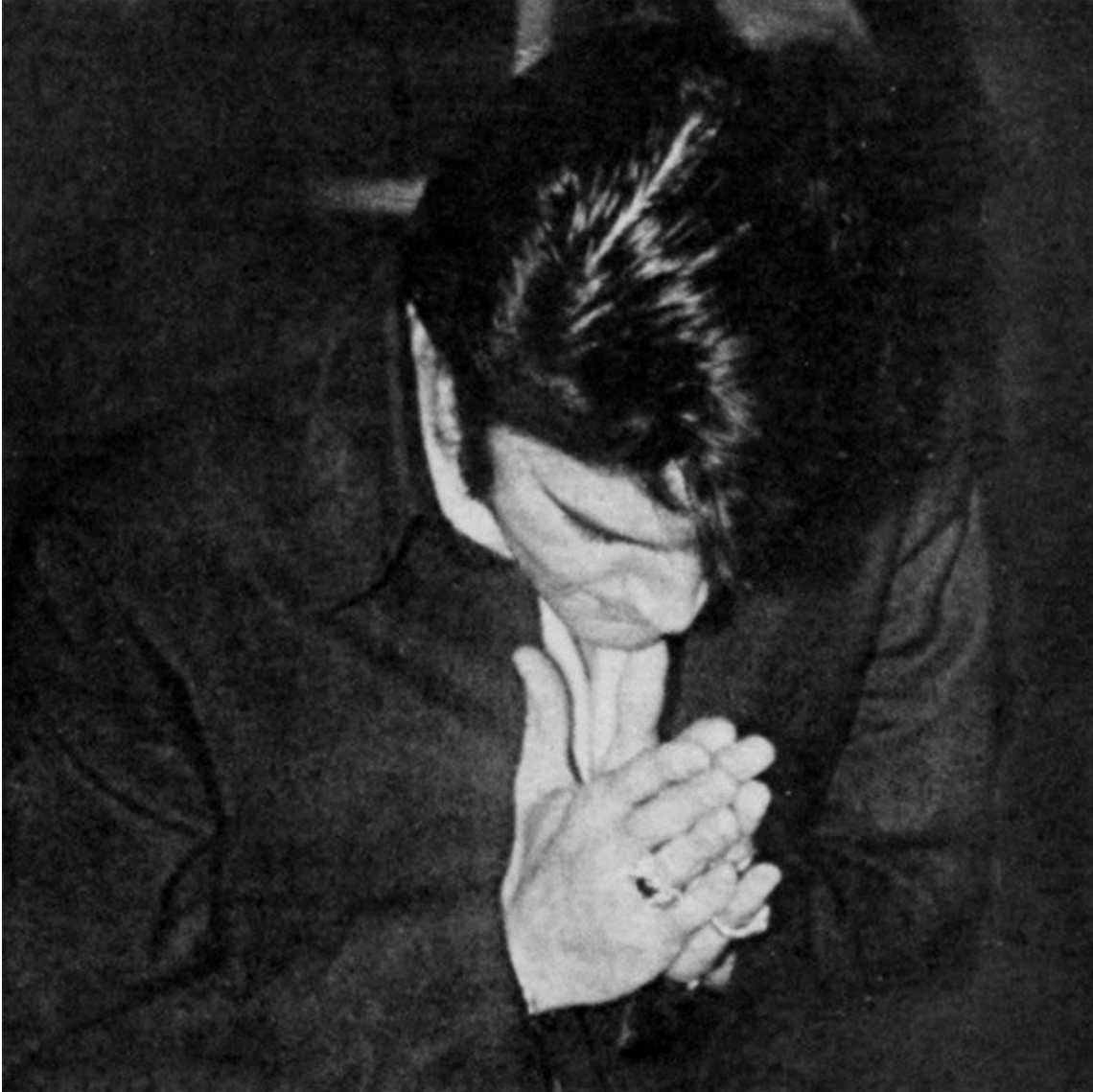
Watching his Gala Apples from his fans at the stable. His Teddy bear accompanied him in the trailer and to shows; he would not enter a “strange stall” until he saw his teddy bear inside -and he never tore them up! He didn’t tear down the Christmas decorations on his window either... All his foals were Pinto’s; he sired one colt and two fillies. We did not want to add his foals to the “over populated horse industry”. Too many beautiful, gentle family horses end up going to horrible slaughter houses when their owners can’t keep them any longer. Horses never forget who loved them—years apart and they will recognize a former owner. Good or cruel...they won’t forget!

*Elvis on one of his favorite horses, “Rising Sun”, a Tennessee walker, and the one he said he liked to ride western and just goof off with “down at the ranch” playing “cowboy”. This is a palomino but a “dark” one which is a highly desirable coloring for Palomino horses although in the past few years the lighter, champagne colorings have come into vogue; the darker shades highlight their lovely mane and tail and accentuate their white blaze on the nose and leg stockings.*

*In the back ground you can almost see the tractors Elvis bought to keep the “Property up”...but mainly, to have fun riding them around! Apparently, the equipment was often “used as vehicles to “off road” on the property! And he enjoyed bulldozing down the old house in back of Graceland, much to his father’s dismay. Elvis was laughing his “head off” while his daddy was doing his best to drag out what he wanted to keep that had been inside the old house! Of course a much nicer office place was quickly built for his father, of whom Elvis laughing said, “Daddy came by that white hair naturally...” Yeah...with “him” for a son!*



**From Change of Habit film-**



**“Lord, help me! Please give me your guidance, walk with me-I cannot go alone.”  
When I asked, what are you thinking just before you walk out on stage-the above is  
what he said first, and then added that he “waited for it to feel right-then I go do  
it...”**

Personal...yes-

I've included quite a few photographs of various personal things, family, gifts and our horses, plus several of Elvis' gifts and thoughts that had special meaning to us and friends who were "there" when they were taken. I know it's a lot to "take in" but there have been so many people who expressed a desire to see the gifts, to get to know our little family, see what we looked like "back then" and so I dug some out. Please forgive me for indulging a few times, in sentiment; it's just natural I guess at this time in my life. And Jimmie and I are proud of our daughter Juliann Starla as any mom and dad is of their child; she is our only one so maybe it is a "little" out of hand.

Also pictures of our white horse because many people have asked about what we did "after Elvis" – and our horses did help fill that gap, though there isn't much I could think of that would truly take away "the Elvis in our lives". Not in a "million years". I did try to put much of those days out of "sight mentally" because I wasn't ready to "go there" anymore. Several years passed, it became easier because we were busy with our stallion and the other horses; thank God for them. It's "easy to get up early when a horse is waiting for you" is a comment that one of Elvis' family said he had made when he was up at dawn on his "days off the movie sets" and out with his horses, cleaning stalls, feeding, grooming and learning to ride like a professional. He got that right! It is a "mind and life changer" owning and caring for horses that are your own; I certainly needed something different, and Jimmie and Starla found things that "mattered" to them also. We had to, in order to move on with living.





One year Elvis was into Egyptian artifacts and history of the tombs; he had several of his friend's names done in ancient Egyptian script (those names were cut out; mine is done in relief as were a few other's he gave away; Egyptians used symbols of animals and other spiritual things in their script. He had my name "Wanda" done because it was "different" and in other cultures, had many meanings; he said we were "spiritual and psychic also as "one who searches" and "questions". My dad said that last one fit, I "liked to drove him nuts" as a child, always asking "why?"



*From “Girls, Girls, Girls”: This looks like a “between takes” photo; he’s fidgeting with his jacket waiting for his cue. This photo isn’t seen very often.*

**Elvis:** “You know the Bible is a guide for us humans; Jesus taught the writers of it, his disciples; he wanted to tell those coming after him to live and do right by each other. There are verses throughout the Bible that are so clearly spoken most people get them confused and think too much about what’s said or not said. Like it says that Jesus wants us to do well, abundantly well in what we endeavor. He doesn’t say work hard and never give up, he says read my words, have faith in what I say and believe that I mean what I say. And he does; but people make too much effort out of it, they think they have to knuckle down and fight and dig to have some understanding when all you need to do is be devout in the study of God’s word. Reading it is powerful stuff, it gives you strength and faith, but you must follow his teachings, he says. “All this and more shall you have, if ye believe.” And what that means is simply try to follow his teachings, listen to what he says by reading his words and then practice them by thinking of the meanings instead of trying to figure out how to make it come true. Believe that it will, say I shall have this or that, thank you Lord for your promise. And then never give up, keep thanking him for giving you all that you have, and more will come. The key here is try to conduct your life and your businesses in his example. With fairness, forethought and concern for others who come to you for help, or to buy or sell. Don’t cheat, don’t steal and don’t take credit for what you didn’t do, instead lift up those who are down trodden, give them light, inspiration and help where you can. That’s what Jesus taught; do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Simple, direct and easy to follow instructions. You can’t hurt someone whom you love as yourself unless you’re out of touch an’ on drugs. You can’t addle your mind with drugs an’ gettin’ high on anything and do right for yourself or anybody else. That’s the old devil talkin’ in your ear, whisperin’ evil and tellin’ you to take the wrong road. Don’t listen; you will only regret the outcome. Okay, that’s it, we got to get goin’, time’s flyin’ by. Thanks kids, see ya!”

(Sonja Lyn Harding Hamilton, worked at the Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas, 1972-77, talked with Elvis several times and loved listening to his lectures; recorded this one for her mother to hear.- Elvis gave his permission.)



Sonja Lyn said that Elvis was so kind, loving and funny; that he could inspire anyone who listened, and that he was respectful, thoughtful and caring to everyone he met. He was she said, “A real southern gentleman in every aspect of that description”. She felt his only “goal” in life was to bring happiness and laughter to those who “might not have much of it in their life”. It is interesting that people who knew him briefly appeared to understand him, more so than those who “lived with and worked for him. Was he that “different” in his dealings with them? I don’t think so- and it would appear that millions of his fans don’t think so either.

*“Could he have been more clear?”*

I have the poem he wrote after I told him he could, if he tried, write poetry and probably song lyrics because he had a “way with words and expression of feelings”. I challenged him to try; the result was the poem he entitled “For All My Friends” (Printed in “*We Remember, Elvis 2006*” soft cover, Amazon. I have to mention that book, Amazon/BookSurge has the rights to sell it – and so I have to list it if I mention something first published in it.) The poem was among the photos of him that were often shown on television, and so was the handwritten poem. On the trip we (Suzy, Starla and I) went to Tupelo and visited the Presley’s home where Elvis was born; while there I gave them a copy of the poem to display if they wished, and the lady said she had seen me on television. She thanked me for my “kind words and praise” for him, saying that he was a “dear soul and so good hearted”. She had tears in her eyes. The little house was set up to look as it might have when that little family lived there, quite small, the back door was visible from the front door, a straight view through the small rooms. Elvis recalled it as being “pretty big” he said, and would add, “I’s jus’ little then, a little bitty boy-“and he’d snicker softly. He remembered it with love, saying “daddy an’ my grand daddy built it, ya know.” He said they shared the bed in winter, to save wood and keep warm too; he would add, “I still don’ like to sleep alone”.

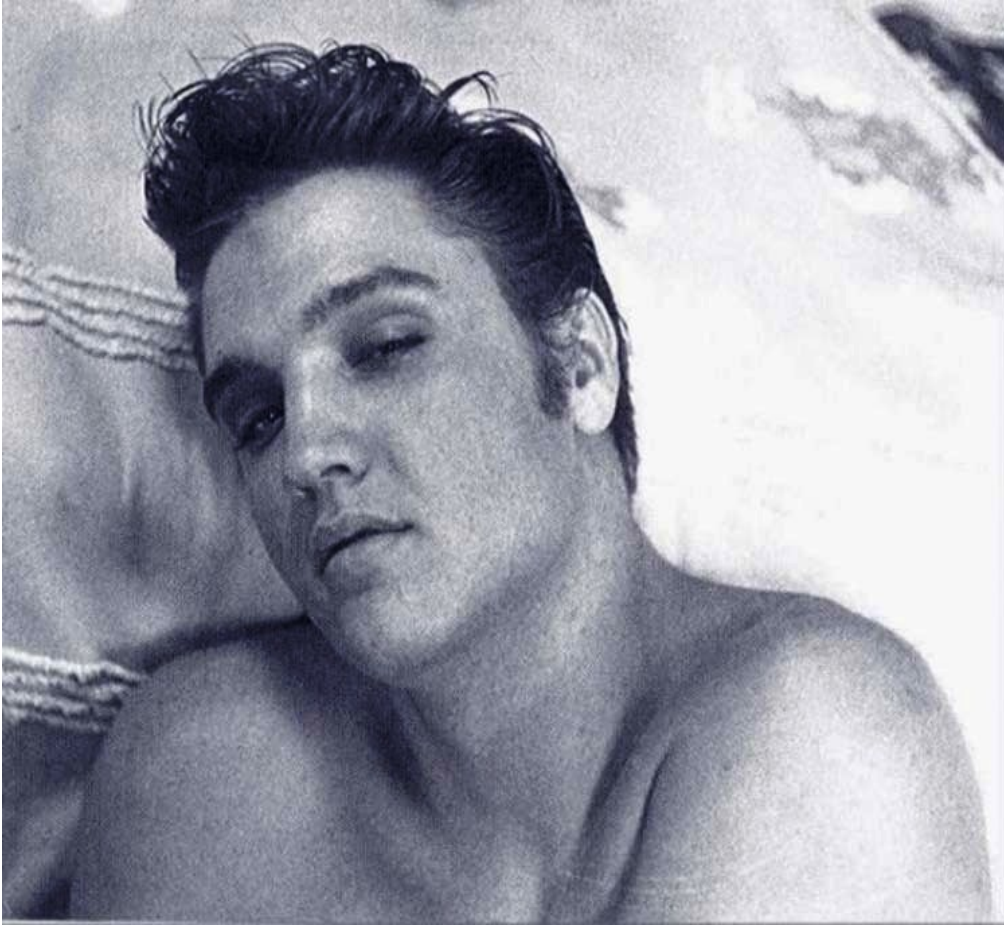
*He never got over “not wanting to sleep alone” as many lucky women know because they shared his bed (and often as not, did not share their bodies).*

*People often seem to think that strange, however times were different when he grew up; young men and women were taught to respect their bodies and wait for a true love, someone they would marry before “giving in” to their natural inclinations. Elvis was no different; he had dreams growing up of being married, with children and family to lean on. His life changed early, he was a young teenaged boy when he “met the Devil” as he put it in a joking way, and went out to work in bars, clubs and anywhere he could find a job, but he still kept his principles and he still treated women with respect- IF they respected themselves and were “lady like”. I read somewhere that he had “68 girlfriends and I would say that was probably more like 168! Perhaps some were more obvious than others and so, got on the “short list”. All I know is that he had respect for the women he chose to spend time with. I truly believe that, regardless of what some of his male friends and “confideants” claim. Elvis was a cameleon in that he tended to try to “fit in” with what ever was going on among the people he was with and he did it so easily it seemed to anyone around at the time, he was “just one of the boys”.*

*It's been said by many who knew Elvis for any length of time, that he was child like and never ‘grew up’; I agree that he was “child like” in many ways, but he was also a very intelligent and caring man, who tended to try and live his life in such a manner that he “fit in” with whomever he was around. Elvis felt “different” from other people, perhaps because he was born a twin and lost that other “half” as he put it; I think he was one of those “special people” whom God puts on earth for a purpose-and Elvis filled his-he won't be forgotten! Not as long as music is music and people hear it, and film and photography is available in some form. People want to see and hear Elvis just as much if not more than when he was walking the earth with us. He will not disappear-his spirit is still here on this earth-and believe it or not, thousands of “new fans” are still being made and this will occur as long as humans continue to be born!*



Early “Marilyn Monroe” poses, taken in his bedroom judging by the chenille bed spread he is leaning upon. I don’t know the name of who took these but Thanks!



The “Boy” had “it”!

I was told it was the photographer that Col. Parker hired to follow Elvis around and take photographs of his “rising young star”. Elvis never did like to take off his shirt: he tended to “break out in skin rashes an’ looked like I got the mange or somethin’.” he said. He was happy when he got into the movies because “they got people who know what to do for skin like mine ‘n they fixed it up pretty good.”



He said he had not “grown into ma lips” until he was in his early 20’s and that maybe it was the Army that helped because “right ‘bout that time, ever thing changed; I had to get my act together, not career wise so much, but personally. Every one has one of those moments, ‘n you either grow up an’ get things squared away mentally or you don’t. Thank God for bein’ with me; I think I got it right, but then, there’s moments when man, I ain’t sure!

Everybody has those kinds of moments, more or less. I’ve been blessed; it’s not that I’m special or anything like that. We are all special in various ways, some just get lucky and fate gives them a-a spotlilght so they show up more. Every person has special qualities that go with what they are as a person, we have our God given talents; just read the Bible, the King James Bible an’ you’ll see, God makes each of us different, but similar because we are His children. Kids in a family resemble one another in various ways, we humans are all the family of God; so we are similar in many ways, we just have a little different talent, or physical appearance so we can tell one from another, that’s all really.

Ya know, you can’t do better for yourself than to read the Bible and try to see what’s in His plan for you. Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; follow His bidding and you shall reap the rewards on high... Try it; ask for understanding, you can’t go wrong trustin’ the Livin’ Word of God.”

One thing that Elvis always had, and had it down to the letter was his ability to share his beliefs, the things that helped him “hold together” in a world that was very shaky and up and down that he lived in from a very young age. He said that “spotlight was so damn hot it I felt like I was burnin’ under it-but as soon as things started workin’ and goin’ good, man it was firin’ me up inside an’ then it felt right, like I belonged there...” And belong he did!

Rehearsing for Vegas- get a look at that belt! He wore weighted wrist wraps and also on his ankles and waist so he'd build strength for the stage show performances. One thing for certain, he'd do what ever it took to do a "good show for my people" (his fans).







**Top:** Garnet bracelet & necklace –exactly matched the color I liked to wear—and did so often, he commented on it. I had 3 sweaters of the same color- purchased at the same time – he must have thought I was a “fanatic” about that color- about as much as he was with “black and a touch of red”.

**Middle:** gold. Set with dark green semi precious stones (not emeralds) earrings to match, another color I liked to wear. Sorry the stones show up “black” here- -

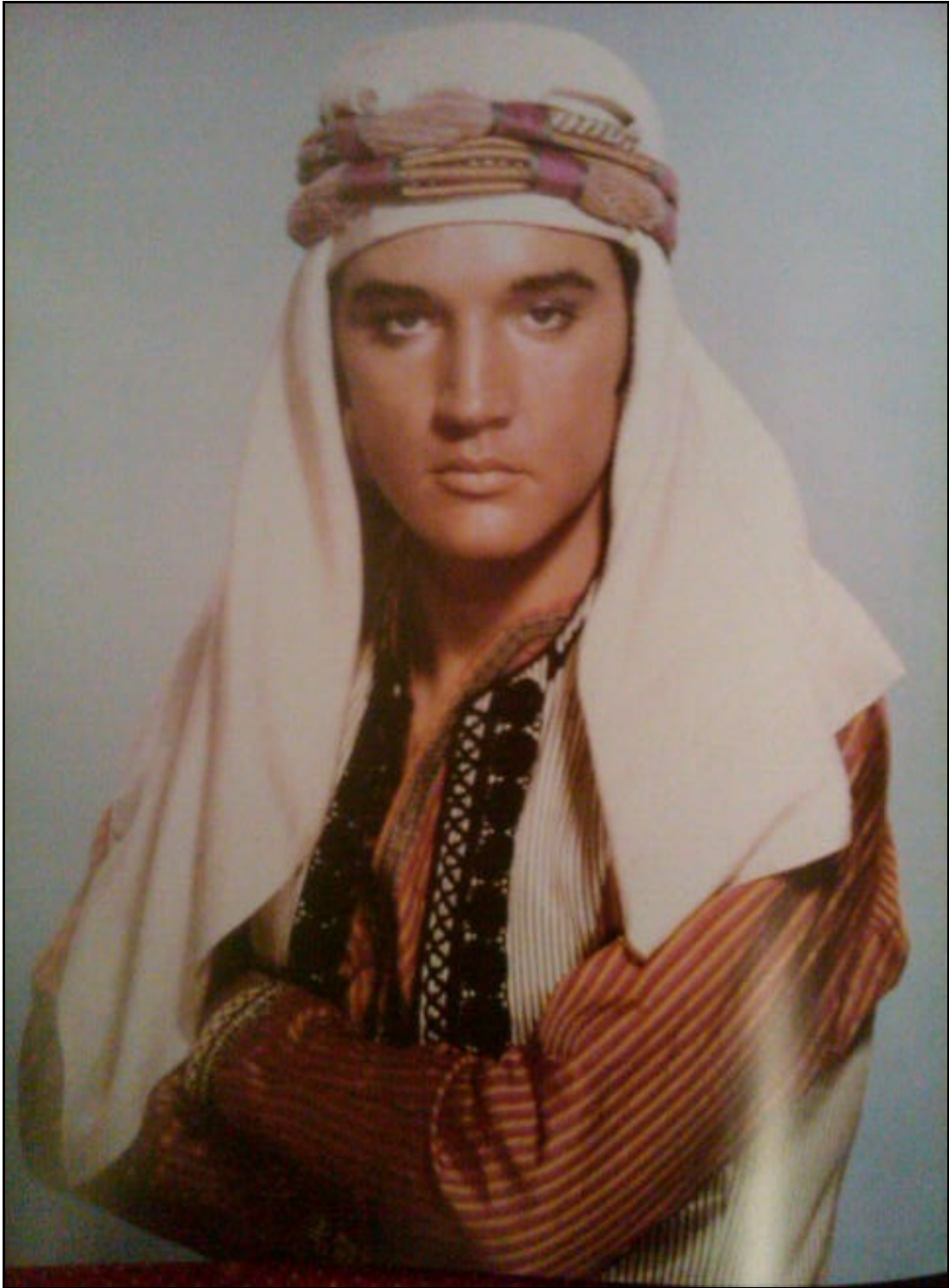
**Bottom:** my “chase away the 30<sup>th</sup> “birthday” blues” cuff bracelet - those flowers on it are “Lilly of the Valley’s” the flower designated for the month of May, and silly me, I didn’t notice that for years! It had a safety chain that snagged on things and broke several times; I had it repaired but finally put it up and have not worn it since the book tour in 1979.

When I wore the garnet bracelet on that tour, one of the lady news broadcasters in Dallas, Texas asked me if she could wear it for a little while- I let her wear it, show it on television and when the time slot was up, I asked for it back. She said, “Oh, it felt so at home on my arm!” But she took it off and said, “He was a wonderful man, we’ll always love and miss him.” How true that statement is - today and always.

To the interviewer that was in a small town area of Northern California: I hope you find this on line book. I know you really wanted a piece of something Elvis had written and I had to say no back then because of copywrite; you can “own” all I have now displayed in the last two books! Thank you for the wonderful and insightful discussion we had on air at your little station. And thanks a bunch for the two police officers who “caught me” driving the wrong way on a street at 4:30 am when trying to find that little radio station and they did not give me a ticket! Because we were doing the show for Elvis whom they had met when he had played nearby, they escorted us all the way and made sure we “found our way” back to the main highway when we were finished at the station. I hope you received the hard back books sent to your station in 1979. They were autographed by me, Susie and Starla to you and your fellow officer.

*Publicity Photo for “Harum, Scarum” – he looked great in that outfit and he knew it! I wonder if he thought of the early days of silent films and the great “Valentino”, who was the big sex symbol for ladies everywhere and at just about every age! I think he was “trying to portray” those smoldering, sexy eyes of the great “Valentino”! I just like the whole “look” of him in this costume...but those bright lime green “pants” were “silly” though he said they were “comfortable” but he got tired of rewrapping the “belt thing” all the time. Didn’t everyone female love the scenes inside the “harum girls quarters”--- oh yeah!*

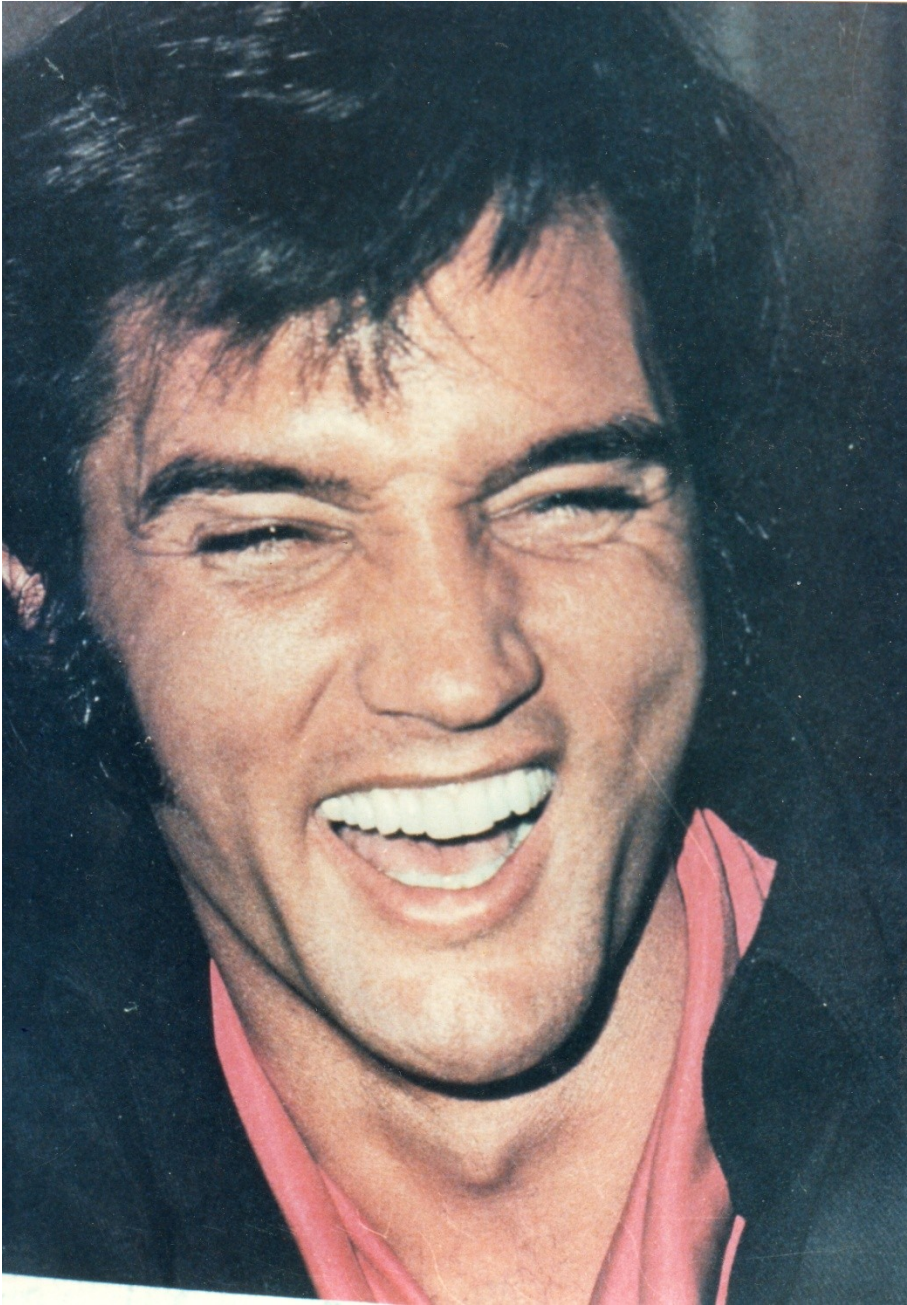
*People often ask about him always wanting someone with him when he slept- and he did like someone near, many ladies have shared his bed to “keep him company” but not many times have I heard anyone comment about his not likeing to be alone, asleep and vulnerable. He was barely 3 when his father was taken to jail for altering a check by a couple of dollars. His dad had sold a hog and the man who bought it put a lower amount on the check when he wrote it out. Elvis’ father spent more than a year in prison; he and his mom visited on weekends and young Elvis didn’t understand why his daddy could not go home with them. He and his mom were living “hand to mouth” and with relatives during those hard times. Elvis was very young, but he missed his daddy and he grew fearfull that he would lose his momna also. He had trouble sleeping unless he was sure she was nearby, he cried when she left to find work and he developed a deep seated fear of one day being “alone” during those times. When he became a singer and was out away from his family, he soon became famous, was mobbed, grabbed at and harassed by fans and some who were not fans. He needed people around him whom he could trust to protect him and also, to give him peace of mind away from home. He did not like to be by himself and said in later life he could hardly remember when he had to be off by himself without anyone to look out for him. That deep seated fear of being left alone was alive and well into his last years of life. His father was ill, had a bad heart and Elvis was beside himself with worry...after all, if his daddy died, he would be left alone.*



**Next up-**

**Opening night in Las Vegas 1969.] Elvis: “Man, they really liked me- did you see! Gawd! They liked me—really, they liked me!” (Associated Press Photo)**





**Elvis:**

**“Sometimes--eh--when I'm standin' there, peek out to see who might be close ya know, an' there-there isn't anybody that I- I know--kinda for a second or so, scares me a - jus' a little--my mind flies back to -to some early days but then I hear people start sayin' my name--'n I'm standin' there waiting on the cue--orchestra an' all--'n then it start's happenin'--.inside me--gettin'- charged--like revin' up the engine,(Laughs)or somethin'--but it's comin' an' I want it to --then I go walk out there an' it hits me--man, sometimes like getting slapped in the face --the- the energy comin' off those people--ya know, they bein' all charged up, excited an' all -it -it gets thrown right at me too. Love it man, jus' love it!”**

**There were times when he would be waiting, and his cues came but he didn't step forward; he'd say, “I'm not ready yet...wait a minute!” And a few times, he got a gentle push to get him out there. He wanted to “feel that feelin'” before he stepped out...until then, he wasn't ready!**

**December 76 –**

***The Last Time...revealed***

Elvis called me from a car phone; he said he was in Southern California, incognito and had appointments later but had some time right now, could I meet him-he wanted to talk in person, it had been so long. He apologized for the short notice, said if I couldn't come; he'd try again before flying out of Long Beach or Orange County Airport. His appointments were in Loma Linda and Los Angeles- medical appointments that he said were "for insurance reasons-to prove I'm still alive." He asked me not to tell anyone until later that night-after he was gone. He didn't want the press to know he was in Los Angeles and said, "I'm in Memphis, understand?" I think he had stayed in Palm Springs, but I didn't question anything, had he wanted me to know, he would have told me.

I met him at the home of one of his friends, a lawyer he said, who was "helping get some things straightened out for me". The house was an older Spanish style home set back in lush landscaping and surrounded by wrought iron fencing. I didn't know such places still existed in that area near Stanton, California. Two men, dressed in black, wearing Trench coats, dark shades and wearing hats, and whom I had never seen before, were waiting beside a lime green Cadillac as I drove in; one of them closed the tall iron gates behind me. Neither spoke to me or paid much attention. I heard one speaking to the other -he had a European sounding accent.

Elvis was waiting in his friend's library, standing inside the open double doors with his arms held out, wearing a big smile and saying, "Come 'ere, darlin'!" He looked great, black suit, black shirt, silver framed, rosy tinted glasses and his hair was longer than I had ever seen it, but that was the style. We had not seen each other to actually talk alone in eight years, though I had been back stage and upstairs a couple of times in Las Vegas. At those times, it was practically impossible to talk to anyone. I wasn't nervous until I saw him -that persona of his was huge and he appeared to be about nine feet tall, but then when he spoke, it was just Elvis, no hype, no glitz, just the guy we knew and loved like a brother.

"Still smell good, baby," he said nearly picking me off the floor in a hug. He was taller than I remembered, and he looked good, not fat at all, just a little more weight than he had when making movies. His hair was combed straight back, but kept falling forward when he moved his head. He smelled good and still wore that same wonderful scent that he said isn't available unless you have it especially blended-but then you'd



have to know his body chemistry or it wouldn't smell the same. He discovered he could have one blended for him in Paris, and loved the fact he had the only one like it; it was his "secret" – typical Elvis, one of a kind, unique and impossible to replicate.

We talked for about an hour and a half, finishing up the interview he was giving for a friend, except for a few questions that we did by phone a few weeks later. He had a few more concerts, and then would be off a few days and do two weeks in Las Vegas. New Year's Eve was booked and he thought there might be a few stops ahead of that but wasn't "thinking that far ahead" right now. He was worn out, but had enjoyed being out working and now just wanted to "rest up some and recharge" for a little while. He spoke of his little girl, she had been to some of the concerts and was going to be with him at Graceland over Christmas and wanted to go on tour with him again. He lit up when talking of her, telling how she loved going to the concerts and he enjoyed working for her. He mentioned wishing he had more time with her and that he missed having a family, "someone to come home to, always thought I'd have a family, kids ya know, and a-a wife." He said when he was younger he used to dream about it, awake and asleep and that "Cilla could of easily been her" in those dreams. Always was "a little dark haired girl, saucy lookin' and we'd have 3 kids with her expectin' another one" but he guessed it "just foolish day dreams and didn't mean anything". But he told me that he loved Priscilla-"she is my wife" he stated emphatically, then added, "For me, divorce didn't seem right -I still feel married 'un long as I feel that way, can't marry again -it wouldn't be fair to another woman-- I love her 'n always will." He shrugged slightly, looked up and with a shake of his head he said, "Guess I been eatin' too much "fantasy pie"!" (A comment his grandmother said when people had "dreams too big for realizing" however her grandson had accomplished his big dreams.)

I asked him about his health because as he spoke, he'd pause and his breathing was labored, wheezing kind of though he didn't have a cold just was quite hoarse from singing and he had forgotten to bring the throat sprays. He said he was "okay", just having some tests and that it wasn't anything to worry about. He said he had intestinal problems, that he was born with internal problems and nearly died shortly after birth; his mom and dad had to "put me in the oven to keep me warm" and now that he was older it was becoming more noticeable and his body tended to hold fluids and over night he would weigh 15 to 20 pounds heavier and he hated it but there wasn't anything he could do about it. He had to watch what he ate now, had a special diet that "jus' about cut out ever thin' I'd want to eat". He had medicine for various things, none of which helped the fluid buildup because he couldn't take medicine for that regularly due to having glaucoma and high blood pressure. He said, "Goin' blind is nothin' to mess with." And he thought he was doing better and he had "specialists" working on things to help solve some of the problems. He just wanted to keep working, and hoped that everyone would understand when "I look like hell's been kickin' ma face 'n everywhere else too". In

fact, the thing that hurt him the most was that he knew he didn't look like *the* "Elvis" his fans expected and had seen for so many years; he felt that he was "letting them" down and there wasn't anything he could do about it, it was out of his hands. And he said, "Whatever happens, it's in God's hands; His will be done."

Always fidgeting, he began flipping the small cigarette lighter from one side to the other as he spoke and he noticed the engraved image of a full figured nude woman on one side (a commonly sold item in Las Vegas). I pretended not to notice as he glanced my way and quickly turned the lighter over hiding the nude; this was the same guy who warned me not to go downtown to the older casino's because there were "elements down there" we women would find "offensive" and women "alone were fair game" etc.

Time flew by, when he said he had to go we both rose at the same time and took a few steps toward the door; he stopped, turned to face me and was looking down at me with a little half smile, half smirk on his face. I knew what he was thinking. Several months earlier he talked about the fact I had never kissed him, just hugged him and he wondered why not -did I think he was "dirty or something"? This time, when he started to put his arms around me, I held his head, holding him back and said, "Just hold on a minute!" And I pushed his hair back off his forehead, looking at his face as if examining him for something.

He looked back through his lashes and I could see the glint of his eyes as he murmured, "Get rough baby, I like it." I said, "This one's for Juliann" and gave him a little "baby" kiss on the corner of his lips-he shut his eyes and stood there waiting. I said, "And this one's for Suzy--" opposite corner of his mouth -baby kiss again, "and this one's for Glenda" and gave him a quick little baby kiss on that lower lip and he's about to grin. I said, "And this one's for me"--and quickly kissed the end of his nose.

He came out with that snickering, half muffled squeaky laugh and lifted his head back happily. Then he pulled me up close and looking into my eyes softly said, "n this one's for me" and gave me a sweet, gentle and a little bit long, kiss, but nothing like the one he had done the night he held me back against the canvas top of my little MG roadster, scaring me silly. Because at that time I didn't know what he was thinking-or what to think of him!

As he ended this kiss, he put his mouth close to my ear and said in that sultry teasing whisper, "Could have been me - if I'd seen you first - know that don'cha?"

"Oh! No way! You're way *too tall!*" I exclaimed, pretending to push him away.

He did that “only Elvis could snickering laugh” again and then almost lifted me off my feet in a bear hug as he said, “Gawd--it's good to see you! Lord! Lord!”

When he had to go, we both cried; my gut feeling told me I'd never see him alone again, and probably wouldn't see him any where many more times. I knew something was very wrong and I think he wanted to tell me, but changed his mind. Today I believe *he knew* his days were numbered and he had a little time that morning, wanted to say goodbye, and typically Elvis, he took a chance and called, just as he had done on a couple of other occasions. I am glad he did, though it broke my heart to see him cry and then again when he didn't want me to say goodbye when I left. Instead, he said, “See ya there”. He knew we would be coming to see his show in Las Vegas---

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Elvis talked a little during the interview we did off and on over the course of nearly 14 months, about his future. He had ideas about what he'd like to do, such as trying it as a director -he thought he could do that, would have “a good eye” for framing scenes etc. and he wanted to go to Europe, play there because so many fans lived in those countries--he felt he “owed them a long run so they could see the show live”. He mentioned wanting to record some more gospel songs, some real oldies he said, and “give them a little tunin' up and some feel good beat to them”. He mentioned going to colleges to do gospel concerts, saying it was something he always wanted to do- that people needed that type music to stir their soul and heal their spirits. He thought music was a way to reach young people, to communicate with them in a way they could understand. He wanted to do good “fims”, something with “heart and meaning to 'em” saying that there was so many things that weren't being brought out in “fims” things that people could relate to and benefit from and he wanted a chance at that. He thought now that he had “proved himself” as having “drawing power”, he might have a chance at making it in “fims and maybe directing somethin' great.” He wasn't ready to throw in the towel saying, “If I can just get myself together somehow--get something to work right” (with his health) “I'd like to try somethin' new--different--an' be my own boss for a while.” He asked if I thought people would accept him back as an actor and I said, “Elvis- there wouldn't be a theater big enough to handle the crowd!” He snickered as only he could and then after a big relieved sigh he said, “Thanks, I needed that!”

He mentioned how many people depended on him, saying it would be a big change for them if he quit touring, they'd have to find other work and it appeared to bother him, he felt obligated to keep working and yet was torn between the past and his hopes for a future doing something else. He said, “Once things start rollin' some of them could come back an' work with us in films, or doin' a few tours now and then. I can't promise them anything now.” He was finally aware of the financial costs of his career but I think the facts and physical costs were making themselves known to Elvis, the man. He

realized he had to make a change – or he'd die from the constant stress and strain on the body that was becoming severely impaired and bringing him down. We will never completely know or understand the extent of his heartache and fears in those last months...not in these bodies, we won't.

Elvis: “I’ve had a great life, ups, downs, all of it...there’s a few things I might consider changing, but if –eh- lookin’ back, it’s been a ride man, (laughs) like a roller coaster ya never been on before kind of, ya know? Don’t know what’s over that incline but you know its gonna maybe blow your mind! Exciting; life is what you make it...I jus’ try to do what is right ya know, do what I can to get through life an’ maybe make things a little brighter in someone else’s life... really. It’s all anyone can do, the best you can with what you been given by God to do with. My voice is a gift, I have to use it or ...maybe lose it. I don’t know man, my life is a...a...an experience, let me jus’ put it that way. I don’t know of anything better, really, so I jus’ enjoy every day ‘n try not to trouble any one doin’ it.”

He continued by saying that “God only assures us one day at a time; we have to use that day wisely. It might be the last one of our life. We don’t know the hour or the day, but God does. He keeps a record; remember that, don’t cha?”

“I hope I have not offended God by what I do or have done; I know that my life has not been eh...perfect as sometimes like most folks, I screw up. Maybe because of what and who I have become, there are pretty big screwups as well as little ones. (Laughs) My heart tells me that God doesn’t expect us to have perfection; He just wants us to try to conduct our daily lives in such a way as to brighten the day for others and to treat one another kindly in our daily activities. God made us, he didn’t make us perfect, or even alike; we are all different in looks, thought and yet, our hearts are so much alike in that we love, we trust and we hope, for ourselves and one another. God like, but not a perfect image. Prayer helps, try it-you might be surprised.”

### **The Truth can hurt---**

Twenty-eight years later, I received a phone call from **Ray Stuttgart**, a German citizen and a friend of **Felton Jarvis** who worked with Elvis via RCA for many years. Ray was helping out at some of the recording sessions of Elvis' last filmed concert tour and had also worked on recording when they filmed Las Vegas concerts in the earlier days. During those Vegas days at that time my friend and I were having breakfast in the Hilton coffee shop one early morning and Ray came in; there were no other places to sit, and since we had seen him working in the back ground back stage, we asked him to join us. He was friendly, and told us he and his wife Trina lived in Paso Robles, California but were planning to move back to Germany in a few years when he retired. He was a nice guy but we never crossed paths again until he discovered my Website on [www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org) in 2007 and e-mailed me for my phone number. Through his recollections of having been back stage at those California concerts and afterward, I learned that Elvis had spent several hours the night before the morning he and I met to talk, being examined at a hospital where he had had some tests done earlier.

Elvis wasn't talking about what he found out, but Ray said it obviously wasn't what he had hoped to hear and that Elvis was so "shaken" by the news, he was having panic attacks and used a "paper bag to catch his breath" in the car. Ray also said that Elvis had "lied to close friends" about the seriousness of his health problems, including letting them think he was taking too many sleeping pills etc. and other stories, preferring they think that rather than have them "pity him" or "worrying over him", or that they were going to be losing their jobs.

He said that his friend Felton told him Elvis was having extremely painful episodes that sometimes put him onto the floor, but Elvis tried to hide it as much as he could, fibbing about taking too many sleeping pills, etc. when he looked and felt bad; to keep the truth from his friends and associates, including those he had known and worked with for years. Hearing all of this I realized that Elvis had told a "little white lie" to me when he said he had some time *before* some medical appointments and could I meet him. The truth was he had *already* kept the appointments and had the results, which explains why he was struggling with his feelings and why I was picking up the emotional turmoil in him. He was not able to talk about it, so he put it ahead of him and let me believe it so he wouldn't have to talk about any of it.

I think he knew he didn't have much time left on earth and wanted to do all he could for as long as he could. Had he let it be known he was that ill, he wouldn't have been able to set foot outside his door, people would have mobbed him. It would have

been a riot everywhere he might try to go and his life would have been so restricted by the many people/fans and their *need* to see him before he was gone, he wouldn't have been able to continue appearing in concert. So he kept it to himself, and he went out and worked, saying goodbye one last time as he went from place to place. It was his life, about which he said, "It's the only place I feel alive--- out there-" on the stage; it was what he was here for, his purpose-to bring joy and happiness through singing-using his God given talents. I think he was trying to pay off debts, trying to make some money for his family, should he go suddenly. And no, I do not believe that he did anything to cause his death-he did not take his own life...maybe if he had tried to get help earlier, before his health deteriorated so much, but maybes never end so I won't go there. He did try to find a doctor who could help; but unfortunately none of them could figure out what exactly was wrong, including Dr. Nick. In his own way, Elvis believed that God would handle it and that he'd be at home, with his friends and it would be okay.

***It was.***

Elvis wanted "to be there for all the people who've cared about me, and sacrificed to come see me; if I just could do somethin' for them. If I can, I'm gonna be there for each of 'em... 'n take 'em straight through Heaven's gate 'n introduce 'em to Jesus ma self... 'cause he's the man... 'n I'm gonna be sittin' at his feet, 'n singin' in that heavenly choir –gawd, what a group that's gonna be!" [I believe that's just what he's doing--- watching over his fans, and being there when they need him. People from all over the world, of all ages have stories to tell of being desperate emotionally, and Elvis suddenly, unasked at times, came to them, sometimes via dreams, other times in song, and always unexpectedly "out of the blue... here comes Elvis".]

**Elvis:** *"A good friend is somethin' everyone needs, sometimes they are kinda difficult to find and harder to keep for one reason or another, things just interfere ya know. One gets married, 'n they move on to other things; or they move away and jus' lose touch. I like keepin' the same people with me, know 'em well that way, and in this kind of work...mine I mean, its better havin' friends looking out for me. Know what to expect that way; don't like surprises out...there..."*

**Jan, from Memphis:** “I met him at a ball game in 1956; he took a bunch of us home with him. Elvis was always fun, interesting and he liked to talk about all sorts of things – we used to spend hours discussing how people had so many different personalities, ways of thinking and all of us are so different – no two alike. He wondered how alike he and his brother would have been since they were twins. I thought he was lonely, more so than most people because he had been 9 months in a close relationship with another human being, his brother; and they were separated at the very time they would have been imprinted upon one another at birth. “First sight” he called it, seeing the other person for the first time after all those hours in darkness with only minimum touch contact and sound. He believed babies heard while in the womb, and he wondered if they had some type of mental contact; oh it was very different talking with Elvis, he was very alive, very real and personable. People who met him even for a few moments would say how warm and friendly he was, and they often said they’d never seen anyone as good looking; he was always embarrassed to hear that and didn’t feel he was all that much. As his fame grew and he went overseas, then to Hollywood for so many years, we lost touch but I thought of him quite often, especially when I began teaching- there were a great many of his ideas discussed among my students and I; of course they had no idea whose thoughts I was “channeling”.

I was teaching a class in 1977 when one of the other students came in from the hallway crying, just sobbing and said, “Elvis is dead! He’s dead! What are we going to do...its Elvis?” It was a young man who often went by Elvis’ home hoping to see him outside and had taken a snapshot of him riding one of his horses, the palomino but he didn’t get to speak with him. Just a wave and a smile as he rode past the gates; he never seemed to tire of telling about those few moments. School was dismissed so the children could go home, so many girls were in tears; it was surprising how many boys took it very seriously. Elvis was dead and things have not been the same since.”

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**Elvis:** *“I’ve had--eh--some dark days --’n nights too (Snickers) an’ there have been times when--when I was ready to – to tuck ma tail an’ run--but I didn’t--because I wasn’t taught that way, raised up to find a way, if it’s worth havin’ then you got to get after it, whatever it might be, you know, a job, more opportunities to make money. Things are possible if you keep tryin’ even when all seems lost there is somethin’ we can do--and that’s--pray,*

*really. It never hurts to bend your knees 'fore God 'n bare your heart an soul because God's fair, he don't make judgments against anybody down on their knees askin' for his help-- 'n no matter what you think at the time, don't make judgments of him either- cause sometimes it takes a little time, 'n patience to see that He did hear your cry 'n it's workin' out. Maybe not quite like you thought, but usually it turns out for the best. Trouble is people have to have the faith to believe--to be ready to accept the answer; eventually it all will make sense--- that's been my experience--. For what it's worth; I know you're lookin' at me, sayin' who's he to stand there 'n sayin' these things- Well, nobody really, but I believe in the word of the Livin' God – an' it's His hand that put me here - so jus' consider that when you're havin' doubts. Really --”*

Elvis: “Sometimes we start thinkin' we got it made, nothin' is gonna get in our way. That's when, ya know, our maker notices us and thinks, Man, he's outta hand! An' next thing ya know like a bolt of lightning from above, we get slapped down for being a fool! So when ya start to think too high an' mighty jus' remember, I told you so!”





*Tie tack Elvis gave Jimmie, also a Capricorn- it is set with small diamonds.*

*In a 1976 conversation Elvis was speaking of feeling worn out and said he was unable to get his strength back; then he started snickering, that turned into laughter and I didn't know what was so funny. He explained between giggling and laughing, saying "I'm a burned out old goat!"*



Elvis looking right at the camera belonging to **Pat Kilpatrick** who took some super photos at every concert he did in Southern California and Tucson, Arizona. Elvis had just got a standing ovation for "*America the Beautiful*" from 7 lovely young ladies sitting directly in front of him, less than 6 feet from the stage. They were all daughters of our friends and Starla was center, next to JoAnna whom she had introduced to Elvis via the telephone a few months earlier. He was tickled with the reaction he received here but a little awed when he did "*How Great Thou Art*" later in the show and he had practically the entire arena audience standing up. He couldn't see much past the 5<sup>th</sup> row if that far from up there, but he certainly could hear them! He said at least three times, "Thank you, thank you very much." And added: "We all thank you, really - very much". He looked a little heavy and puffy in the face, his fingers and hands looked swollen and splotchy skinned in the California concerts, but when he went to Tucson a few days later he had "shrunk" down, his skin was pale and his hands were more "normal" looking. Pat had close ups, Elvis' face was not puffy and his body was not "bloated or heavy looking" at all. Obviously Elvis' body was retaining fluids, and he had lost a lot of that in less than five days! We noticed at the shows we saw, and we were very close to the stage, that his hands trembled as he gripped the microphone and that he was trying to stop his arm from trembling as much as he could. At this time in his life, he was having pain in his wrists, arms and shoulders, and he had arthritis affecting his neck and the joints of his back. Yet

this man consistently gave some of the best performances we had seen – and we did see a lot of them, with some of us having seen nearly a hundred shows over the last 5 years of his life. It was true – he *did* “feel alive up there”.

I believe he took the medicine for keeping fluid buildup in body tissue as often as he could, and perhaps that might explain the sweating he was experiencing. He had told me those pills were harmful to his eyes since he had glaucoma though I know he wanted to look good as possible and do the shows the best he could. He’d take the risk for that.

Coming up is the transcript of the “poem” that was found in the Bible Elvis gave to my husband Jimmie for his birthday in January of 1977. Elvis writing is hard to read, on a small pocket sized piece of paper, and looks as if he was using an ink pen. It would appear that he was sitting in the quiet of the night in his Meditation Garden at Graceland, gazing into the fountain as he put his thoughts in writing, probably using his knee as a “desk”. The 3 ½ inch by 4 ½ inch lined page was torn out, folded and being used as a book marker for Psalms in that Bible. – I titled this piece-In the Garden.

When he wrote what I have called “*In the Garden*”, he was about to head out for another tour -and we don’t know exactly when he composed these words. He felt bad physically; he was struggling with the stress of needing to bring in more money to keep things going and just a few weeks earlier, he thought he was going to be physically better but those hopes were dashed after the previous tour. He realized that he had to come to grips with the fact he had serious health problems that were not going to right themselves easily-especially with a heavy tour schedule. He had to make changes, or he was going to die. I believe he felt it would be sooner than anyone else realized because he was very good at keeping his personal feelings to himself. He knew how easily word got spread about, he didn’t want the press to learn anything; it was easier for him to just let the gossip among his group of friends and coworkers run its course. We all know it surely did in those last few months. And even more so after his death.

Unfortunately Elvis didn’t have a vast fortune of investments or properties nor were there a lot of record royalties since the Col. had earlier convinced him to sell off some of those -most of them early hits that after his death brought in a “virtual fortune” to the new owners with Elvis receiving less money from them, just as he had mentioned weeks before he was gone. He wasn’t broke, but he said he was not a “fat cat”. Like he said in that very serious voice, “Hind sight is what kicks you in the ass for bein’ stupid-that’s why I ain’t got hardly any ass left!” And of course he enjoyed the laughs he’d get from those type comments. Actually, it was pretty true -he had lost his “fine booty” and had “baggy in the seat” pants when his body wasn’t puffing up from fluid retention as it did when he was out working. In those last concerts when he has his father come out on stage and stand with him, Elvis appears to be in a more weakened condition than his

daddy. Elvis' arms are thin, it is only his upper abdomen that looks distended and out of proportion to the rest of his body and his skin color is not right, his eyes look tired and the stage make up does not hide the paleness of his skin. His fine voice never fails him, breathless though he might become from working harder to sing, his voice remained constant and true.

I was always glad when Elvis could laugh about his problems, more so when he was so ill and had every reason to be 'down in spirit'. I think that sense of humor helped to keep him going, to give him a boost when he was low and to light up those eyes with that smile of his. People tend to feel badly when watching and thinking about those last days, his performances were less active, some he hardly could move around and it was visible to anyone who was a long time fan and had seen him in other venues; but if one looks at it from his perspective, it's not so hard to understand- he was leaving us with his last gift, one from his heart, one we would have access to forever, and he knew his fans would watch those last moments and be able to see through the hype and flack coming from those who get a lift out of tearing down his image, and there are so many prone to do that sort of thing. Elvis left us with his talent, his heart and soul forever -and that is what counts. That he was human and had frailties, sometimes more than he could stand without medical help, doesn't really count as a mark against him -rather the fact that he rose above it all, and did his job to the best of his abilities is a decided victory for him - forever. Bless his little ole Capricorn "do or die" attitude, he won! And as he would say, "Aww...to heck with it!"

On the next pages: the poem I named “In the Garden” and the hand written by Elvis poem “In the Garden”, followed by a new age Bible interpretation. To read the one Elvis would have read look in a King James Bible that contains the earlier Christian version.

**In the Garden**

**I sit here alone thinking, how the moon's light glows -  
Meditating upon the garden water there below.  
I've only just begun to spend my life-  
To have some fun.**

**But as I think of all I've lost, the hurt hangs on-  
So slow to go.**

**I'm now full grown and called a man – but really  
is that what I am?**

**My hearts so young, it feels like new-  
To think I'm getting old makes me very blue.**

**Lord –**

**Just let me laugh and be the clown I am-**

**Please give me dignity and grace.**

**So I can have the strength to face-**

**These final days that seems to race.**

**Let me have some time to do all I can-  
So facing death won't be such a task.  
Please Lord, thy will be done- that's all I ask---**

***Psalms 38***

[illegible]

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## **Psalm 38 [Amplified Bible] submitted by Sonya...**

### **Psalms of David: to bring remembrance and make memorial.**

“LORD, rebuke me not in Your wrath, neither chasten me in Your hot displeasure.  
For Your arrows have sunk into me and stick fast, and Your hand has come down upon me and pressed me sorely.  
There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation; neither is there any health or rest in my bones because of my sin.  
For my iniquities have gone over my head [like waves of a flood]; as a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.  
My wounds are loathsome and corrupt because of my foolishness.  
I am bent and bowed down greatly; I go about mourning all the day long.  
For my loins are filled with burning; and there is no soundness in my flesh.  
I am faint and sorely bruised {deadly cold and quite worn out}; I groan by reason of the disquiet and moaning of my heart.  
Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from you.  
My heart throbs, my strength fails me; as for the light of my eyes, it also is gone from me.  
My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my plague; and my neighbors and my near ones stand afar off.  
They also that seek and demand my life lay snares for me, and they that seek and require my hurt speak crafty and mischievous things;  
They meditate treachery and deceit all the day long.  
But I, like a deaf man, hear not; and I am like a dumb man who opens not his mouth.  
Yes, I have become like a man who hears not, in whose mouth are no arguments or replies.  
For in You, O Lord, do I hope; You will answer, O Lord my God.  
For I pray, Let them not rejoice over me, who when my foot slips boast against me.  
For I am ready to halt and fall; my pain and sorrow are continually before me.  
**For I do confess my guilt and iniquity; I am filled with sorrow for my sin.**  
But my enemies are vigorous and strong, and those who hate me wrongfully are multiplied.  
They also that render evil for good are adversaries to me, because I follow the thing that is good. Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my Salvation.”

[To me, the above highlighted declaration is very meaningful, important to many thousands of Elvis’ fans who loved him, cared about him and wonder in silence and by questions, was Elvis “saved”, did he express sorrow for his “sins”, “did he “go to Heaven”? (Christians believe in salvation, that Jesus was the Son of God and he came to take on our sins and die on the cross, a sacrifice for all of us; other religions do not



always agree but every religion does believe in some form of “eternal life”. In his studies and conversations, Elvis knew this was a worldwide belief.) Elvis was a Biblical scholar, he knew the Bible and the fact he put Psalm 38 at the bottom of the page where he had written from the heart, deeply felt emotionally charged thoughts telling his Lord, “Thy Will Be Done, that's all I ask. There is no doubt in my mind or my heart that he is there, sitting at the feet of Jesus, the Christ listening, or preparing to do the bidding of his Lord when he is not singing praise filled gospel in that heavenly choir over yonder! You can bet he loves every minute of it. He once asked me what I thought about “angel’s havin’ wings, flyin’ around”. His view was, they would “get in the way havin’ all those feathers an’ tryin’ to do things” so no, in his mind, people would not become Angels, not in the sense of having wings like they are in pictures and paintings. He found scripture, read about angels, and that there were just so many of them, made to serve God’s needs from heaven -messengers he said, sent down to visit humans, but they were different from human beings...and did not have to come live on earth...unless God sent them for a specific cause. He thought everyone had an angel, but not 100% of the time...as if they had several human causes, and so only showed up for those in need. (He made sense to me.)

**Elvis:** There is more godliness in the beauty of the night sky than any mortal man, who views it with the eyes of the heart as well as those of the head...who can possibly deny that there has to be a supreme being, something greater than anything mortal man can come up with, who designed and controls the vastness of the heavens... Who is gonna say it was not created with a “big bang” kind of event? It’s there, and we aren’t smart enough yet to know how else it got there... Ain’t no body gonna deny that fact!”

On a “note” found in one of Elvis’ books- He had made a “list” of close relatives and family on the right and put “Me” on the left- below was written: “I am so alone in this. Why? No one understands. No one person but me has been here until me. I am alone. God, Give me hope.”

From his Bible, underlined in red ink: Psalm 39: vs.2 -4: “I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Vs 13: O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.”

Elvis used his Bible for all things, to find solace, to guide and give him wisdom, to help cool his temper when angry and for hope to ease his heart and soul. And he prayed for people all over the world; he asked forgiveness for his sins, and asked for guidance in

dealing with others whom he spent time with, his men, his family and his girlfriends; and he prayed daily and said, “God never judges a person down on their knees-he blesses them.”

Elvis prayed everywhere apparently, his men “found” him on his knees in bathrooms asking for strength and help before performances. He was seen praying on his knees beside his bed in Las Vegas several times by housekeepers. He taught his little daughter to pray before bedtime and got on his knees to say prayers with her. He prayed and meditated in his Meditation Garden when no one was around, often late at night. And he prayed for his fans, his friends and those who loved him, and those who did not. His mother said in an interview in 1956 that she and his dad taught Elvis to be kind, honest and love everyone as God wished all his children would, and that God would always give strength and hope to those who asked. Elvis learned that lesson well; his mother and father had every reason to be proud of their special son.

### ***AND THEY WRITE---***

[Letters I have received from very lucky people who had the chance to personally know Elvis from early in his career until his last years in Las Vegas and on tour.]

#### **(Excerpts from “Evie” - received her letter in 1980)**

And no matter what I said or did, he refused to take me to bed! We rode his motorcycle, raced around town after dark, went to Liberty Land and rode that roller coaster until we were about to throw up, and went on long walks around Graceland property. Way off from the house we lay on the ground looking up at the stars and he pointed out several of them, calling them by name. We necked, he lay on me, I lay on him, my sweater off, his shirt off, but that was as far as it went. It wasn't because I wasn't willing nor was it because he didn't want to; he said no, I was a virgin and he didn't want to spoil that for me. Nothing I said or did changed his mind.

I spent the night at Graceland, waiting until his mother and father were in bed and hopefully asleep, then I sneaked into his room to be with him. Of course that led to more and he got up and went downstairs to “cool off” he said. I fell asleep waiting for him to return and the next morning he woke me up kissing my neck and ear. He had slept in his clothes! His mother knocked once, opened the door and walked in on us as if she expected to find me there. Elvis got up to hug and kiss her for bringing us coffee and some homemade donuts. Mrs. Presley was pleased with him, but was very cool toward

me and only spoke to me because he was present. That happened several times and when he wasn't near she was cold and uncommunicative. I have spoken to other women who had relationships with him in those early days, they tell me that his mother wanted him to marry a Southern raised girl, one who would know how to take care of him; she didn't want him involved with girls in "show business" because they would be too interested in themselves and their own careers to care for Elvis properly. I guess she knew her son very well; he should have married that kind of woman.

I didn't stay the entire week; Elvis was unhappy about that but I couldn't stand watching his mother play up to him with me near and be so distant and obviously jealous when he was out of sight. His father was a complete opposite, friendly and warm, graciously asking after my plans and being helpful as could be while she stood by sullen and glum faced. Elvis didn't seem to notice anything was wrong and I couldn't tell him! So he took me to the train and I came back to Los Angeles. Elvis never called me again and when he was working on King Creole I dropped by the set and said hello.

He seemed happy to see me, kissed me several times- for the cameras, I think. Then he said he had to get back to work and I left. I never saw him again to speak to him.

Several other girls in Hollywood had dated Elvis and they had similar experiences with his mother, one of them had such a bad experience with his mother, she didn't stay as long as I and from all appearances, Elvis was pretty angry and accused her of "taking things all wrong" when she told him his mother "ran her off". Some of my friends spent several days with him at different locales and he didn't tell them no; they all said he was a little funny about certain things and he would not take any chances---his manager "would kill him". He didn't call any of them again either, of course with the number of girls lined up for a chance to be with him, he didn't have to worry about "repeats".

The army had drafted him and his mother had passed away suddenly. I sent a card with some flowers and his father responded through his secretary. Elvis was devastated at the funeral and wasn't aware that I was present. I don't think he could remember anything about who was there; his eyes were only for his mother lying in her casket. He lay over her sobbing and had to be helped away and then was almost carried up to the graveside and when they were lowering her casket, he tried to jump in after it, crying "No-no-don't, oh God momma--no--no!" I have never seen a man as lost as he looked that day; he had cried so much he didn't look well, his eyes were dazed and tears ran in streams from them. His father ran a close second; he too was helpless, unable to give much comfort to his torn up son. It was obvious that Elvis was not himself; I was amazed that he managed to get it together and go overseas. But he did; he was a remarkable man in so many ways. I fell in love with him the first day I met him and I still hold a special love in my heart for him. I am so thankful he had good friends who understood him. The kind of fame he acquired was a very heavy load. I love your book; I hope there will be another soon.

Sincerely, Evyone "Evie" L. Bradford Jr.

***(From 1979, former Las Vegas showgirl who was lucky...and met him in the 60's)***

I didn't consider that I would ever meet him, I mean, how many chances would I have meeting a rock 'n roll idol going to a Christian College and studying religions with the intentions of becoming a Reverend's wife? However, so many things do change, thank the good Lord!

My fiancée decided to marry another girl (whose parents were loaded) and dumped me at the proverbial alter so I moved to Las Vegas and tried out for some of the shows. I had studied dance, and was hired on as a trainee dancer at the Flamingo Hotel in 1964 where it took me (just) three weeks to become a main liner-because of my height. From there I went to the Sands and joined the 6ft and over Follies. One night while doing our thing, with the gigantic 27-pound headgear on; I looked down though when wearing that rigging we couldn't bend over and had to hold our heads straight or risk losing our balance. I saw him sitting at a front table in front of me and those blue neon eyes were smiling right at me. He got up and came to stage edge grinning up at me, with a little piece of paper held up in his hand. We weren't allowed to take things from patrons; I looked straight at him and mouthed back stage and rolled my eyes toward that side. He nodded and blew me a kiss.

I thought our 10-minute show would never end! My heart was racing like a wild animal and I had to do two more shows before I could leave! It was an eternity but what saved me was he didn't leave -he stayed for both performances and each time I moved to his side of the room, he came to the stage edge and stood there looking up at me with such a cute grin on that handsome face. I have to say, I have never in my life looked forward to anything as much before or since in my life!

Finally the shows were over and we all hurried back to the dressing rooms. The other girls were as excited as I and were so thrilled that he was even in the audience and had stayed for the entire performance! One would have thought we were all going to be his date! We didn't have long to wait; he came right back into our dressing rooms and he was alone with 22 women in various stages of undress but he didn't seem to mind (at all). To say that he didn't look would certainly be silly, he did! And grinned at them all; but when he finally came to my station, he was suddenly serious. I was sitting down, about to remove the heavy eye makeup and he stood behind me looking at my reflection in the mirror.

Hi, I said, I'll be through here in about 20 minutes. He smiled and sat down in Rae Ann's chair (she was showering). "How tall are you" he asked. I replied how tall are you? He kind of grinned and said 6 feet, barely. I said 6'2" barefoot. He had a silly grin on his face and said, "Oh man, I could have sworn you were 15 feet tall in that get up when I first saw you-that's damn heavy, isn't it?" I answered, not too, once I had my neck built up. He grinned and said, "Honey, you're built up all over!" He laughed; everyone seemed to hush at once; he suddenly realized where he was-with a bunch of women and we were all about to "pant" over him. He stood up, saying he would wait just

outside in the hall, and then leaned over me and said, “Will you come with me to my hotel-I’m at the Flamingo down the street?” I said I sure would and I’d hurry. He grinned, kissed my cheek and made his way through the girls who were all touching him, hugging him and wanting a kiss also; which he obliged with quick little kisses as he kept moving to the door.

The room was abuzz as we got our costumes off, showered and dressed in civvies. None of the girls wanted to leave until I did; they wanted to see me go off with Elvis Presley! It was something how we females “bonded” that evening.

Elvis was waiting, surrounded by hotel employees and musicians but when he saw me, he excused himself and came over saying, “Lordy, and even out of costume you are beautiful! And tall, too!” He took my arm and said shall we go? We went. It took about 20 minutes to get to his hotel and another 10 to get rid of his friends (male) who appeared to want to hang out with us. Elvis finally told them to go find something to do and they left.

It was 62 degrees outside and I think below freezing in Elvis’ suite-so cold I was shivering in my low cut, thin evening gown. Elvis wasn’t cold at all, in fact when we came in he said he was hot and asked did I mind if he took off his jacket? Such politeness was astounding! He turned on the television set, found a comedy station and invited me to sit on the sofa with him. I was freezing and he pulled me very close and kept his arm around me saying, “I’m warm blooded, take advantage of the heat” and then he kissed me. I’m no beginner and have been around lots of guys, even some star attractions but I had never had kisses affect me quite like Elvis’ kisses. He was accomplished, gifted might be the better choice of words. My head was spinning and I definitely warmed up! Between kisses he asked me questions, how long had I been dancing? When did I come to Vegas and was I really tall as a young girl and did it bother me then? I was hardly able to get two intelligent words out before those lips were doing their dance across mine and up and down my neck.

I finally did say, honey pie, you have entirely too many clothes on, let’s get you undressed. He started giggling, then laughing but he leaned back and let me unbutton his shirt, then stood and I undid the top of his pants. He stopped me there saying he’d have to get his boots off before he could get these xxxxxing tight-legged pants off! And he quickly pulled off the boots and then led me to the bedroom saying if I would like to use the bathroom, to check the drawers and if there was anything there I needed to help myself and he would make us some drinks.

There were several toothbrushes and paste so I used them-I smoked then and he had fresh, sweet breath; I wasn’t going to take a chance on missing out on those kisses! He knocked on the door and handed in the top to a pair of silk pajamas saying I could wear it if I wanted so I slipped it on and fastened one button. When I came out he was looking out the window, had replaced his shirt but left it hanging open and had two tall glasses of orange juice with cherries and” a little vodka”, he said. He smiled, shook his head and said, “Whew, I’m so lucky!” He held out my drink, we stood looking at the

lights, sipping our drinks though I don't think he had more than a couple of sips while I was thirsty and nearly finished mine. He said he didn't drink much alcohol but if mine wasn't strong enough, he would add some to it. I drank it as it was-I don't drink either but thought I had better because he was one great looking guy and I wasn't sure how much longer I could keep my hands off him, if you know what I mean.

He wanted to go outside and pulled a blanket off the bed to keep me warm; we went onto the balcony where he carefully folded the blanket around both of us; the breeze had died and it was pleasant, the stars were shining brightly. We talked a few minutes about Memphis and Vegas, how different the life styles were and he asked where I grew up and was surprised when I said I had planned for most of my life to be a preacher's wife but got sidetracked a little bit when the guy picked a non-college girl. He said, yeah, he'd had that happen too, his girl chose a non-entertainer guy! We sat outside for quite a while, just talking and getting to know each other; he seemed relaxed and in no hurry at all.

We went to bed before sunrise and didn't make love until I woke him up hours later. Elvis liked to sleep days and stay up at night and that's what we did. He came to the shows, stayed through the entire thing and at least once each night he came to the stage edge and looked up at me with those eyes and that grin. He liked the fact I was taller than he and from that angle, I looked 15 feet tall as he said.

I never could get used to the cold rooms he kept but he was never cold. Not even in bed when we had nothing on; I would be freezing a big part of the time but he was nice about it and kept me covered and held me close. He liked being on the bottom and so I wore the pajama top and even had the blankets pulled up at times but he didn't care. He turned out the lights except for the small hall light near the bath. He liked to touch and kiss and did a lot of that. He was a good lover, said sweet things and even sang to me a little bit, but he'd end up giggling often as not. I can't say I ever had a better lover; I would have married him on the spot had he asked, but I knew he'd never do that. In fact, I was surprised when he did marry-he just didn't seem to be the marrying kind of guy. He loved women too much -way too much for any one of them to keep him content for long. It didn't surprise me when she left him he had so many "irons in the fire" kinds of things going on in his life and didn't have time to be just a "common man".

I saw Elvis off and on for 3 years, when he'd come over to Vegas to "play" and relax with the guys. Once he rode his motorcycle and we spent time riding out in the desert, it was so beautiful out there, we stripped and made love under the spectacular night sky on the sand and he complained all the way back about the grit; he was sure he had some kind of sand fleas crawling all over him. He couldn't wait to get in the shower and used a brush to scrub his body and asked me scrub his back and hair because he was sure something was crawling in it. I didn't see anything but a little black sand but he was horribly unhappy! He swore he'd never do that again; I teased him about how much I

had loved it and what if I wanted to go back and do it in the raw again? He still said “No way!” The next day he did have a rash in some tender places and he was upset to say the least but he didn’t mind me putting salve and powder on those places for him or kissing them to make it better. Oh naughty me.

A few years later he was married, appearing in Vegas and I was having babies with my husband whom I adore and who knows I was with Elvis long before meeting him; he doesn’t mind- he loves him also. We went over in the mid seventies and saw his show and I sent a note up to him telling him we loved his show and he was so handsome up there and I was so thrilled to look up at him on stage. I asked him if he remembered me and gave him our mailing address. Later I received a two-page hand written letter from him and I was so thrilled to get it. I want to share the second page with you because it is so much the man who was Elvis, the king of rock ‘n roll. Thank you for writing so kindly about him.

Barbara

(2<sup>nd</sup> page of Elvis letter to her – his hand written response is in “We Remember, Elvis revised 2006, Amazon books)

*“I guess I am born in the wrong time period as I am out of step with my peers and the expression of my emotions. They hold everything in and suffer, and I let it all come to the surface and suffer. I think it’s harder both ways...to have openness is good I guess. Gooder as Lisa would say; gooder and gooder. You’re a better judge than I about these type things. You asked me if I remember you. I do. I remember that early morning when we stood on the balcony and watched that Vegas sunrise. And that air was crisp and you said you love wintertime best. I looked at you and your eyes were like the morning glory's growing around the back of our old house in Tupelo and it made me cry and you thought I was sick but it was just the beauty of that time...and you. So I do and I will never forget. Just remember me in return.*

*Love ya, Elvis Presley*

(In 1981 I tried contacting some of the composers of the many letters received when our book *We Remember, Elvis* first came out (1979) I pondered over sharing them, but some were so poignant, revealing the man’s heart, I felt he would want his fans to read and know his heart better.. Barbara was one of the few I was able to contact. She gave me permission to use her letter and Elvis’ 2<sup>nd</sup> page should I wish to do so in future writings about him. Her husband was very ill with liver disease; she commented that Elvis and he were “twins” in appearance at that stage of their illnesses. Her husband passed away at 48 years of age and she moved back to Texas to be near her family.)

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Dear Mrs. Hill,            (She met him as an “Elvis fan””)

Please forgive me for writing to you as I am going to take up a lot of your precious time with my story. I recently was able to get a copy of your books through e-bay and a good friend who bid on it for me got a spiral bound copy with both of your books in it-that is so wonderful because I got to read them one after the other. My friend Marty (not Lacker) told me that you have a revised edition coming out through Amazon books and I sure will get one of those! He looked up your current address for me –he works for the Post Master General and can find any body’s mailing address! Now, getting to my story: I had just turned 18 and went to Las Vegas with a group of friends-we had graduated high school that summer and took Vegas “by storm” in 105+ degree temperatures! Elvis was appearing at the Hilton and we had tickets to see his show at midnight on a Friday night in 1972. Talk about excited! I surely was, he had been my dream guy since I was 12 years old and saw him at a friend’s house in a re-run of Blue Hawaii. He was to me, the most handsome and exciting man I had ever seen-I guess there are many of us who think that! At that time I was under the impression that it was just I and that I was destined to in some way meet him and become his girl. Little did I know that fantasy was about to come true! We were so lucky! While standing in line we got acquainted with one of the young men who worked for Elvis, his friends were in line and he came over and being as we were young, attractive girls, he started talking to us as well. During the conversation it came out that I loved Elvis and wanted to meet him. The young man’s name was Richard and he invited us to come with him after the show and wait by the elevator where Elvis would be going upstairs. We of course were so thrilled-especially me! We had good seats, not right at the stage but I did make it close enough to give him a gift I had brought with me. I had heard he liked poetry and gave him a little book of “feel good” poems and got a kiss and a scarf for my efforts. I remember looking into his eyes and almost fainting, and would have but for his strong arm holding me up as he kissed me on the lips. I can still recall how the touch of his lips sent a shock wave through me as if I had been electrocuted! He must have felt it also, as he drew back just a little, looked straight into my eyes and said, “Whooo-O!” Handed me the scarf, and with a smashing grin, winked at me. I do not remember how I got back to my seat or much of the rest of the show. I was in a trance-and he did it.

We waited together where Richard told us and sure enough he came with some other of Elvis’ guys and they took us back into the bowels of the hotel and to the elevator that Elvis would be going up on. We waited for what seemed hours though it was only about 45 minutes and finally here he came. I have never seen a man so handsome, a man who seemed to shine from head to feet and whose presence preceded him. But Elvis’ surely did-I felt him long before he stood in front of me. He listened as Richard introduced us all, but he kept looking at me out of the corner of his eyes when not straight on. Finally,



he took my hand and I started shaking, was on the verge of screaming and that was not like me! He immediately put his arm around me and leaning to reach my ear said, "Honey, don't be afraid of me, I won't hurt you...will you do me the honor of coming upstairs and having dinner with me? Please?" I don't know if I said yes, the next thing we were going up on the elevator. Elvis had his arm around me holding me close to his side and two of my girl friends were also going up, one with Richard and the other with Sonny. When we got off onto the top floor where Elvis was staying, I was in shock and don't recall a lot of the early conversation other than he showed me around the suite, the balcony and then we sat down for dinner. There were other people there when we arrived but when we sat down to eat, it was only Elvis and me -I had no idea where my friends were and frankly at that point, I didn't care. Elvis was right there and he was beyond belief good looking. I've read and heard it said that no camera ever did him justice and I can say that is most definitely true! The man was a walking work of art-that hasn't been duplicated so far that I have seen-and I've looked! We talked through dinner, but I remember only one thing and that was he asked my age and if I had a boyfriend-I told him I was 21 and I didn't have a steady boyfriend as I didn't think I was ready for anything serious yet. I remember seeing amusement on his face and in his eyes, but he said, "You're a smart girl-stay single until you find the right one." I knew his marriage was on the skids and that he had a little girl but he wasn't living with his wife and he had a reputation for being a playboy. Right then I didn't care what they said or I heard-I wanted to be right where I was-within touching distance of him! I didn't eat much, the only hunger I felt was for him and it was hard not to jump his bones where he sat, however I tried to be a lady because I also had heard he liked ladies.

We came back to the living room, and then he asked if I would like to see the bedroom - that it was something to see-nothing like he had at home. He said, "Here, I live like a king and at home I just enjoy living." We went there and he was right, it was magnificent and fit for him, I thought. The bedspread was gold with navy blue, lots of mirror and there was gold and navy blue drapery and silver foil on all the windows! He explained he slept days so he had to make himself think it was night so he could sleep and stay "balanced". We sat down on the sofa and he turned on the television saying that if I had a movie I'd like to see that was current, he could get it on television and we could watch that. I said no, I had just about all I could handle just watching him. He smiled and moved closer to me, took hold of me and kissed me gently on the lips.

"You're good looking too, honey." He whispered into my ear and then he was kissing my neck, his hands in my hair and I was kissing him anywhere I could. The next thing I knew he was carrying me to the bed where he dropped me gently, sat beside me and with one hand on my shoulder holding me down, he asked me if I was a virgin and if not, if I knew for sure I wanted to be alone with him.

I think I attacked him. I remember his startled expression as I yanked him down and the next thing was all over him and then he got hold of me with both arms and I couldn't get loose. Never in my life had I acted in such a fashion, nor do I ever think it will

happen again. Especially now that he is gone and I am nearly 53 years old! I married after Elvis died, it lasted for 13 years; he found a young woman who was 18 years old. We have two children who are wonderful and nothing like their father. They love Elvis too and we enjoy doing Elvis things like watching movies and we went to Graceland and saw everything-what a wonderful place and so full of him. I felt so close to him there-it was almost as if he was taking the tour with me. I swear I smelled his cologne a time or two and even got a whiff of his cigar smoke in the gym. I had goose bumps again-as I did every time he touched me.

Yes, we did make love-but he didn't know he was the first for me until I told him at the last minute and he couldn't get away though he was about to try. He believed me though he was a little shook that I had fooled him so well-and I told him I had boyfriends who had lots of experience and they were good teachers-I just hadn't wanted to be with them-I was set on Elvis Presley-my whole life. He was okay then; he had to get ready for the second show. He said I could come watch or just wait for him, but it might be late before he came up. I said I'd wait because I wanted to rest since I had been up for hours. He said okay, latter baby. He didn't wake me when he came in but I woke shortly afterward and he said, "It's about time--was 'bout to get some cold water an' pour it on you or somethin'!" And then he laid a gold rope chain across my chest that was so cold I jumped and he laughed. His laugh was as wonderful as anything I'd ever heard before.

We made love several times in several locations, including the shower and he was a wonderful lover. Funny, gentle and very much a man in every way a woman could want. Why his wife didn't seem to think so, I'll never understand! I guess all women are different-he said they were and he ought to know...enough of them seemed to be ready and willing where he was concerned, me included.

I stayed with him until Tuesday, 4 days and nights in all and saw the shows twice a day. He was great on stage, I could never tire of watching him and hearing him out there-so many little things he did, all of them different and unique at each show. His background singers and the band were so in tune with him, they watched him for cues, never seemed to be tired of going out with him and even were excited to do so. Especially the girls, one of which had stayed with him herself-but I guess it ended kind of on a sour note as far as she was concerned, though he was nice to her and seemed fond of her even though she was very cool at times. When she first saw me and realized I was staying with him, she looked as if she had been slapped with a dead fish for just a few seconds, then wiped it off her face and never looked my way again. I think she was in love with him; it would have been easy to fall in love with Elvis, that was a given. I didn't but I have never forgotten him and never will. He was perfect in my eyes and he will stay so until the day I die. I hope then to be able to meet him again and tell him I got to see so many falling stars from the meteor shower that he told me would be happening in 2002 and every one of them seemed to say, "Elvis! Elvis!" as they exploded through the sky! A show arranged just for me, thank you, my dear, darling Elvis! And I thank you Wanda

June; and all of the others who contributed for writing so beautifully and with so much love, about our Elvis..

**Post Script:** On the second night/day as we slept days, Elvis got so sick all of a sudden, just bent over double holding his arms tightly across his stomach and turned chalk white under his tan. I was alarmed as he could barely move as he tried to get to the bed and then, just lie on the floor gritting his teeth. I rushed out to knock on the other doors where his guys were staying, finally found one and he came in to kneel over to help Elvis. His little friend Charlie came rushing in and they two got Elvis up and on the bed where he lay on his back moaning as Charlie did massage to his belly area. I couldn't see what was going on as his men told me to get back, leave him alone! I got my robe and went into the hall where one of his backup girls was in the hall all worried. She asked me if it was his stomach and I said I think so and she looked very concerned. Another one came out and she said, Well, I am going in! And she rushed into the suite and didn't come back. Charlie came out a few minutes later and told me I could go in, to leave Elvis alone and that he would be sleeping. He asked me to try to keep an eye on him, if he seemed to be having pain again to come get him and he would look after Elvis. I agreed but the other girl came out and said he needs to see a doctor; this isn't something that is going to just go away! Charlie told her to never mind, Elvis didn't want to see the hotel doctor-if he had to go to emergency later, he would do that and he told us who were in the hallway, to keep this quiet and not tell anyone-especially not the Colonel and he added that he Charlie, didn't want to find out we had told anyone else either. Later, I realized he meant Colonel Tom Parker, Elvis' manager.

Elvis woke up after several hours and he seemed to be all right. He took a shower, called me in and didn't act as if anything was hurting him; in fact he laughed and was very playful. He told me it was just a sensitive stomach and he had ulcers that acted up sometimes-he should not have eaten the fried chicken, but it was so good and I had made him hungry-and he grabbed me, pretending to bite my neck. He carried me naked to the balcony; I was worried that someone would see me because he had a towel on and I didn't. He just laughed and said, not up here, they won't! He put me in the small pool with the jets and water sprays and we stayed there and watched the sun coming up and of course, made love. Elvis liked to do things differently and he never rushed anything. I think he liked foreplay and working up to things more than he did the actual sexual act...sometimes he didn't seem to care if that happened or not-as long as there were other things going on that got the job done. I can safely say and be truthful, Elvis was very tactical in his feelings, he liked physical contact of all kinds and liked to sleep close, he wanted me to sleep in his arms, my head on his shoulder or chest. He lay on his back holding me for hours, fast asleep and content. When I wasn't touching him, lying close to him, he sometimes had bad dreams; at least they seemed bad as he was moaning and mumbling and seemed distressed. All I had to do was get close, stroke him and hold him and he would quiet down and sleep like a baby.

There was one time he scared me; I was asleep but felt as though someone or something was standing over me- just staring at me. I woke up and he was there. There was no expression on his face or in his eyes, he kept looking down but I realized he didn't see me- I said his name softly, he didn't move. I realized he was standing there in his sleep! I took his hand and said, come to bed Elvis; it's too early to be up. He let me pull his arm and he kind of fell onto the bed but he didn't wake up. The next day he didn't recall doing that at all; he was disturbed and didn't want to discuss it any more. He said, "Don't try to wake me; it might be dangerous for you" and that was all.

The day I told him I had to go home and get ready to start a job that week, he was very disappointed and upset; he said he thought I would stay longer-we were getting along so well together. He didn't ask me for my phone number, or invite me to come back; I thought he would; it was just as well, I would have ended up in love with him and I know that wouldn't have worked out for long. Elvis was not the kind of guy to stick to one woman, not as long as he spoke to his wife and little girl nearly every day-it was obvious that he wasn't finished with that relationship and that he was still very hung up on her. The fact she had his little girl only made that tie stronger and there wasn't a woman living who could break it-that I would have bet on. But you know, I wish I could relive it all over again-I have no regrets and it was a wonderful time in my life. Thanks for letting me share it with you and his other fans, old and new.

Sharen J. McMurphy Jr. (She passed away from a serious illness in 2011; I am sure Elvis was there to meet her. He promised.)

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### **MEMORIES FROM JIMMIE'S LITTLE SISTER-**

**JOYCE LOWER--"Elvis was my new boyfriend--- but he didn't know it yet --"**

It was 1956 and my half brother and I were anxiously waiting for Ed Sullivan to get to his special guest, but it seemed like he was going to drag it out till the bitter end! My kid brother thought this "Alvin" guy was my new boyfriend and he couldn't figure out why he'd be on television. That was a big deal -so he was sticking it out, waiting to see who this guy was his sister was so ga-ga-over. Finally, with the sneaky look only Ed Sullivan could get he said, "Now ladies and gentlemen, here he is Elvis Presley!" And all hell broke loose in that audience-and in our living room as this young god walked out and grabbed that microphone and with a grin that burned its way straight into female hearts, began belting out his signature song, "Hound Dawg". From that moment on, Elvis was

here to stay--right in my heart and mind. As long as I have the strength to take a breath, I **won't** forget him!

I married, had children and went on with a normal life but he was playing on my stereo and the car radio regularly. Then one day, with the help of my older brother's wife, I got to talk to Elvis himself! The conversation went something like this:

“Hello”

“Hello, this is Elvis.”

“No it isn't!

“Yes ma'am it is”

“Donald Ray, if this is you this is not a joke!”

“No ma'am, it's not a joke.” (Snicker)

“Oh my god! *It's Elvis!*”

When I could get hold of myself again, the conversation continued with him asking questions, was I married? Did we have kids; and other family questions. He told me that my older brother's wife had asked him to call me for my birthday present from them--so Happy Birthday!

I told him what a fan my girlfriend and I had been, skipping classes in school to go see him in “*Love Me Tender*” at the Cozy Theater in Tulsa and how my friend loved him too and we both cried when he got married. I said my husband's mother was a big fan like I am. And he said, “Would she like me to call her?” I gave him her work phone number and she thought it was a joke too-but after a bit of conversation she knew it was him. They almost had to peel her off the ceiling when it was over.

Elvis was such a nice guy, kind and generous. When he found out I had developed chemical poisoning, he wrote a letter and wished me well. My best friend who had skipped school with me to see Elvis' movies received a Christmas card from him and that made her whole month a joy! It's one of her most prized possessions.

Another time he had a movie out called “*Harum Scarum*” and I told him his films didn't do him justice-he was a lot better actor than they let him show in those films. He thanked me and said he didn't like the scripts but he couldn't get any better ones. I told him it didn't matter and wouldn't make any difference what he was in-we would like it anyway because it was him. He seemed shy and very humble at that and said a soft, “Thank you very much; I'll do my very best.”

My mother, my friend and I went to **Oral Roberts University** to see Elvis' show in 1976-it was a full house and he was great, singing his heart out as usual. We could tell that he didn't feel well, but he put everything he had into the show and the audience loved him. He sang “*How Great Thou Art*” and did the ending three times. The whole audience stood up, we had goose bumps running over us. The whole place was filled with love and the *Holy Spirit*; we were not the only ones who thought that either.

My husband's grandmother liked Elvis' gospel songs and thought he ought to be doing more of that type music and Elvis agreed, that was what he wanted to do and enjoyed doing the most.

My girlfriend's husband wasn't always my favorite person and we got into it often over some things. I preferred to stay clear of him though he knew he couldn't keep me from seeing my friend, his wife. The day Elvis died he went down to the newspaper office and waited in line for hours to get final copies of the newspaper for his wife and me. He knew I would love having one and that was his way of “making up for his bad attitude” around me. He handed me the paper, I opened it up and said, “This would just about do it!”

I'll never forget Elvis, that beautiful voice that no one yet can equal, his beyond handsome good looks and how he didn't put on airs about it, in fact he didn't think he was even that good looking-his nose was crooked and one eye was bigger than the other, etc.--that always made me wonder if his vision was faulty! I can remember his friendly, warm voice and his kindness to just everyday regular people and how down to earth and sweet he was to everyone he met. He spoke to my mother, kept in touch with her kids and passed messages between us regarding her when she was living alone and growing elderly. He brightened dark days, brought smiles and laughter, joy and excitement and we will never forget him. I know he'll be there, singing in that Heavenly choir and we'll all be joining in singing praises and have a good old time again.

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### **Dear Elvis, 5/30/08---**

I remember very well the day you “forced” me to try a spoonful of your yogurt – I didn't want it-in those days yogurt made me want to gag and just because it was yours didn't change how I felt! I said I didn't like yogurt; you said I would like this – it was good, just taste it and you stuck a big spoon full in my face. The look in your eyes said “damn it, take it” so I swallowed hard and let you feed it to me. You said, “Good – huh?” and walked off while I stood there wishing for something to wash it on down! It wasn't just that I hated yogurt – it was the fact I had to take it from that spoon you were happily slurping the stuff from – and the fact I had a phobia about “eating after someone else, especially off their spoon or fork”. Years later you brought it up “like it was just the day before” as you could so often do and said, “You didn't want to eat after me, did you? Thought I was nasty or something didn't you? Don't lie!” I told you, I wondered where your mouth had been! You were shocked, feelings ruffled and then spent several long moments convincing me you were not “nasty mouthed” or doing things of that nature etc;--and how you brushed your teeth “an' ever' thing” all the time and on and on - . I teased you some and you went into even more reasons why you weren't going to “infect”

me with something awful etc--and how you used to be the same way, wouldn't eat after anyone, drink after them etc... so you understood how I felt about it; but just because you were a Hollywood "star" didn't mean you were "dirty" and taking part in the stuff that went on in Hollywood. Finally you heard me and realized what I meant, that I didn't know you very well at that time, was just beginning to see that you were not totally like that "image" and you realized those were things I "used to think" before I knew you were "jus' a baby" like you so often would jokingly say. And you laughed.

You know Elvis, you kind of were "my baby boy", you were so right, and I am the "mother hen type". Thank you Elvis, for letting me mother you-- and never getting upset when so often I tended to talk to you like you were my spoiled teenager. By the way honey, I love the "new" yogurt they have today – it's good – *I'd even share the the spoon with you---* wjh

**Letter received Nov. 1978**, excerpts taken from 5 pages written by young lady who was lucky and got to meet Elvis through one of his employees' girlfriends. That "employee shall remain nameless" at her request for "reasons he would understand- we didn't part friends" she says, "need I say more!" -

**Sylvia Orvella Darrel Jr.**  
**Shreveport, La**

I am writing because I want to tell what I experienced with that fabulous guy we all think of as being the "perfect male" - he did come close! I met him in Las Vegas through a girlfriend who was dating one of his employees who shall remain nameless for reasons he would understand. We didn't part friends- I need not say more!

It was a perfect night, I had a good hair day and was wearing my favorite new dress and see through shoes, and you know the clear plastic ones. These had gold threads running through the plastic and gold heels- 3 inch of course! My purse matched – I won them in a contest- well a complete wardrobe actually; it was part of winning a beauty contest in Texas, my home state originally. Elvis didn't know I was going to be there – he was expecting another lady friend who couldn't come for some reason and rather than tell Elvis there wasn't going to be any replacement his man asked me if I'd like to meet Elvis and said, "He'd like to meet you-bet on it!" So I played demure and said, "If you think it would be all right with him--of course I would." And so I was watching this man I was going to meet on stage and thinking, "Oh my god! What have I got myself into?" He was super fine, so handsome, and athletic and his voice was beautiful, growling, purring and melting all around the room. I thought the show would never end.

His friend met us after the show and took me back into the hallways behind the stage area and then up the elevator and put me in a beautiful suite that was where I was to "wait" until Elvis came upstairs and then they would send someone for me. So I waited

about 2 hours, pacing the floor, looking out the window and in general, panicking. Finally, his friend came back and said Elvis is upstairs and he's expecting you. He said to tell you he saw you sitting in the booth and he thought you were the most beautiful woman out there tonight. He's pretty excited to be meeting you; he wanted you to know he's nervous, thinking you might not like such sudden changes in your plans, if you were having dinner somewhere else, he would understand if you changed your mind. Have you?

I thought, you must be kidding! But I said I'm looking forward to meeting him; having dinner with him would be wonderful! His friend replied, you look beautiful, don't worry about anything. Elvis is going to love your outfit and he likes long dark hair. So out we went and into the elevator and up to the penthouse. I was taken through the entrance and left standing there mouth agape at its splendor when through the doorway slightly behind and to the side of me, walked the handsomest man I had ever seen in my life. He looked wonderful, dressed in black from head to toe, with a black and red scarf at his throat serving as a tie. With a smile on his very beautiful face that was framed by raven black hair. Oh my, even now thinking of that picture, my heart is racing in memory!

"Hello", said this magnificent animal in a voice soft and melodious, "I'm Elvis, glad you came up, can I get you anything?" He took hold of my hand and said, "You're more beautiful close up – I saw you sitting out there and man, forgot two lines!" He laughed softly and suddenly leaned down and kissed my cheek saying, "I'm nervous honey, please excuse me if I get silly." Then he led me to the big glass windows and said, "Look at the view out there -all those people down there goin' out doing stuff and here we are, looking down on them from--the top of the world; amazing, isn't it?"

It was, but he was by far the most amazing of any view we had – and he was right beside me. I finally got out a few words, but don't remember them. I just remember he held my hand, one arm around my waist and when he talked to me he was so close I could feel his breath on my cheek. We had dinner – I think I ate but I can't recall what it might have been. I had eyes only for him. He talked about the show, asked questions and I guess I answered, he laughed a time or two and then he said he had to get ready for the next show – I had forgotten he had to do another one. He asked if I wanted to go down and watch from back stage or sit in the audience and I said yes- he said okay, I have to dress now. He turned on the television for me, then said excuse me and went back through the doors he had came out of.

I kind of fell apart then, it was overwhelming; I found a bathroom and sat in there trying to calm my heart and mind for a few minutes. I heard voices outside, so I pulled myself together and went back out to find several members of his singing group and some of his other men talking together waiting for Elvis to come out. He took about an hour getting ready and then here he came, looking like some sort of god who belonged in a painting somewhere, dressed in a snow white jumpsuit with silver trims and glittering jewels that laced together across his chest. He wasn't wearing any kind of makeup except



around his eyes, eye liner and some mascara – he didn't need anything else as he had a wonderful tan. He looked at me and smiled saying, “This is Elvis baby; can you believe it?” I shook my head no and managed to say, “You are so handsome, my god, I can't believe you're real!”

He grinned, took hold of my hand, put it under his shirt over his heart and said, “I'm real baby, real as you: feel what you're doin' to me--my heart don't race like that on its own! Come on, walk down with me.”

I stood beside him in the elevator; he held my hand, grinned at me a few times and chatted with his group. We went down a long corridor to get to the stage area and he spoke to everyone standing along the way, laughing and joking and seemed to be very happy. We stopped just back stage, he told one of his guys to keep an eye on me and make sure I had anything I needed, then he kissed me on the cheek, squeezed my hand and said, “Watch me- I'm doin' this one for you!” He walked away, looked back at me and shook his head like he couldn't believe it, and he was gone. His friend said, come on; I'll find you a good place so he can see you easily-by the mirror. I thought mirror? And there was a big mirror off stage so he could see how things looked as he performed--I guess he asked for one to be there-or maybe they all have one, I don't know. It was there and that's where I was seated.

Elvis came out to stage edge and was very cool looking, seeming to be in a kind of trance state as he waited for his cue. He bowed his head slightly as if in prayer, his hands together before him-his cue came and he strode out looking every inch the super star he was. The audience went wild and so did everyone back stage-it was amazing.

That show went so fast and yet it was the longest wait I've ever had in my life – even now I think about how long it took for him to do 19 or so songs and I can't believe it! I think he may have done more than that, but from the time I began counting that's how many he did. He looked at me a time or two, smiled and gave me some burning looks but mostly he played to the audience and his band members. The show finally ended; Elvis was whipped, I mean he was totally exhausted when he came off stage. His clothes were sopping wet, his hair, sweat running down his face and body and he said to me, “Honey, don't touch me--or--or you'll get all sweaty.” I wanted to touch him anyway and knew it, but I just held his very hot, wet hand and we went back into the back stage area again. There were some people coming to see him so I had to go upstairs with his friend and wait some more by myself.

Elvis came up after nearly two hours; he had showered and was wearing a nice outfit that most people would go on stage in, it was that beautiful. He had a bottle of water with him and was drinking that but nothing else. His friends said goodbye and we were alone. He sat down on the sofa and lay his head back saying, “I'm really tired tonight honey, come sit down with me and we'll jus' relax a little and talk some, okay?”

I did, he held my hand and said, “What would you like to know?” I said, “What time do you usually go to bed?” He looked into my eyes so tenderly and said, “Any

time's a good time--are you asking me or jus' askin' me?" I said, I'm tired too, I'd like to lie down and rest a little while, it's been a long exciting day." He said, "Okay, we can watch a movie or something? - I got a lot of new ones."

We went back to his beautiful bedroom suite that had just been redecorated in white, pale green and gold; he pointed out the bathroom saying "You use that one 'n I'll use the other one." He asked if I brought luggage and I said, not here- at the other hotel, so he gave me the top to a pair of his pajamas and said, "This ought to --cover ever' thing -- how tall are you?" I told him and he said, "Well, this is good as a dress then." It smelled like him though they were folded up as if not used and it was clean. I look good in red and boy, it was Chinese red! That bathroom was fully equipped and freezing cold luckily I found the switch that turned on an overhead heater! I used several things, including one of the 10 brand new, still packaged toothbrushes. I was so nervous then, opening the door to come out. I didn't know what I'd find-and had never met anyone like him-how was he really? He had to be an expert in sexual matters and I was pretty dumb-barely past being a virgin!

Shakily, I sat down on the bench at the foot of that huge bed and tried to calm my fears. He came strolling in dressed in silky blue pajamas, sat down beside me and softly said, "You look beautiful in red, darlin'. His fingers trailed through my hair that hung loose down my back, "God, love your hair" he said with his lips pressed over my ear- "so cool and silky soft. I got somethin' for you-hope you like it" he said holding out a little box. I was excited, he got something for me! Then it hit me, no he went into his room and picked something out to give to you silly, he didn't go out and buy it!

I fumbled so trying to open the box, he opened it for me, and there was a little gold kitten with emerald eyes hanging onto a thin gold rope chain -- the kitten moved back and forth as if walking the rope. I love cats- how did he know? He put it on me, moved my hair back to fasten it and then kissed my neck below my ear. I was all over him then, poor man didn't have a chance to defend himself either- tired or not, lack of sleep, hardly any dinner to recall and up for almost 20 hours -and I wasn't the least bit tired! Too bad bud, you had to work like a rock breaker for three and a half hours- *get over it-* you had dinner, you sat down for 15 minutes -now, snap to *and act like Elvis!* Of course I didn't say those things, I just thought them.

He was a good lover, but he wasn't up for a long session because he was tired out and it did show in his eyes and the fact he kept saying, "Whoa -- whoa--wait- oh god--wait--" but of course I couldn't wait--he finally gave up saying, "Lord, lord, jus' be gentle baby--I'm not gonna give you no trouble--" That made me laugh and he laughed also. He was a wonderful guy; I wish I could be with him again. I cried when I had to leave him. I knew that I would never see him again; not in that way, and sadly didn't get to. And just five years later- he died.

I still have the kitten, it still walks the rope and I take it out, remember those wonderful minutes and hours with the most wonderful gentleman who turned into Elvis on stage and gave his all for his fans--whom he said were "my friends--it's just like I'm

working for my friends--that's how I do it, really". He was shy, humble, sweet and on the flip side, he was wild, young and slightly dangerous – what a package of fun and laughter he could be – most of all he was full of love for everyone. I will miss him for the rest of my days and I hope to be able to run into his arms for a hug in that great hereafter he so sincerely believed would be there for us all. Keep a place for me baby, I want to sit next to you!

That's my story, god how I wish it took longer to write, for then I would have had more time with him. Thank you for your memories, I hope mine can find a place in one of your books. I too, believe everyone who knew him, even for a few minutes should put their memories on paper and make sure they are kept for all our fellow human beings who shall follow our footsteps. They need to find his through ours.

A friend, through his memory,  
“Sv-via” as he said it,  
(Sylvia Darrel Jr., (married name))

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**As told by Mrs. Sword whose daughter was an airline stewardess for Pan Am Airlines and met Elvis in 1962 -**

My daughter met Elvis and two of his young fellow travelers on flights from Los Angeles to Nashville and other places as well. She served the first class section and was delighted to have him in her care. My daughter was then young and very beautiful and she still is though she's a mother and housewife now. She was thrilled when Elvis spent time chatting with her and then when learning there was a two hour layover for her in Memphis, he invited her to come home with him and see his beloved Graceland. She told him her mother was on this flight so he said, “good, bring her along, we got room.” So we rode to Graceland in a Cadillac and let me say it was a thrill to drive through those famous gates! And to see a large group of fans lined up waiting for his arrival!

He was a wonderful host, taking us on the tour of his home, including upstairs to see his bedroom where there was some reconstruction going on. He explained how it would look when finished and was anxious to get it done so he could use the new tub that was to be larger than the one he'd had before. His house was beautiful, everything clean and sparkling, looked after by a lovely housekeeper who obviously adored her boss from her genuine interest in pleasing him. We had lunch with Elvis, prepared by this lovely lady that he said had been with him for several years. He said his mother chose the draperies which were corduroy brushed to look like velvet -they could be cleaned easily saying she chose something that would last. I thought he was a darling son, speaking

proudly of his dear mother whom he apparently missed very much and remembered so lovingly.

The time came for our return to the airport and Elvis had one of his men friends drive us there and he waited until we were on board. I had always thought Elvis was adorable and loved his voice but had never seen him on the screen-well, now we have seen every movie he made and he's still adorable, with a wonderful style and it's clearly obvious why he is known around the world and is "The King" because he surely did have kingly ways about him. We also saw two Las Vegas shows and one Tahoe show that he did live and he was exciting and so masterful in movement, voice and attitude. Oh that attitude- so sexual- totally unlike the sweet hearted gentleman who took us on a tour of his lovely home those many years earlier. He wanted to date my daughter but she was in love with one of the young men from the *Green Bay Packer's* team and when she told Elvis he said, "Well, then I won't make you choose-- if I won, he might not feel like helpin' 'em win!" Elvis was a big fan of the *Green Team* and knew several of them he said, including her boyfriend. So being a southern gentleman, he didn't ask her out any more – but he did enjoy sharing a kiss or two with her--and would say, "Don't tell on me."

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**Excerpts from an 8 page letter received 1986 from "Sharen" who spent time with Elvis in Las Vegas.**

"It wasn't so much how special he looked, you know, handsome, sexy, and so masculine and graceful at the same time. It was how carefully he treated me, gentle and thoughtful and with such personal concern for my happiness. He asked if there was anything I needed or wanted; if so, said don't be shy -just ask me and I'll try to get it for you. And those beautiful blue eyes lit up when I came into the room, every time! I felt special, loved and he didn't appear to be faking, he really did like me – at least that is what I felt and (I) still do believe he was being honest and open as much as he could be with a woman he had not known long.

It was the third day that I saw a little of his temper-but not directed at me or anything about me, it was a couple of male background/ gospel singers. He was very angry when he learned they were drunk and misbehaving at one of the places across town. I don't know who told on them, but he was fit to be tied and gave them a dressing down that I could hear through the closed bedroom door. I was surprised how differently he spoke to them very masculine and brash, totally disgusted with what he had been told they had been doing. It involved some women and getting drunk and being vulgar in a public

place. Elvis wasn't going to let them forget it he said and threatened to replace them with another gospel group! I was stunned to hear this; he had known one of them for a long time and seemed to almost worship at his feet at times. Elvis was not happy with their behavior and he didn't make excuses for them. They were still pretty drunk and he had them escorted to their rooms, then came back and paced the floor ranting about he couldn't understand why they were out acting like the worst degenerates in Las Vegas, "Why is it this town does that to good people"? He wanted to know, I said it's "sin city" and what happens here is happening in another world – people don't live here: they party here. He just glared at me and stomped off into the bedroom where he flopped on the bed, pulled a pillow over his face with both arms wrapped around it as if he was going to suffocate himself. He did that when his head hurt, if it wasn't his head it was his eyes hurting and he often lay with a pillow pressed on them for hours, trying to go to sleep. I bought him one of those little eye pillows full of some type of seeds that could be chilled and then would stay cool for a while- he loved that and kept it in the refrigerator and then had someone find another one so he had a spare when he wanted one. He took them with him on the plane and kept them chilled. I felt so good knowing I found something that helped him feel better.

Elvis was a good man, he didn't complain about how he felt but there were times he was in great pain, from something inside him but he didn't explain what. I didn't question him, but he would turn so pale and lay on the floor doubled up until someone came in to massage his belly and the doctor got there to give him a shot for pain, I think. Then he would get in bed and lay there trying to relax so the pain would go away. He received shots every day – he said they were B-12 and that he had a problem with his liver that required that or he wouldn't have enough energy to do the shows. He did perk up after the shots, then there were sleeping pills that he took every night almost and he would be a sleep very quickly sometimes, though he often woke up after a few hours.

I expected him to be a very sexual guy, always wanting it you know, but he wasn't like that – Sure he did sometimes, but most of the time he fell asleep after just a hug and a few kisses. He wasn't what I expected at all, but there wasn't anything wrong with him, his ability I mean. I'm not saying that at all. He just worked hard and was tired and wanted to sleep. And sometimes he just wanted to cuddle and talk, he was shy, and a little timid in expressing his feelings, very much like a young boy. It was insecurity, he felt he would somehow be a disappointment because behind that persona of "ELVIS" was a shy, easily embarrassed young heart...and not the dark and dangerous guy on stage. Sometimes when he woke up he was ready for sex and sometimes I wasn't, but he took "later" for an answer quite well and he didn't let me forget. He was cute, he'd come knock on my bathroom door when I was showering and say, "Okay, its later baby!" And I would have to laugh and say, "So soon, really?" He'd open the door and come in taking off his clothes or pajamas and say, "Really, really baby--awww--gawd really!" And he

would be ready to go. I have to say he was more fun in the shower than he was in bed—more playful, more of “I’m the man” kind of style. I liked him to be “the king” I guess, and from other women I know who were with him, we all say the same thing – it was the idea of what he was more than him being just a regular guy. He liked to think he was just “normal” but he could never be a regular guy again, not after who he became, the king you know. He just didn’t understand that much and worried over it quite a bit. He didn’t know why people couldn’t see the difference— the fact was, there wasn’t much difference – he was so much both the man and “the king”, it was too late to separate them and he should have just accepted it. I think he never did.

The day I told him I was going home he was so quiet, he went in his bedroom and shut the door and I heard him talking to himself and carrying on beating the bed it sounded like. Then he came out and asked if I had enough money to get a plane ticket and did I need anything before I left. I said I had money and he had given me so much, and I hugged him tightly. It took a few seconds before he hugged me, then he was all over me again and we made love on the floor of his bedroom and he cried, and then was angry at himself for letting his feelings show, but I told him it was all right, I loved it that he cared and I was crying too. He hugged me tightly and whispered, “Please, come back when I ask you; promise me!” I said I would and he kissed me several times saying goodbye.

I tried not to cry any more but did on the plane when it lifted off over Vegas. I felt like I had lost my best friend kind of thing and though he said he wanted me to return, I felt like he would never call me again.  
He didn’t.

I had such a good time visiting with him, he read poems to me, the Bible and told stories about how he felt so strongly that he was meant to reach people through his music and singing, that it was his purpose, saying that singing was a universal language that people would understand all over the world. So he had to do it right. He said he felt so lonely, like he was a freak or something of nature, that he didn’t belong here and was never at home except when he went to Graceland. He said it felt like he had always lived there, that was a place he was supposed to have and he’d never leave it or let it get away as long as he could manage to keep it. He said he thought he wasn’t going to live very long, that he had a weird condition that is inherited and passed down through the family tree, that it wasn’t something that could be fixed easily and one day it would be serious and he thought his time was shortened. He said he was healthy now, but had a blood condition and was almost having to take shots like diabetics but so far was lucky. He didn’t care that he wasn’t going to live to be old, he didn’t want to get old, and it scared him to think of that. He wanted to stay young and look good forever, so he didn’t care that his life might be shorter than some-- as long as he got to do the things he was supposed to do, enjoyed doing and he had the best of everything so why worry about the future? It would

be here soon enough. He said “just today- that's all we are promised; just this day so do with it the best you can, live for today, it's all you have really. Think about it, make it count for something even if it's just a smile you give someone who doesn't have any, it's something you can do for someone else. He said I'm here to bring happiness, to light up eyes, and make people happy, to give them a few moments of fun and enjoyment, to entertain their hearts and lighten their spirits and give them memories to cherish. And if I can do that for them, then that's all I'm supposed to do, so that's what I do--just love them and they love me back; its love that counts, and I love it, it's my life.”

Sometimes it seemed like the men friends he had working for him didn't care a lot about him, his personal feelings and needs; they were more interested in what he could do for their wants and needs and it bothered me when I saw how much jealousy there was among them, it was kind of like dogs fighting over a bone and in this case it was who had more attention from Elvis than the others. All of them seemed to be offended if they thought he was slighting them in any way. Heaven help the one he might single out- I thought they should immediately invest in a thick shield to fend off the “knife in the back” attacks. And men say we women are jealous and spiteful!

God, I miss him. When he died I thought my heart would burst apart. I was driving with my husband and it came on the radio and I couldn't believe it. I said, “Oh stop the car! I have to go phone- I have to know.” And he did; I called and he was gone. I thought I would die in the phone booth. My husband finally got the door open enough to pull me out and carried me to the car. I can't remember anything else except I woke up in a motel room with him putting cold cloths on my face. He said I was mumbling and crying the whole night long. He understands that Elvis was a special friend and that I will always love and remember him.

End

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***The “Keys to the City” - taken from letter received in 2006***

My father who was the mayor of our city, my mother and my married sister and I went backstage to give him (Elvis) the “Keys to the City”. Elvis was stunning, wearing a dark blue suit with silver studs all over it. He looked like a god from Athens, more handsome than Apollo! He was warm and friendly, holding my father's handshake the whole time he was giving him a welcome to our humble city, (my father said a handshake told a great deal about a man; if it was brief, limp or encompassing; he was pleased with Elvis' firm, warm grasp.)

I could not take my eyes off Elvis as he spoke to my mother and then with my older sister who was graduating college; Elvis asked about the football team, listened with interest and wished her team well. Then he turned to me and my limbs were shaking as he removed his glasses, looked into my eyes for what seemed a long while though it could not have been, and then he took my hand and held it. He smiled and softly said, “Well, well, little one, they sure...didn’t find you under any cabbage leaf--- Man, you are beautiful! You look like your momma and your sister honey, just beautiful.”

I don’t know how I managed to speak to him but I quavered something like, you sure are handsome and he said, “I hope so, spent a couple hours getting ready for this....” He bent close to my ear to add, “chance to meet a beautiful woman like you. Can I have your phone number?” He straightened up, looked into my surprised eyes, smiled and nodded his head slightly asking please, with those eyes. My sister who was close enough to see what was going on was nudging me with her elbow and smiling at Elvis. My father was talking with one of Elvis’ men and my mother was listening to them. Elvis asked, “Do you have a pen?” My sister handed me a piece of paper and a pen and I couldn’t remember my phone number! Elvis took the paper and wrote his hotel name on it with “Ask for John Carpenter’s room” please. EP. He folded it and gave it to me with the pen, bent quickly and kissed me on the lips, then kissed my sister too. She said it felt as if a bolt of lightening had struck her and went from head to toe.

With that done, he turned back and joined the conversation with my father, thanking him and my mother for bringing their daughters to meet him. He put his hand on my father’s shoulder, looked him in the eyes and said, “Sir, I asked your daughter to call me at my hotel; may I ask her to have dinner with me?” I stood there, stunned, speechless and it was like seeing them through a haze. My sister thought I was going to faint and put her arm around my waist to steady me. My father looked at me, at my mother who was smiling at me and then said, “I’m sure she would be delighted Elvis, thank you for letting us know.” And he shook his hand again. Elvis thanked him, told my mother she sure had beautiful daughters saying they looked like her so much. Of course she was beaming, and Elvis looked very satisfied as he glanced over at me and winked.

I don’t remember much about his show; my sister and parents said he was fantastic and that when he thanked the audience for coming, he mentioned meeting their mayor, his wife and their lovely daughters. I didn’t hear anything. It was all I could do to watch him. My eyes were laying all over him; that’s the only way I can describe how I felt, as if I were touching him with my eyes.

I had dinner with him. I had breakfast with him and I went with him to the next two cities and did it all again. Those shows I remember well, he would look over at me sitting backstage beyond the curtain and I always stood up and gave him the go-go- sign.



He'd grin really big and nod his head ever so slightly at me. We slept in the same bed, with him wearing pajamas top and bottom and me wearing a robe and pajamas at his suggestion since his rooms were cold. He kissed me gently goodnight before we went to bed, and he held my hand while we chit-chatted briefly, but he didn't make any moves on me until I asked him why he wanted me to stay. Didn't he want to do anything more than talk and sleep? He looked at me very seriously and said, "I was waiting for you to- to give me some kind of sign or something...is this it?"

I was dumbfounded; he explained that he didn't want to "scare me off". He didn't know how I felt about being with a guy twice my age and he didn't want me to think he was some kind of "dirty old man or something" so he was waiting on me. I told him I wasn't a teenager- I was 22 years old and his eyes kind of snapped and he said, "Really...you look like you're about 18 or so. God, I'm getting old...an' blind too!" Then he smiled at me and said very softly, "Come here darlin' – show me it's okay if I turn into that "dirty old guy".

Elvis wasn't a "dirty old guy", he was sweet, funny, and very sexy; he didn't disappoint me in any way. I told him he was the best looking dirty old man I knew and he laughed. I loved being with him, and told him I would stay with him as long as he wanted, but he said he could only take me along for 5 days because he was going home after that; his little girl would be there waiting. She didn't like it when he brought girls home because she wanted to be his only girl and she hadn't seen him in a while. He laughed about that, showed me her pictures and told me some cute stories about her possessiveness toward him, how she wanted to spend her time with him and that she waited on him hand and foot until she "got tired of him" then she'd play with her friends. I showed him pictures of my son who was turning 4 years old in a few months and who lived with his father whom I had chosen not to marry. I wanted to finish college quickly; that my son was physically impaired but not mentally, he required specialized care and I couldn't provide that on my own and get my degree in 3 years. I was with him every summer and several weekends each month; he had the best of both parents and was very bright and lively mentally. Elvis wanted to know if I knew what caused it and when I said it was genetic; we didn't know about it until it happened and my son was the first in our family that we knew of to have the problem. His eyes filled with tears, he hugged me and was trembling with compassion for me and my son. I'll never forget how he felt hugging me, so complete and so very heartfelt, he kept whispering, "I'm so sorry, so sorry, oh God, you are so brave, so good. I'm so glad you told me." And he asked if there was anything he could do, money or help with care for him- anything? He wanted to know if he could meet my son some time-the next time he came back to town maybe. I said yes and gave him my phone number.

For the next few days and nights he was so tender, loving and seemed to second guess in my behalf, waiting on me, doing little things for me to see me smile. At

breakfast, I found a rose bud beside my plate and after the show that night, a little box tied with a blue ribbon was setting by my plate. He was like a kid waiting for me to open it, and then jumped up to fasten a lovely gold bracelet that was set with my birthstone on my wrist. I was so thrilled I jumped up and down like a silly girl and he giggled like a teenaged boy. Needless to say, we ate that meal cold and it was delicious!

Elvis didn't come back to our city; he died two years later. He called me a couple of times and we talked for about two hours each time. He mentioned wanting to see me and to meet my son but didn't know when that would be, and he said that he was "fine" when I asked how he felt. He wasn't well for several weeks after I had been with him; my father told me he had found out through the administrator of the hospital which had been checked out in case Elvis needed emergency services, that Elvis had something serious wrong but they were to "keep it quiet". I asked Elvis what was wrong; he said it wasn't anything important, that he had problems off and on but it wasn't a big deal and he changed the subject. After that conversation I didn't hear from him again. Maybe he didn't want to lie about his condition and was afraid I'd ask.

I will always love Elvis, so will my son Brandon who is still doing well and went to college in his motorized wheel chair. Elvis arranged for him to have "upgrades as needed" until my son reached 18 years old and he didn't tell me, I found out when that first motorized chair was delivered a few weeks after we said goodbye. He graduated with honors and holds down a computer-programming job. I married and am very happy with my family. I still love Elvis; he has a very special place in my heart and can live there forever. I still recall him saying, "Maggie, sweet Maggie, you stole my heart an' made me love you..." in that soft sexy voice and I wear his bracelet often. I will never forget Elvis and I thank you for putting your memories in a book so other less fortunate than you or I, can read about his kind, loving goodness and wonderful sense of humor. I wish I had known you were letting other people pen their stories; I would have loved to tell how very compassionate and caring that precious heart beating inside that beautiful spirit called Elvis Presley was.

Forever Elvis, I love you

"Maggie" (Margaret)

*(I hope you learn of this book Margaret, because here is your story, as you wished. Thank you for sharing your heart and his-)*

## ***Elvis...***

“I hope to be...remembered for somethin’....(Snickers)...eh...that people will remember coming to the shows, hearing the songs and maybe, will enjoy recalling those...eh times. It isn’t I think what I’m doin’ is so much different than other performers...nothin’ like that, really. But I hope that somehow I have done something that will lift spirits when their down, and maybe make them smile on a dreary day... You know, a smile is a mood changer...it can be soothing, inspiring and raise the energy level of people who share it-- I try to bring happiness to others ...because it makes me happy also; you never know who you might meet, could be they got troubles twice as bad as yours and just hide it, so give ‘em a smile, a hand up or whatever you can; you’ll be blessed for doin’ it and so will they...in the end, ever’ body wins.”

## ***Dancing in Las Vegas---*** Letter received in January, 2007

**(Excerpts, some are heartrending and painful, and others beautifully spiritual.)**

I have just finished reading your wonderful book (We Remember, Elvis revised 2006) and wanted to thank you and those dear people who so graciously contributed their stories. Sharing so much of my dear Elvis has brought him back in many memories and I am grateful and feel such love in the pages of this book, I want to share my story with you.

I met Elvis in the summer of 1966 when I was dancing in Las Vegas and he took a fancy to one of my dancer friends. I had just joined the group having come fresh from New York after being written out of a short run on a well-known soap where I had been a “naughty girl”. My friend wouldn’t go to his hotel unless he invited all seven of us dancers; it was not a problem, we all managed to fit into two cars, one of which was a sports car of some type and I sat on the lap of one of his men and my friend sat on Elvis’ lap. It was a short ride, but a wild one and Elvis had fun with wandering hands while trying to hold us all steady in the wind-it was a convertible with the top down. We laughed a lot on the way and once at his hotel he said he was hungry and he must have been, judging from the amount of food sent up, though I didn’t see him eat a thing.

My friend disappeared with him into his room and I was left with the two friends who soon found out they weren’t my type. I left shortly afterward; my friend didn’t come

back until the next day and she was “in love” saying Elvis was the most wonderful guy she had ever known. I told her to keep it under control; he was most certainly not marriage material or a serious contender for a long-term relationship. She of course didn’t believe me.

The next night I received a beautiful arrangement of flowers as I was preparing to go on stage and our chorographer said, “It’s from Elvis!” I was speechless-and thought it must have been for Lea (*name changed by request*) my friend who had been with him the day before. The show began, and one of the girls said, “Elvis Presley is in the audience; give him a good show kids!” I couldn’t see him as I am blind as a bat past 10 feet without glasses but the other girls were excited, ga-ga and giddy!

I was changing costumes between shows when I received a message through our security guard that Elvis was in the hallway and wanted me to join him for some coffee between our performances. I asked, are you sure he said me? He handed me a note which said, “I saw you on stage yesterday, in the car and at the hotel. I’m here tonight because I want to be friends. Please. EP.” Lea was busy with the headpiece and wig for her next performance so I slipped out the door and there he was, leaning against the wall talking with security. He saw me, excused himself and casually strolled my way wearing a pleased smile on his face.

We stopped about 6 inches from each other; he was looking into my eyes and I swear beams came from them to mine- beams of blue light that made my mind go blank. I felt foolish, like some silly teenager confronting a movie star or something! He took my arm and led me down the hallway into a private office that he said he already had permission to use, asked me to sit on the sofa and he perched on the edge of the desk. We were in the hotel manager’s office-but Elvis said its okay, he knew him and he owed him a favor anyway. He asked me to come to his hotel after my last show, promised he’d “be good” and he’d order dinner for two-not an army. He said, “I wanted to ask you to stay but didn’t want to hurt Lea’s feelings ‘cause she had her heart set on being with me a while. It’s okay, we’re just friends; I’m hoping we can be friends. I’d like to get to know you, Yah’nice.”

I said how did you know my name? He said “Jordan told me.” (My father, who was the only one who called me Yah-‘nice) Elvis had met him at football games where my dad had a part time job parking cars and juggling venders. Elvis explained that my dad had told him about me, that he would like for him to meet me, he thought I would get a kick out of meeting Elvis Presley. “So,” Elvis said, “I’m doin’ a favor for your daddy- so I can get a good parking spot and get out quick ahead of traffic.” He grinned that oh so sexy grin and winked at me. I couldn’t wait to get the next show over with; he had promised dinner.

We had a nice meal, conversation and he put on a slow waltz record and we danced. He kissed my neck and whispered lovely things into my ear. We kissed a couple of times and his entire body quivered in my arms. He looked at me with very serious blue eyes for several long seconds before leading me toward his bedroom. I held back, not sure I wanted to get into anything with him, after all Lea was “in love” and thought he was “a catch”. I wondered what I’d “catch” if I went that route with him. He paused, asking, “You’re not sure...” I shook my head no and he said, “Okay, let’s see what’s on TV, I got some movies also.” I thought since he was “Elvis” he would be into porn but no, we watched a documentary about the Holy Land! He knew a lot about ancient history, especially the battle artifices and people who lived in those times, comparing times of today with past life history. Elvis began saying that he felt, that he had been here several times, done many things and that he was here for a purpose but didn’t quite know yet what it was. He said he was studying, reading and trying to find his purpose in this life. I was impressed; this was an intelligent man who just happened to be the best damn looking guy I ever lay eyes on. He was right in the middle of a sentence when I said, “I want to go to bed-now; with you!” He almost swallowed his tongue but he got up, took me by the hand and said, “Let’s do it baby, I’m with you.” Not the most romantic line but for him, it was pretty good!

I dated him off and on for a year, and then he married, had a baby with her, did that television show, blew minds, and was playing in Las Vegas when I discovered a fast growing lump in my left breast. It was one of the worst type cancers a woman could have and I had no options other than to have the breast removed along with all the glands in my chest, neck and arm to try and stop its further spreading. My doctor planed to remove both breasts-but opted to do the other one after I had recovered from the first. I also went through a round of radiation. I was 31 years old, dancing the lead in our show and had the world by the tail, an upscale apartment overlooking the beautiful Las Vegas lights and hills beyond, drove a Mercedes and thought I was on top of the world. It was a rude awakening, one I didn’t handle very well. The surgery was terrible, painful and there were cancer cells lingering on and on with more sickening treatments. I could not bear to see myself in the mirror; my reflection was so alien on one side, still so perfect on the other. I refused to see anyone, stayed in my house, lost so much weight nothing fit and I stopped talking with friends. Usually I did not answer my door or the telephone. Lea was worried, she said I was trying to kill myself; I told her to go away, forget she ever knew me. For a year this went on and I went from 129 lbs to 98 lbs and didn’t care that I couldn’t sit outside on my balcony because the wind almost blew me over the railings. I thought of jumping every single day; the idea was more and more appealing.

On the coldest morning in Feburary ‘72 someone rang my door chimes, and then knocked on my door. I didn’t get up. They knocked and rang the chimes again, and again, and

then again. I had to answer or my neighbors would be calling the police. I was prepared to tell whomever off as I flung open the door but there stood Elvis, handsome, tall, wearing a beautiful leather jacket and a “happy to see you smile”. I almost closed the door in his face but he had a foot in the door before I could do that. His father came in right behind him. Brushing past me, Elvis said, “Man, you’ve lost weight! We got to get those curves back baby! No-no this won’t do at all!” I started to cry, he came to me and gently held me close, crooning in my ear and then picked me up and held me in his lap while sitting on the sofa. He sang little songs my mother used to sing to me when I was sick, and I cried all over him. Finally I couldn’t cry anymore and he said, okay, now we got to get you out of here-man, this place is a dungeon! All my curtains and shades were down, I didn’t want any light on, didn’t want to see anything about me. His father and he helped me pack a few things, I don’t know what was said, or what he asked but he had me in his car and took me to his hotel suite. There were some men there when we arrived, they vanished immediately and Elvis took me into his bedroom and lay me on the bed to rest he said, as he pulled the spread up around me and kissed me softly on the lips and then said, “Just rest darlin’, I’m gonna be right here, don’t worry about anything, I’m here.”

I didn’t want him to see me when he later said, we’d share his bed so he would be close and could “take care of me”. He said, don’t worry, nothin’ else, not yet. He turned off all the lights, closed the blinds and turned off his night light. I was impressed, Elvis hated the darkness. He turned up the heat in his rooms because the cold made my breastbones and ribs hurt and he found one of his soft sweat shirts for me to wear in bed. I felt so safe with him, he held my hand and we slept side by side.

A few days passed, I was feeling better; Elvis made sure I ate a little more every day and he was fun, getting me to laugh at his antics. He watched me carefully but tried not to be noticeable about it. I didn’t want anyone to see me and went to the bedroom when he was having company; he bought clothes for me and they helped my attitude some. I looked normal wearing the padded bra; we didn’t discuss the surgery or my health though he was very diligent about my getting back my figure because he wanted to see “those curves”. He explained that he was married but his wife wanted a divorce and it was over though they had not made any public statements. He was seeing Linda, whom he liked but said they were just friends and didn’t have a “commitment yet” though he appeared to want one.

One day after his last show he came up a little later as he had people downstairs who had come to see him. I was waiting for him, thinking he would have something to eat but he didn’t, he got ready for bed and said, “Are you coming?” I slipped into my gown, came out and got in beside him. He was lying with his back to me but he turned over saying, “I can’t wait any more,” and slid close to me, kissing my neck, stroking my right arm and

shoulder murmuring little sweet things into my ear, saying, “I won’t lie; you’ll always be beautiful to me”. I didn’t want him to see my scars, didn’t want to take off my bra; he got up and turned out all the lights again, even the night light and then sat down beside me and said, “Let me hold you, it’s alright, it’s me, darlin’; remember!” He was gentle, sweet and careful not to touch my left side, not to put any weight on me and when it was over, he held me in his arms and I slept for a while and then it was almost daylight. He was awake, he had not slept; I think he was afraid he might hurt me if he slept and I felt so guilty because he had to get some rest-he had to work. He turned over and let me rub his back as I used to do for him, and he relaxed enough to sleep for a couple of hours. He seldom slept for more than four hours at a time, and sometimes he would be awake for several days.

He was in the shower later; I took off my clothes and opened the shower door. Elvis turned toward me, a smile on his face that froze as shock registered in his eyes as he saw how terribly scared, and ugly reddish purple the skin on the left side of my body had become. Those few seconds were all there was, he smiled, his eyes filled with love and warmth and he kissed my neck where the scars began, then kissed his way across my shoulder and down over where my breast should have been. His lips were soft, tender and there was no revulsion in his touch. He soaped his hands, got me under the water and proceeded to wash and massage my body, my neck and shoulders and very gently over my scars and my one perfect breast that was scheduled for removal. And then he said with that famous sexy grin on his face, “Now, you do me, more fun that way!”

Later, he dried me with a big fluffy towel, and then insisted that I let him give me a treatment on my scars with “special oil” that he used on his skin to keep it soft and supple. I told him a little about the cancer, that it was the kind that spread and I was supposed to have further surgery in a few months. He said, “Don’t worry, we’ll handle it” and then he got dressed and went out and did his show. I was so happy, the time flew by; he didn’t come up until after his last show was done and then it was I who gave him “the treatment”...he said he wanted more of that...

The next night he came in early from his show, not waiting to talk with anyone and he said he wanted to talk to me about something serious. He asked if I believed in the power of prayer, if I believed in the Almighty God’s healing power. I said I didn’t know. He said I want to pray for you and he went down onto his knees, put his hands on my scars and began to pray, he quoted scriptures and was earnestly begging his God to heal me. His hands trembled, his body shook and he cried out his faith, speaking words I couldn’t understand, as if from another language or perhaps southern expressions I didn’t recognize, but it was pure faith from Elvis’ heart and soul. He suddenly said, “Now Yah-nice! Now! Say I am healed by the power of God’s mighty hand, say it now Yah-nice!” He pulled me to my knees and said, say this, follow me...”I am healed, thank you oh

mighty God! I am healed by the power of God's mighty hand!" Say it now Yah-nice, over and over, say it with me!" I did, he did and I felt as if his hands burned my skin, I felt a hot wind blow over me and I was so weak I thought I would faint dead away. Elvis was shaking; he picked me up and said did you feel it? Yah' nice? Did you feel it? God touched you with his hand! Praise him; thank him, Oh Lord, thank you!" He made me say those words over and over with him, until we were exhausted and I was so weak. He put me to bed, kissed my chest and said, "God has healed you- you will not have cancer again!"

Later Linda, who was a former beauty contest winner was coming; I took my things and stayed in another suite with his father while Elvis spent time with her; his father told me Elvis liked her very much, wanted her to stay with him and I knew it was time for me to move on with my life and let him live his. When I told him I had to go, he looked at me several long seconds, then said, " Okay, keep in touch, please, I need to know you're doin' okay." I promised, went back to my apartment, packed up and moved to live with my father until he passed away. I owed the hospital a lot of money and didn't know Lea had told Elvis until I received a "paid in full" statement from the hospital.

My high school sweetheart came back into my life a few years ago; his wife and child had been killed in a car crash, and he lost his right leg to the thigh at the same time. We two wounded birds got together and have been happily married for 6 years. Wouldn't you know; he is a big Elvis fan.

Elvis has died, but he lives in my memory and will always have a special place in my heart. My scars have faded, and those on my arm and neck are barely noticeable. My husband says he doesn't mind being married to a one breasted woman, and he calls my scars "tattoos" and says they look like a dancer to him. He's right-they kind of do. He knows about Elvis, and cried when I told him how Elvis prayed for me and that he said "God has healed you" had used him as a go between and that I would be forever cancer free. I have been tested several times, I am cancer free. I believe that God did use Elvis' faith, put fire into his hands and killed the cancer cells that lay in wait dead in their tracks. Amen. May God bless and keep you and yours safe, forever and ever.

Sincerely,

*Ja' nice*

Florida, USA

*(Thank you Ja' nice for letting us share your story; the power of faith is tremendous and your story is inspirational and filled with hope, love and proof of that powerful force that lives in all of us. Faith and Belief in the Power of Prayer is available to all of God's children in their time of need and having a friend who enforces our faith, is a gift and perhaps, sometimes is an angel on earth to help carry it out.)*



## A look at the man and the image---

**ELVIS' COMMENTS** put together taken from three different conversations that explain about **The Comeback Show** that was actually “*The Singer Special*” when it was first shown on television. He also refers to the opening of his return to Las Vegas and how he felt then.

“Just so- so involved with trying to make the damn show the best could be – didn't know if I'd ever get another chance to-to-eh-to get my career back up like before. God, things been so f--kin awful, the movies goin' to the shit can an' nothing--in the future but more lies and disappointments-- An' God knows I was losin' my mind! Havin' the baby meant so much to us--we wanted more kids but not immediately ya know needed some time and here I was workin' and havin' to put everything into getting it done. Man, I-I-can't, I mean, when it's like that, it's just-just I-I have to put everything into doin' it – there's not much left of me-- kinda takes over an' I-I-can't help how it is, it's a part of me, what I do and it was wrong for me to think she'd understand an' be okay with it all. I didn't realize, she never said nothin' but she really didn't want me to do it- to go back to live shows. She was-was afraid and for good reason. I told her that was what I wanted to do, have to do, an' she said she understood and it would be okay, all she wanted was for me to come back to her, to be with her and the baby. Only thing was, I couldn't just turn it on and off like that, even when I was there with her, it was still in my head, things to plan, think about and was on the phone with all of 'em, director, an all and we were planning moves and songs, routines and then there was the sets, all that. It was the biggest production anyone ever planned for TV and it had to be the best we could make it. [He said that he and Steve Binder came up with the Bordello routine, and it was considered “not acceptable for TV”, but he insisted so it was filmed, and “they” liked it because nobody else “could get away with somethin’ like that”; except “Elvis”]. “Spent hours and hours rehearsin' ever little detail, trying to make it outstanding. And then Tom was--was draggin' his feet an' I was havin' to tell him okay, and then tell the others don't pay him no mind, let's do it your way. And takin' the heat for that- people started getting some weird things from him, fired and so forth an' I was hirin' 'em back, payin' 'em myself an' then he'd be causin' other problems. But other than that, it was just tryin' to do a good show--to bring back the lost years an' all, it was hard. I was--was--scared silly worryin' how I was going to be able to-to talk out there in front of those-those people. Lord, it had been so hard before an' now all that fear was right back at me. You don't know, I can't-I don't have the words to express how-how I felt about it. Everyone thing just came back--like I was 18 again an' scared so--bad couldn't move, couldn't talk! God, I just knew I was gonna fall on my ass in front of ever body! Shakin' man, couldn't stop ma teeth from rattlin' – picked up on the mike too! Gawd--Steve was tellin' me it was okay, an' I'm sittin' there shakin', sick man, and just sick clear through me. An' they had

the people there an' I'm supposed to come out an' do it an' I can't get outta the damn chair – like froze or somethin'. Man, my throats so dry couldn't hardly swallow, can't make spit an' I'm gonna go out and sing something! They were all tryin' to get my nerve up an' I don't even know what they was sayin', my head's like spinnin'! Got the damn black suit on an' it's wet from the skin out – stuff was hotter'n hell! Steve come back an' said, "Come on now, we got a show to do! I'm sittin' there shakin' an' sayin' I can't do it--can't go out there-- Cholly's pokin' water at me sayin' drink this, you'll be fine--come on--your friends are all out there waiting-- Cholly said, "Give him a minute; he's going to do it. And everybody left me alone 'cept him. I could hear the orchestra playing and people noises--they kept playin' the music supposed to bring me out an' I had to do it. I knew I had to do it. It took some doin' but I drank some water, dried off some an' got my nerve up enough to walk out there. God! It was awful! Standin' out there couldn't look at anyone- too scared man. I was shakin' couldn't stop it first few minutes--that stage was little too an' they were all sittin' right there close. Finally got that first song goin' and then I knew it was okay, I could do it, I had to do it! Man, that was the worst – then we were doin' the dance routines an' that was okay, wasn't alone out there doin' that. And most of it didn't have an audience really, just friends watchin'. Man, I was too scared to see any of it 'fore it was done. Steve kept tellin' me it was great, I looked great and there wasn't anything to worry 'bout--still didn't believe him. I couldn't- couldn't tell anyone how-how scared I was--man, no body! Cilla didn't know, wouldn't understand. Hell, she wasn't there back then, didn't know how hard it was for me – just Scotty and J.D. They knew man, they were there! We sat 'round and talked 'bout it all, that helped me some, a lot really, if-if they hadn't been there, I don't know--might never happened.

And then it was done an' waiting for it to run, Gawd--sick, man I was throwin' up, my nerves shot to hell! I jus' wanted to go somewhere an' hide till it was over--but then couldn't do that so we watched it together an' it turned out okay. Man, I was relieved--just never thought people would-would want me back like that--after--after so long.

So then I wanted to get back to live shows, it was what I needed an' I told Cilla but-but we didn't really talk about it much--I just told her I had to do it 'n she said she understood, if that was what I wanted but she wanted me to wait, still had those movies to do and all and I said okay. But there wasn't time to wait, so I called up everyone and we were planning what to do an' she'd come home an' the house was full of equipment, musicians an' we'd be playin' half the night an' she told me she didn't want that in the house, the baby couldn't get any rest and the neighbors weren't going to like it.

So got a rehearsal studio set up an' we spent lots of time there, ever spare minute kind of an' I wasn't home much- even when I was there -just didn't hardly want to be anywhere but back with the music. Cilla tried keepin' me up on the baby, and she was growin' fast, but I had to get back to work--if I didn't do somethin' man, we'd all be lookin' for some place to live. It was up to me man, an' I knew it. Films weren't doin' good an' somethin' had to start happenin' or-or our life be changin' and things weren't goin' to be like- like she was used to an' wanted for the future. Money was goin' fast an' it was up to me to get

it back. So, me and Daddy talked about it an' he told me, I had to make a choice an' I made it. I told Cilla I signed a contract to work Vegas an' she didn't look too happy but she said whatever I thought, she'd understand. Man, it was hard, we had to learn everything an' I'd gawd, I'd forgot most the songs – had to bring it back for me and my head was goin' round an' round and I loved it--Gawd, I did! I-I missed it...that...the excitement 'n the-the ups 'n downs 'n turmoil...I felt --felt alive again...just loved it-- Then the new hotel, Mr. Kerkorian planned it for me, biggest showroom an all that and I didn't want to be first, you know, things happen, an' man I couldn't take that on top of the case of nerves I was sufferin' from!

So Barbara did it first an' things got straightened out but there wasn't no suite for me so had to take a bunch of rooms an' that was okay, never had no suite of rooms anyway before. Guess I was--was--kinda a surprise to Cilla--can't say as I blame her for thinkin' she didn't know who the hell I was 'cause she never seen me like that before. Like bein' in another world, ya know. I was there, but I wasn't there--kind of--it all came back--just like all that time doin' those films didn't --didn't--- like some bad dream or something. Gawd--maybe I am crazy! (Laughs) Gawd--loved it--just loved it. An' you know I figured maybe first few nights I might fill that big room--but goddamn never dreamed it'd be full ever damn night--twice a night! The whole damn town was full up! People comin' from ever where man! Hotels crammed full, havin' to hire help, bringin' in more food, to meet the demand! I couldn't believe it--nobody else did either! An' practically ever body in Hollywood was comin' over--people wouldn't give me the time of day was there waitin' in line to see ME! Man, if that didn't scare the livin' shit outta me--nothin' would! Had hives all over my body opening day--'bout itched to death for a while then got a shot to stop that an' the dry air was killin' my voice an' here I am shakin' like needin' a fix or somethin' thinkin' I can't move, how'm I gonna walk out there! Cholly looked like he was half a mile way lookin' at him 'cross that stage! Man, I thought ma feet was glued to the f---kin' floor! Daddy knew me, how I'd feel like before an' he put his hand on my back and said, "Go son, go now! An' kinda pushed me forward so I took that first step--seemed like slow motion crossin' that stage, couldn't hear nothin' but a soild roar then quiet an' I just grabbed that guitar an' started to sing 'for I lost ma head an' run like a scalded dog! Then I thought I was gonna fall over when that first rush of sound an' an' all comin' off that audience hit me--sucked the air out of me man--then they were all standin' up yellin' an' clappin'--Gawd--you know --know--I can't say--just can't--no way to say it--how it felt, how I felt bein' up there--gawd--don't hardly remember nothin' from that show--went so fast--like a dream or somethin-- just didn't want to wake up, didn't ever.

(On the recording of that first night, Elvis is so excited, he has moments of stuttering, stammering over certain letters of the alphabet as he said he did when a young boy...he recovers, saying "Come on boy, you 'kin talk--" and when he does it again exclaims, "Christ! What's the matter with you boy?" And then he gets it together and goes on.

During a “sit down” monologue he explains that he wants to tell “what happened” from his side of things, saying that everyone else had talked about it and he wanted to share his view. The audience was quiet, only laughing when he pulled an “Elvis funny”, and then they hushed, almost holding their breath, hanging on his every softly spoken word. When he ended his “talk” the audience as a group, took a long simultaneous breath that is audible on the recording.)

**Elvis:**

“My life has been....blessed, from the beginning. I can’t think of it any other way man; God eh...eh chose me, there is no such thing as coincidence –not really. There is a plan for our life that has to be true be--because we follow it we make it real; if you don’t take the opportunities that are presented and use them accordingly, you won’t have as good luck. Maybe that’s our “free will” –we choose the roads we take, deal with the outcome an’ let other stuff get in the way of what was meant for us. Gawd, I don’ know-who asked me that question anyway? Lord-Lord, I need to get some rest...good night all of you, see you tomorrow.”

It’s been said by medical experts who study such things and those “afflicted with the problem” that stuttering and losing one’s ability to control the speech is not an “impediment” because it can be controlled over time...and with patience of those around them. Often little kids don’t get that “patience or understanding” from one parent or none at all from either. They don’t learn to control it, to slow their thoughts down and to stop before speaking too quickly.

Elvis did learn, he said that an older black gentleman who was a musician and singer, taught him how to “count before talkin”, “to take a breath and speak in a rhythm and breathe in time”. Not being a musician it doesn’t click in my mind as to what that meant, but it worked for Elvis who said as a child he didn’t talk much around strangers or peers because “I couldn’t let ‘em know that I-I stuttered; always someone who wants to pick on a kid who ain’t got it together yet, ya know.” And he snickered, saying, “Took me a little while, but most of the time, I got it goin’ an’ it don’t bother me if it gets outta hand a little.”

**ELVIS, the Spirit Man--- by Will Gonzales, age 8, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade**

“My mom and dad took me to Las Vegas to see Elvis, who's my best singer and movie guy to see. The biggest hotel room was full; we sat in the half way room and had a good picture of the stage. It was loud when a group of girls sang. My ears hurt and a man group came out and yelled a lot singing so my head was hurting but then a man came out and told funny jokes but my ears shut up and most I didn't hear. We waited for hours and then the lights ran across the curtain and drums came on with loud music, the curtain split open and everyone was on stage but not Elvis. Then he came out and it was slowed down and he walked proud, like Indian chiefs. My mom said he is so handsome, oh my god and I said he is a god-look at him! Does he have lights on his clothes? She said he just glows and they look like lights are on and my dad said it's the spotlights doing it, but I know it was not that-it was Elvis' insides glowing because he is God's Spirit Man.”

Will Gonzales, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade [1970's]

***Elvis- born and raised a Pentecostal Christian, baptized at near 12 in a river -- by Sonya Snyder-- of ElvisCandlelight web site -read Sonya's blogs.***

**One of the most asked questions among Elvis fans is was Elvis a Christian, and did he go to Heaven? Here is what my individual study has found out to date.**

Elvis was born and raised a **Pentecostal Christian**, baptized at 13 in a river by a pastor, enthusiastically dragging his friend with him as he ran down to make a public pronouncement that he had given his life to Jesus. He wanted that fire he saw in his mom for **Jesus**. She took him to church sometimes 7 days a week. He loved the gospel singing and the fiery delivery that came from some of the preachers.

Then when he became famous, he was hurt early on by many evangelical pastors' superficial judgments of his musical influences, and thus, him. They mainly wrote from the news articles: ones who actually met him often changed their opinions of him and his music, but some do not even to this day, erroneously citing him as the reason for the decline in our society. This proves all men on Earth are fallible, and we must always contemplate the facts.

Elvis also had become an avid reader of the *King James Version* of the *Bible*, and even studied and could read *Hebrew* to study the *Old Testament* in greater detail and knowledge. It was his favorite book. This drew him to the ancient Jewish teachings of the importance of numbers in the Hebrew language – every letter with a corresponding number- giving even more weight to the prophecies, names, and words of the texts. From there he studied *Numerology*, a more pagan form of the Hebrew teachings.

In many of the *New Age, Hindu & Egyptian*-focused books he read, in the margins are some of his notes – and many of them are *Biblical* scriptures or references he must have felt corresponded with the meaning within the writings in the books at hand.

He often tried to do what the *Bible* says to do and that is to weigh the balance – search to see if there is agreement with scripture from whomever you hear, whatever you read, to make sure you are not turned away from the truth. He wanted to know the truth about why God made him Elvis, and gave him the powers he did. He could not understand it and was tormented by the idea he wasn't living the way he should, or doing with his gifts what he should do for God. Even as early as 1958 it is recorded that he went to his Memphis pastor and cried to him, nearly perfectly quoting the **Apostle Paul** that “I do those things I know I should not, and I do not do those things I know I should-- -I am the most miserable man on Earth, please pray for me!”

He mentioned quite a few times that he wanted to leave touring in rock concerts and seek out the “*Jesus Music*” coming out of California in the mid 1970’s, mostly lead by **Keith Green** in the charts, at the time.

He had told the Colonel and others about his desires to leave behind his touring of secular music and go and tour only Gospel plus record some of the new music of the *Jesus Generation*. Both the Colonel, and all those around him dissuaded him from his desired course, saying it would not be as profitable as his present tours, and so he would put so many people counting on his money, out of work, he would let down those counting on him. He didn't have one person around him who was a believer like him, and who would back him in following his dream, which would have been a departure into exploding into another musical genre he could originate.

I believe this was a source of great frustration for Elvis. As a Christian, I know what it is like to be asked in my spirit by God to go and tell or to do something and then not do it or say it and feel the remorse of disappointment and the loss of “what if”? If the faith had been bigger; God often asked believers to jump off cliffs of their comfort levels to be useful vessels for Him, and Elvis was asked that, certainly.

Mainly because of this, Elvis did not follow his dream and perhaps his main calling from God, to truly “preach the Word” from his velvet voice, as only he could. He used to say, “I know Jesus loves me, and I know he really loves me when I sing.”

His “**How Great Thou Art**” album is just a small testimony as to how Jesus used Elvis to reach the lost for Christ.

He never thought he was a king, nor did he like that title. In concerts, he would announce on stage to those proclaiming him so that “I am not the king, I'm just a singer, honey; Jesus is the King.” and he refused to put the crowns given to him on his head.

In his last days he wrote notes to God, found at the Hilton, saying he needed none of this anymore and that he was lonely, and he was asking his “daddy”, Father God, to please take him home. Elvis never thought he was God, but some writers thought he thought he could be used as a musical type of pied piper to lead people.

I believe God offered Elvis the chance to be one of the greatest musical evangelists in the world but he turned it down as a full-time occupation. I also think that he and **Keith Green** would have made amazing music together – Green as a prolific and passionate songwriter. I find it a powerful testimony and the hand of God that allowed *Keith and Elvis* to both be inducted into the *Gospel Hall of Fame* on the same night in 1984--

I had such a powerful feeling of what went on there-in Graceland when I visited; waves of emotion- like feeling his and his mom's mixed feelings from silly joy to a beyond despair type of regret despair – that was sometimes so deep I left at night in uncontrollable tears.

I have wanted an explanation for them and for the many questions surrounding so many parts of his life. I have been on this quest, researching, collecting data, comparing what those around him said and wrote, talking with others, and as I feel these things, read the commonalities and then the discrepancies, a truth has formed for me that I have not read. I believe God has answered so many of my prayers with a yes, and here is one more example.

I asked god to show me the truth in all I read, research and study, and oftentimes when I am low, and find another dead end, God sends me answers from surprising sources. Tonight you again became the answer to my prayer, like you have done before. I want to ask you this- here is my thought on this – Elvis loved people so much, he loved them even when he didn't totally agree with their beliefs or like what they did. He joined in with what they were doing, wanted to make others happy and bring joy--

He also made excuses for and totally forgave such as **Sonny and Red West**, and for the **Stanley Brothers**, for **Priscilla** by taking all the blame, and for many others who were just rotten to him after a time. The excuses were always that “what the outward show was and wasn't who they were, wasn't what they needed, it was okay--” etc, like he had a view into that person's heart, he understood what was needed.

I think that why there are so many books that disagree on Elvis is because while many say that “Elvis was a mirror to those who knew him” they have it backwards. He was not projecting himself onto them, and they were seeing what they wanted to see--- I think that I am beginning to see that he was just loving them where they were, like Jesus did and told his followers to do also.

Some examples of this that glare out in highlights as I read:

That is why he could accept the bongo drums from **Priscilla** and act like they were the greatest gift in the world when at the same time, he had 80 – other identical bongo drums in his basement--- Or accept the same book from **Larry Geller** and **June Juanico** years apart, but knew what the book meant to each of them and also to him so he would exclaim great delight both times for such a wonderful gift---and why he loved best the many mementos, notes and home-made gifts from fans given to him over the years, and he kept them – thousands of them – to where they filled warehouses--

Why he didn't have much use for the big flashy gifts from wealthy notable politicians and others like them-- Why his handlers lost him and then were shocked to find him playing, tossing change against the curb with taxi drivers, at the airport when his plane was delayed--why he was found in the bathroom on his knees, praying for help before a concert, because his throat had not recovered and he still wanted to do a good job to get the message of the songs through to the audience--

Why he read all sorts of books given to him by those who wanted to share with him, with Elvis the person and not the image – and why he wrote Christian scripture references in the margins of secular studies--why he hugged **Joe Moscheo** with tears in his eyes of thanks, even though Joe gave that gift of a living Bible to Elvis thinking it was “simple” enough for Elvis, even though Elvis at the time had been reading *King James Version*, memorizing many passages of it for decades and also had been a studier of *Hebrew*, but he didn't embarrass Joe for thinking he was simple, he thanked him and told him he loved him--



It is why he chose to talk with the maids rather than the mayors--why he tried out for Elvis impersonator jobs and lost, why he would pretend to be the maitre de in restaurants, and a police detective at crime scenes and an EMT at crash sites--

There are just so many examples.

There is a thing called Agape love – God love, and it is a sacrificial love – the highest form of love that **Jesus said in John 15:12** “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends”. Jesus modeled this for man to follow Him in, and I see many examples where Elvis loved the unlovable with this kind of love even when it was not understood. It was a verse that Elvis quoted on several occasions: “Greater love hath no man, than he lay down his life for his friends.” And he said, “That is one of God's greatest commandments for we humans, that we love even those who wrong us so we can be more like Him.” Elvis practiced his faith, he sought guidance from God's word, tried to treat everyone he met fairly and with loving kindness. And when he was exhausted, sick of heart and body, he asked his Father in Heaven to take him home. I believe he is sitting at the feet of Jesus, just as he wished and singing in that heavenly choir.

**Sonya- U.S.A. {Read Sonya's blogs: ElvisLightedCandle Web Site}**

**Saint John Chapter 15, Vs. 12 – 13, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends.”**One of Elvis’ favorite Bible verses and one he practiced daily, and often quoted on appropriate occasions.

## **A Testament of Light – The Last Year**

***Oh, Lord my God, when I, in awesome wonder---  
Consider all thy worlds thy hands have made---***

***I see the stars; I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.***

***When Christ shall come, with shout of acclimation,  
to take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!***

***Then I shall bow in humble adoration,  
and then proclaim my God, how great thou art!***

[From the gospel song, “**How Great Thou Art**” as sung by Elvis]

They came to Las Vegas to see him still. From Ohio, New York and Texas they came. From Great Britain, Japan and India they came. From all over the world they came to “Sin City” in Nevada, U.S.A. With one single purpose in mind: to see, hear and hopefully touch Elvis, and to feel the love and universal kinship he offered them.

Terminally ill and in great pain he lay himself down as a bridge never-to-far for compassion and mutual love to cross over.

He was now a hostage of men whose greed blinded them to his beauty. While he would have performed freely until his last breath, he was told that his precious baby would not see another day if he did not go before the throng for as many shows the Jackals could possibly cram into his short remaining months of life. So they shoved his face into an iced bucket of astringent until he coughed and sputtered, sucking the solution into his lungs. They cared only that he was now conscious enough to go on stage.

Yet on that stage, surrounded by gambling casinos and prostitution, and all manner of degenerate allurements to the darker side of humanity, he looked up and out--to those seated before him; and he smiled the smile of an angel. He radiated the love of a beloved brother, and all was simple and graceful and RIGHT --in that moment.

There he stood like a sacred white stone in the Garden of Allah, sweat pouring off him in a libation of holy water from the vials of the gods.

He paused in the quiet he had created with a glance. He bowed his head for an instant, and then raised his face to the heavens beyond the plastic Vegas showroom. His eyes caught sweet celestial fire. He parted his lips and sang, “**How Great Thou Art**” and the trueness of the sound sent a shaft of light through the heart. His voice rose trembling, powerful. His hand lifted and curved upward in the single spotlight, reaching above his head, his eyes following it like a beacon above a stormy sea. “*Oh my GOD, how GREAT thou art!*” Such a cry of the awakened soul! An anthem of spirit returning to Source; he was in the moment, whole, complete and beyond from, disease and suffering--and SO WERE WE. He took us with him on that golden wave of his hand, lifting us gently, surely into the sunrise above the shore. Every tremulous note from the core of his being contained us and assured us that what he saw we would see with him. What he knew absolutely and without a doubt was THERE, beyond the veil, so we would know with such certainty as well.

Surely in that moment, the angels descended into the cauldron of this lost city that never sleeps – a lair of the Beast, to reveal that there is no “evil” anywhere when the being is full of LOVE. I know this to be true; I was there to witness the miracle of Elvis in the Lion's Den (for the last time, in 1975.) I know it remains true even now, 31 years later. Evil is only a perception, a shadow cast by the absence of Love, of Light, of Beauty. The only true thing is that God is all and is in all. Elvis knew this. He lived it, and he gifted it to us in a master stroke at a time in his life that should have been his darkest hour. It was his lasting Testament of Light.

**-Maia Christianne Nartoomid, January, 2006**

***Maia's book “Blue Star Love, From an Amazing Heart of Grace” is now available from Balboa Publishing or Amazon.***

***It is a “28 year work in progress “regarding Elvis’ spiritual qualities-thoughts and love.***

***Source:*** <http://www.elvislightedcandle.org/theman/testamentoflight.htm>

**Elvis:** “I believe there are angels---I believe we have guardian angels sent from on high to look out for us when we're foolish; they come an' whisper in our ear, to give comfort and sometimes, a good shakin' up when we need it. Too many people have had real experiences, been in dire need an' somebody just showed up, from nowhere to give help, to stay with them until people came, or they helped them save themselves and then when people came, and the angel was no longer needed, they just disappear. Hear things like that too often for it not to have some truth to it, really.”

**Conversation: 1967**

**Elvis** speaking of a dream: “It was like bein' in a smokey room, puffs of it floatin' around ya know, like ghosts in the mist or somethin'. Then there was a-a space with nothin' in it an' as I was looking at it, somethin' started to appear. I hafta say it spooked me a little bit, lord a lot really! Man, it was takin' the shape of a person but slow, like bits and pieces formin' an' I thought....I thought Gawd, I'm runnin' a fever but I wasn't. Then it got clearer an' it was a lady...seems like ever time it's a lady when I feel bad ya know; they come an comfort me...in real life an' visions! (He snickers then says,) Seriously, it was a little scary, even for me when this woman is standin' there lookin' at me as if I been a bad boy or something- then she smiles and holds out her hand...I feel like I ought to take it, but I can't do I t- man it was

like my arms turned to lead! Then she moved like floating or somethin' and came closer an I could smell a sweet fragrance, similar to liliacs maybe an' she looked closely at me an put her hand on top of my head. I thought ma f...kin' brain was gonna fly out of my ears but then she moved it an I heard her sayin' "You sleep now, tomorrow will be a better day." And she turned to that misty lookin' cloud and disappeared quickly. My head felt hot where she put her hand, an' I was afraid to get up and look at it- And kept havin' chills so had to get up and turn down the air so that'd stop. Next day came fast- 'cause man I slept! An' didn't have a headache either- felt really good. Man, that's the kinda woman I oughta have visit more often- lord!" (Laughs, then says very seriously) She came to heal me, like she's my angel or somethin'... I-I – she's come before, dressed different at times...it's her though.. same one, lord, lord. Who'd believe -- me?"

*I guess that I would – we're both a little bit way out, don't you think?*

**Elvis:** Yeah, (Snickers slightly) You know, sometimes it's - kinda like I- I – don't know, maybe it's jus' bein' in this – this place...you know, bein' picked out or somethin' . Man, I don' know, really...

*Well, just practice feeling good about it - lots of people like us out there- hearing things and seeing a few of those too. At least - she was an angel!*

---

A friend told me that she had read a book written by one of Elvis' friends (a female) who he had met and befriended in earlier days of his career. In the book (I do not know which title or even who the friend was who wrote it but I am sure someone out there will know!) In the friend's book she tells that Elvis told her in speaking about his mother and his army days in Germany, that when he was alone and serving as a driver of the Jeep used to carry officers from place to place, he would scream out his mother's name and it echoed back and forth around him. Elvis didn't have time to grieve at home after her passing; he was shipped out to Germany and served his time working there in whatever capacity he was assigned. He did live off base, he had his father and his grandmother with him, he also had a few of his Memphis buddies over now and then. But the only time he could let down his guard, allow himself to let lose the sorrow and anguish he felt over losing his beloved Momma, it was almost more than he could bear, he missed her so much.

Several of his relatives who knew him well have said he was never the same "happy, carefree young man that he was before she passed". They thought he kept everything inside him, closed up and locked tightly and that he was "afraid to care that much for anyone again". His Aunt Delta said, "Elvis never fully recovered from losing his momma, he didn't

get to tell her goodbye or even realize that she was not going to recover...it happened so quickly and then he was shipped overseas; Elvis never had a chance to talk with anyone at that time. He couldn't, he was too torn up inside." Charlie Hodge said the same; "Elvis never fully recovered from the sudden loss of his beloved mother; he'd tear up at mention of her."

In talking with him myself, I too, don't think he ever did "come to grips" with the loss; he wasn't able to speak of her without showing how much it hurt him to have lost her. He kept it all bottled up inside, seldom allowing himself to pull that cork.

*In his room at home, sharing thoughts with his beloved mother, Gladys Love; this must have been taken in the first home that he bought for his mom and dad. Photos show there were twin beds in his room with matching chenille bed spreads.*



LANG  
OTTO

1725 TAYLOR STREET  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94133

Dear Mrs. Hill,

RE: ELVIS PRESLEY

I had the pleasure of being associated with two films starring Elvis Presley.

It was my privilege to have been assigned by MGM to set up and direct the exciting Grand Prix Automobile Race sequence for VIVA LAS VEGAS.

I remember Elvis as such a gentleman and a thorough professional. He always knew his lines and never indulged in having his director and crew waiting for him on the set. He seemed to enjoy his work and appreciated his co-workers. For a man of his <sup>TALENT AND</sup> stature in show business, he was a remarkably "regular guy".

Otto Lang.

*Mr. Lang said in an interview he would have liked the chance to make a dramatic film with Elvis whom he thought was a good actor, willing to take direction and who could make scenes "real".*

## **The Extended Family of Elvis Presley**

**By Barbara Lee Rowe**

*Elvis' 2nd cousin, her father knew his family well -*

Elvis had close kin living with him at Graceland®, a list that included a father, a daughter, aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was close to all, but in the last year of his life, Elvis had distanced himself from some family members, keeping mostly to himself. Elvis was a private man, but he was also a family man and tried to help those he could, when he could. Many of the extended family members of Presley's and allied kin were poor, having never risen above the ravages left by the American Conflict of 1861 which devastated the entire South, causing wealthy land and business owners to lose their livelihoods and most instead became farmers, farmhands, and sharecroppers. Many of our families, including Elvis' own family, worked the cotton fields during this time and up until the mid 1930's. The sad story of the Southern people did not begin with poverty but ended up that way. Some continued to live in poverty and struggle. However, many, like cousin Elvis, chose to pursue lives that would enrich them and their families in time to come.

The Presley ancestors came from Palatinate Germany in 1708, during the German influx to America. Valentine Bressler and his wife, Anna Catherina Franse, along with their children came in through New York and moved along the upper state trails between New York and Pennsylvania, with members of the original Bressler family still living today in the northeastern areas of Pennsylvania. These were cousins to Valentine Bressler. Valentine altered the spelling of Bressler to Preslar and he and family continued to head South into Cecil County Maryland, where his children were baptized at St. Stephen's Parish. Two of his sons, Hans Jurie and Andreas, ended up in North Carolina, becoming there the founding fathers of our present Presley lines. To distinguish between the two families, Hans Jurie's line retained the Preslar/Pressler spelling of the name and Andreas line became Presley/Pressley. Andreas Preslar adopted a more Americanized version of his given name: Andrew Pressley. His brother Thomas Preslar, thus became Thomas Presley, possibly to further distinguish between the brothers.

Andreas and his brother, Thomas were blacksmiths and large land holders, they moved between the counties of North Carolina and South Carolina, with descendants of Andrew early on moving further into Tennessee. There was another brother, John, who relocated to Tennessee as well. The family of Thomas stayed in North Carolina and South Carolina, but his descendant's branched further into Tennessee and Mississippi where they continued to intermarry into the Presley line there.

As for Elvis, his immediate ancestor was Andrew Presley, Sr., through son Andrew, Jr. and then his son, John Presley whom it is believed married a Tuscarora woman, a daughter of Dunning Keziah, a full-blooded Tuscarora from the Southern Band of Tuscarora, Deer Clan, Bertie County, North Carolina. Dunning was an Indian scout during the American Revolution. His sister, Sara Keziah, married William Winchester, cousins to the Presley family. It is told that Dunning's father was a chief, Nicholas Cashie/Casiah of the Southern Band, one of seven who signed the 1831 Treaty releasing a portion therewith the Tuscarora from their North Carolina lands. Another son of Andrew, Jr., Charles, married Polly Keziah, a daughter of Dunning. It is believed that John Presley's wife named their first born after her father, Dunning Presley, the first. The name is referenced and spelled as "Dunnan", but the original spelling of the name along with its origin has since become quite clear. Elvis had Native American blood, Cherokee, Creek, and Tuscarora. Through the Tuscarora line, Elvis' ancestor would have been a Tuscarora Chief. Elvis was always fascinated with Native American culture. Some Indian blood was disclosed to him through his mother's family, but Elvis had no idea of the extent of his Native American heritage. He would have been proud.

Nor could he fully account for the brave men and women who comprised his ancestors as family stories only continued back to the great grandparents. The Presley family did not know who their ancestors were before, during, and immediately following Elvis' death. Later on, Presley family members began the ultimate task of researching and validating our family existence as far back as able.

Elvis would have been proud of his extended family heritage. He would have learned that they, like himself, had dreams and worked toward goals of accomplishing those dreams. The family continues to come together today, though many are happy in their own lives without including the novelty of having famous kin. Others, like me, remember the family struggles and the kin connection that brings me right down to Elvis' own backyard, families linked from sharing the Presley name and origin to those connected to Gladys Love Smith and her family. The connection runs deep between Elvis and I; linked by practically every family name ---both sides! It is a worthy and noble heritage, and I include cousin Elvis as a major contribution to our family success story.

Elvis, the Kin of Rock and Roll is what we are to you, and our efforts will, hopefully, make you proud. We love you!



[Barbara Lee Rowe is putting together the history of Elvis' family members who served in the military, including going back to the Civil War days. Elvis mentioned to me of knowing several of his Southern ancestors had lost their homes and land, and he wanted to go down there to look for where they lived, and visit Civil War battle fields, saying that he felt that he had been “alive on earth during that time” and had been a young Southern soldier who was killed early in battle. He said that he had a “dream, so real it woke me up feelin' like I'd been shot--it was a bad wound- gut shot--could feel and smell the blood---”. The dream was so real to him, I could hear him suck in his breath and shiver as he spoke of how it felt, leaning against that tree, looking up at the blue sky, with sunlight dancing through the leaves, knowing it was “my last hour of life”. He would be delighted to know his heritage, and that his cousin, Barbara Lee, is doing something of great value and honor for Elvis Aaron Presley's memory and yes, he would be so proud, so very pleased. Thank you Barbara Lee, for your hard work and efforts in giving him this personal honor, I know he would have been hanging over your shoulder, marveling over every revelation of his heritage and probably have his sword in hand “practicing” as he waited for the next wondrous bit of information!]

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***Additional piece regarding the death of Elvis Presley, 12/2011***

**DEMYSTIFYING THE DEATH OF ELVIS**

By Daniel Brookoff, MD, PhD  
Center for Medical Pain Management  
Presbyterian St. Luke's Hospital  
Denver, Colorado

The opinions contained within this commentary are solely those of Daniel Brookoff, MD, PhD and are not supported or endorsed by Medical Learning Solutions or Cephalon, Inc. and its affiliates.

Biography- Dr. Daniel Brookoff received his medical degree as well as his doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He also completed his residency in medicine and a fellowship in medical oncology at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Brookoff has held faculty positions at both the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Tennessee medical schools, and is currently the medical director of the Center for Medical Pain Management at Presbyterian, St. Luke's Medical Center in Denver, Colorado. In addition, Dr. Brookoff is

the founding associate director of the Methodist Comprehensive Pain Clinic in Memphis.( He has passed away recently; but this writing shall live on via the internet.)

Dr. Brookoff has authored numerous papers and textbook chapters on pain management, most recently “Chronic Pain as a Disease, the Patho physiology of Disordered Pain” for the textbook Expert Guide to Pain Management, published by the American College of Physicians in 2005.

In order to comfort many of my patients with chronic pain, for years I have told them the story of Job from the Bible. These days not only do I tell my patients the story of Job, I also tell them the story of Elvis.

Elvis was born in 1935. He was a twin, his twin died at birth. Elvis had problems right from the start and it turned out he had a form of Hirschsprung's disease, and Hirschsprung's disease is a disease of the colon that really kept him from having normal bowel movements and things that he really didn't want to talk about. There are a lot of people with Hirschsprung's that survive into adulthood, and later on in adulthood they start to develop severe bowel problems, and that's exactly what happened to Elvis. He started seeking treatment because he didn't know what he had. In the 60's he was seeing a variety of doctors, some of them in California, some of them in Las Vegas. They were giving him all kinds of treatments, and one of the treatments that he got were anti-inflammatory steroids for the colitis he was developing. So people who survive into adulthood with Hirschsprung's disease will stretch out their bowel, will develop twists in their bowel, and develop a symptom like colitis. And this is what was plaguing Elvis when he met Dr. George Nicopopolis. And it's kind of interesting because if you asked people what happened, they said that Dr. Nicopopolis caused Elvis to be addicted and that's what he died of, and that is absolutely not true. And it just kind of mirrors a lot of what we go through either as pain patients, or as doctors taking care of pain patients, that it's hard enough taking care of the physical suffering that the stigma and humiliation really are not deserved, and they become an enormous burden.

The first time Elvis met Dr. Nick was in February of 1967. Elvis had suffered an attack of vertigo and had fallen in the bathroom and broken his rib. He came to see Dr. Nicopopolis and one of the interesting things is from then on they developed this relationship that was kind of a father-son relationship. A lot of pain physicians develop very close relationships with their pain patients, and often that's the most important part of our treatment is having somebody they can trust and somebody who believes in them.

Elvis actually got better under Dr. Nick's care. When Elvis met Dr. Nick in 1967, he wasn't touring. He hadn't played a concert since 1958, which is when he went into the military service. He started playing concerts again in 1969. Despite that, he started to

suffer worse and worse bowel problems. Because of a problem with the Hirschprung's disease, which is a neurological problem with your bowel, he developed a very distended and stretched out colon, and at one point developed something called a volvulus, which is real crisis where his colon actually twisted and he started bleeding and was nearly dead. And it was kind of interesting; I've seen the medical notes for that. What you do with somebody who has a volvulus is you take them to the hospital. Elvis went to Dr. Nick's office and saw Dr. Nick and a gastroenterologist and they said, we need to take you to the hospital. Elvis was just terrified that they were going to do a colostomy on him, which is probably what they would have done, and to be Elvis Presley and to have colostomy, I could see being kind of intolerable. When Elvis refused, the gastroenterologist said, "well we can stick a scope, you know, a rigid scope, in your colon and, because your colon is twisted, and if we twist it the right way, you'll be okay, and if we twist it the wrong way, it'll be catastrophic". Elvis told him to go ahead and do that, because his identity as Elvis was so important to him.

I remember looking at the medical chart for that visit and it's kind of sweat stained and the note for that's really long. Usually when you write a note for a procedure it's a page or two. That note is 16 pages. And luckily they twisted the right way. So he made it through that crisis. It's kind of interesting, everybody makes their judgment of Elvis, who was a good person, loved his mom, a good Southern Baptist who didn't drink alcohol, much less abuse drugs. And they made all these kind of presuppositions about him. And really what he was trying to do was, to get treatment and still stay Elvis and maintain his iconic image, and it's kind of interesting because his image continues to grow.

He started to develop terrible constipation and something called overflow diarrhea. So he had trouble moving his bowels and at the same time some of the liquid stool would overflow. There was an incident at a concert in Baltimore where he actually had what we call an accident, and that terrified him. And you can imagine Elvis having a bowel accident would be terrifying. Because of his accident, Elvis became very, very concerned about his bowels and started taking medicines that actually caused the blockages and the constipation to get worse. He took a medication called *Lomotil*, and he insisted that medication be given to him at his own discretion. All his other medications, as it turns out, were very carefully controlled. So it wasn't like he was going out on the street buying drugs or asking for drugs. He was actually taking very little medication, but he did take a lot of *Lomotil*. *Lomotil* has two drugs in it. *Lomotil* was developed in the 50's when they were trying to look for a pain-relieving narcotic and it's a drug called diphenoxylate. Diphenoxylate didn't relieve any pain, it caused constipation. But when it came out on the market, regulators were really concerned that you just can't let a narcotic out on the market even though it doesn't get absorbed. So they did something called the poison pill theory of formulation. So *Lomotil* has two drugs in it. It has diphenoxylate and it has belladonna, an atropine-like drug. The thought being that people who took a

low dose of it would never feel the belladonna, whereas people who tried to abuse it, which are very, very few, would get belladonna side effects.

Elvis took this drug and took it in large amounts because he was absolutely horrified about having a bowel accident. And like I said, you just think of him living with that kind of terror and still going out there and performing for people and going to Vegas and doing concerts, and the poor fellow was terrified. If you look at the mode of death, he didn't die like a drug addict dies, because on his last day he was having problems getting his days and nights mixed up so he did sleep in kind of late. But then he ate breakfast and did several things during the day. He played racquetball, which is not something a lot of my drug -addicted patients do, and then he had friends come over and what did they do, they played gospel music into the night, which is something he really loved doing.

Then Elvis tried to do the hardest thing that he had to do every day, because he tried to have a bowel movement. And it looks like Elvis had not had a bowel movement for several weeks before the time of his death. And one of the ways we know is that he'd had a barium enema, in those days we did that instead of colonoscopies, where they put barium in his bowel. And we know that if you don't get the barium out of your bowel pretty quickly, it turns solid, like cement. And he'd had a barium enema more than eight weeks previously and had never gotten the barium out of his bowel. So he had a very stretched out bowel with a lot of barium. And he hadn't had a bowel movement in at least two weeks, is on the toilet trying hard to have a bowel movement. And unfortunately he had taken a lot of *Lomotil* right before that. The diphenoxylate in *Lomotil* was stopping him from having a bowel movement. The belladonna in *Lomotil* caused him to have an arrhythmia when he bore down. So as he bore down real hard to kind of push things out of his bowel, his heart slowed down and he had an arrhythmia called ventricular tachycardia which killed him. And he died on the toilet, which again, I take care of a lot of addicts and *that's not how they die*. They either die with a needle in their arm or they die in bed. He died on the toilet and he was taken to the hospital, and by the time he got to Baptist Hospital he'd passed on. (He had a seizure from lack of oxygen to the brain due to the heart arrhythmia, said the doctors after they observed and performed the autopsy. Noone could have prevented his death; it happened so suddenly.)

And it's just kind of interesting because he died at a very young age. He was trying to be Elvis through his whole life and if you're Elvis Presley, that's what you've got to do. It's interesting, that's what his doctor did for him was he kept him Elvis an extra 10 years. He would have passed on sooner without Dr. Nicopopolis's care. And Dr. Nicopopolis kept his secrets.

Treating chronic pain is one of the most pro-life things we can do as physicians. And if we're being pro-life, we're doing the right thing; we're

restoring people to their lives. So I just thought it was interesting to share with you the story of Elvis and his doctor. Like I said, Dr. Nick told me that Elvis was his best friend and his worst patient. He was hard to deal with because he kept wanting to be Elvis Presley. But in his case, that was legitimate. And because of Dr. Nick's care, Elvis probably lived 10 years longer than he would have, *despite a really terrible genetic illness that plagued him all of his life; and would eventually cause his death.*

One of the interesting of that was, that's one of the secrets that never came out because Elvis was humiliated by his illness, which is really unfortunate. And your doctors are the ones who will keep your secrets when you pass on and everybody else is talking about you.

{Source: *The Emerging Solutions in Pain*}

Link to video: <http://www.emergingsolutionsinpain.com/...0&emid=219>

Post script: Elvis' father and family members who did not know all the facts about his problem, (he didn't want them to worry) kept Elvis' secret, knowing how embarrassed and humiliated he felt about his condition; he was ELVIS to the world, they honored his wishes by doing what they could because he always tried to be "perfect" for his fans and so, when he died they did not let the media know his physical problems as that would be "fair game in that shark infested waters" of "yellow" journalism. And the "sharks" still continue to circle, grabbing a "bite" here and there from the garbage riddled suppositions from some who "were there and knew every move he made, day or night" in their minds. As Elvis often said, "Somebody wants to make a name for themselves in newspapers 'n books an' anything goes...the dirtier the better for getting attention."

One thing I've noticed is that over time, those type people in "powerful positions" do end up getting "kicked in the ass" as Elvis would put it. For instance the owner of the infamous National Enquirer, Sun. and other such dribble, and who bought up publishing firms and who sponsored several so called "insider" books published beginning before and continuing after Elvis death, and who now is the owner or co-owner of most major radio and television channels/stations., publishing firms and newspapers. Today he tells them all what they can write, say and broadcast and he is now under

investigation for other infringements including “spying”, “phone taping”, buying stolen information, distorting facts and etc then releasing this stuff as “truthful” to get things to go his way and make money hand over fist. But suddenly all his money and “power “isn’t able to buy his way out of court proceedings”. “What goes around, comes around...” said Elvis, “do wrong to your fellow man, trick ‘em, rip ‘em off an’ make life miserable for ‘em ‘cause you can ‘un sooner or later it’ll come back and bite you in the ass!”. (It’s payback time...I hope that “bite” is shark sized!)

When Elvis was on that last tour, exhausted, sick and emotionally and physically worn down, he didn’t feel good and did not respond to an invitation from this multi-millionaire who wanted to delight his dinner party guests by “promising them Elvis would come to the dinner party after his show was over”. Do to his status as a multi-millionaire he was used to having his way and never expected anyone would turn down an invitation from him, especially not an “aging rock ‘n roller”. And so for that Elvis was scorned, ridiculed and slandered in every way possible, nation and world wide -before and after his death- most likely he didn’t know who the invitation came from or he may not of been told of it, yet that person was so offended that ELVIS would say no to *him* he set about to ruin Elvis Presley’s “good name”. But Elvis has come out “smelling like a rose” because as he often said, “when ya hear somebody talkin’ trash about another person or sayin’ things that are questionable...just take a good look at what’s bein’ said...truth shines...so look for the light ‘n you won’t go wrong.”

Elvis’ inner light always out shone any thing thrown his way- “Dirt kickers can’t see the whole picture...they throw up such a thick cloud huffin’ ‘n puffin their distortions, distractions, tales an’ delusions (“DDTs”) they let common sense get lost in the shuffle.” (Elvis’ stated view of such things.)

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United States of America

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*Wanda June Hill*

**Thank you Elvis for being my friend -----The story is told, your  
secrets are safe and nothing too bold.**

**Your fans will know, still love you and understand it all.  
You will never be forgotten, you'll never grow old.**

**Suzy Lloyd, 2006**



End of concert drama- his suit is white, the inside cape is gold. He has poured heart, spirit and body into that almost 1 hour long Performance. His suit is soaked from the effort and sweat; the band is doing it's rousing finale and Elvis is giving one last moment of excitement to his thrilled, awed and astounded audience! The showroom is filled to capacity as always, people are screaming, clapping and standing up to see better...the showroom is filled with electricity that flashes through the air. Unforgettable moments in time... Thank you, Elvis! You will never be forgotten.



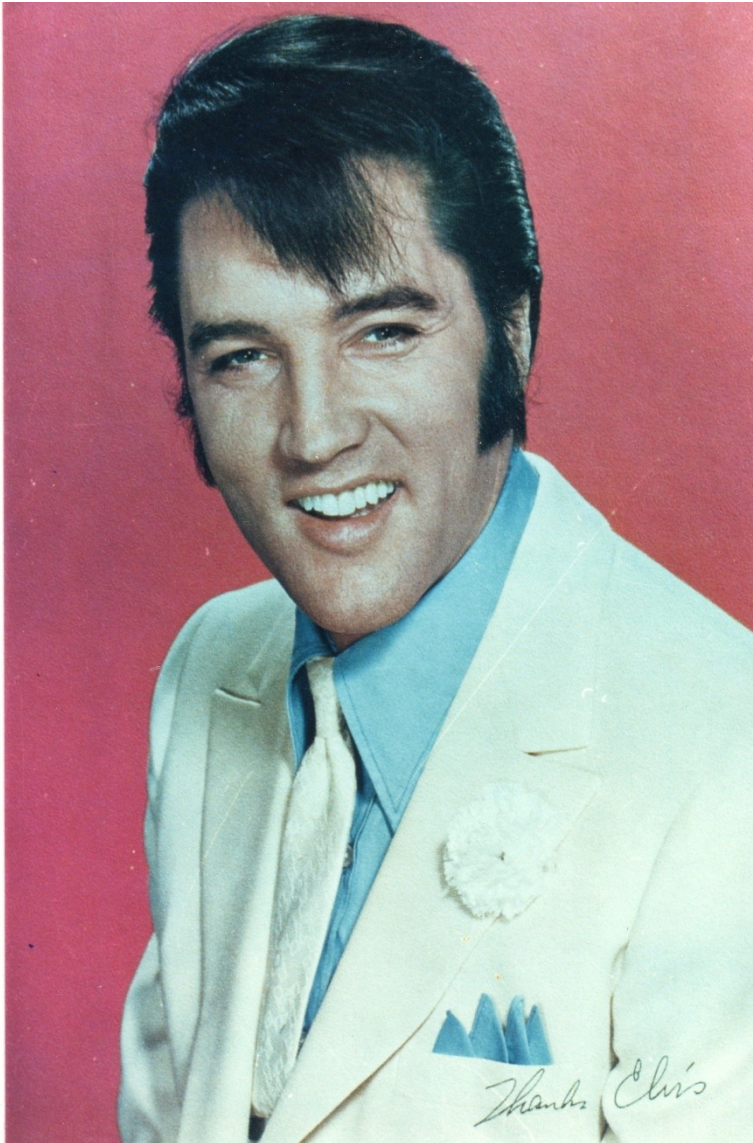
January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Dear Readers, his fans and those who want to know him-

I have said everything that I feel should be said at this point in time; there could perhaps be more but not from me...this is it. Please tell your friends, family and other fans about this site. Help us erase the “blight” that has been put on Elvis’ legacy, beginning months before his death and growing like wild weeds in the spring time since that sad day. So many of the people who worked with him on stage and in films, who helped with his recordings, those lucky enough to have met him by chance and circumstance-have put down their memories into books and personal interviews; these writings show the man behind the image. A kind, generous and gracious young man who grew up to be “the king of rock ‘n roll”, and continued to be generous, sweet of heart and soul, loving his fellow humans with tenderness and understanding, even when they hurt his feelings, wounded his pride and misjudged his purpose, that was to do his job, entertain and bring happiness to his fellow humans. What more can one say? Elvis was special, here in a special time and place, and he will never be forgotten.

He has been dissected, turned inside out, analyzed and sup-positioned so many times by so many persons; many who have degrees and so forth, but do they really know the man...or just theory? He had faults, he took part in some risqué fun making, he never claimed to be saint, and said “I ain’t even close.” but is that not being human? Each of us is the sum total of our experiences-mixed up with what we manage to learn along the journey of our lives- and so he became as he was. A wonderful friend, loving father and husband, devoted entertainer and a gifted singer who could lift spirits, toss out fears and delight his audiences with his charm, humor and beautiful vocals. And he couldn’t wait to get on those stages to do it all for you, me and every one who had the chance to be there. He was always ready to have fun, and yes he could be “colorful” having that fun, and didn’t we all enjoy that laugh, giggle and ornery gleam in those eyes? He was more special than he would ever understand- but his fans know...and so he will always be. Time will never take him from his fans as long as we all continue to remember. He was here just 42 ½ years... he will be remembered way longer than that. He is forever...ELVIS. Unforgettable!

*Wanda June Hill*



*From promotional folder for "Trouble with Girls".*

*A special thank you from the guy who made it all happen...Elvis!*

**This photo duplicated at the end- it looks great framed!**

**Elvis:**

“I believe every man, an’ every woman has a purpose for being on this earth at the time they are born. Their mother and father, regardless of the couple being married or not, regardless of any circumstances of their lives, when they have a child, it has a purpose just as they had one when they were born. Consider this, everyone comes into the world as a child, a baby and that baby from the moment it begins to breathe is growing, physically and mentally. They are born with the ability to feel emotions, to learn how to get fed and cared for. Babies are cute, even those not so pretty at birth, become so to their parents and if circumstances are right, the child grows, learns and begins to have dreams and hopes for a future.

Parents are supposed to give a child hope, love and encouragement, some do and some don’t do so well, but children have a mind and heart and they are guided by what they see from others as well as from their immediate circumstances. Maybe they are poor in things, but as long as there is love in the family, the kids are gonna be all right. It might take a while, but in the end, they will make it okay. Sometimes it takes a while to find out what purpose you might be here for, and sometimes maybe you won’t know until you’re old and maybe feel you haven’t done anything. But you don’t know but what a word you said, a gesture of friendship, or just a smile has brought to someone else; it can happen out of your range of reasoning or seeing, really. Believe me, at the lowest point in life, a smile, a hand held out or just a simple thing as saying hello can make all the difference in a life gone low.

Try it; if someone you see, meet or know is kind of down, pat them on the back, give them a smile, a hug is a good thing also, it brings them into your ...space, the light around you can make theirs shine a little brighter. I believe we are joined in spirit to everyone we meet, casually or intimately and we need to do our best for each other, be it with a helping hand, a word of kindness, loving them even if they seem to be unlovable and most of all, letting them know, you see them. You know they exist. Used to when I was a little boy, I thought I was almost invisible, hardly anyone noticed me around but I kept on being, even when a little older an’ I wanted to jus’ quit, momma told me you can’t quit! There won’t be a quitter in this family! And I didn’t quit... an’ ever one of you can’t either! We are the family of earth, and we can’t quit on each other! Look around, your purpose might be just next door. An’ remember to smile, you’ll feel better too.



The “western” suit he was “gonna wear” just for me.  
mom,

Starla says” Oh

his eyes are hurting”; they were, he had one of “those headaches” but he did a super fine show, perfect voice and his fans let him know!

He looked good in those “Cisco Kid” outfits, but the darker colors proved to be too hot under the hot strobe lighting on stage. So he soon went back to the white and blue and blue and white... “they’re different; two each an’ some of ‘em I have three each.

It’s a real drag havin’ to make sure they get cleaned when we’re on the road. The guys do it, find cleaners an’ make sure they get ‘em back otherwise, man, I’d be out there drippin’ worse havin’ to wear one I already wore. Salt ya know, from outta ma body...course I don’t have much of that after I’m out there a few days...”

Laughs, “It’s just somethin’ I don’t have to think about...suits ya know, once I make up my mind which one’s I’m gonna wear. That...now that can be a little time...it’s kinda difficult when there are different ones.... I like not havin’ to think about it...really...”

When asked if he could fit into the outfits he originally wore in 1969 he said: “What’d I wear?” “Oh probably not, ‘um older ‘un all that goes with getting’ older...” laughs “I’m no different...man, I’m headin’ to the 40’s...Lord! It’s been a long haul...”

He was asked, “Knowing what you know now about being on the road so much, would you sign on to do it again?”

“Sure, why not? I love goin’ from place to place, meeting new people an’ they let me know they are enjoyin’ the show, we, all of us on tour together, we like goin’ or-or we wouldn’t be doin’ it like this. It’s tiring in some ways, sure, but it’s exciting and fulfilling inwardly...we feel good out there...bein’ on stage...it’s a..an other world; you have to experience it to get it...man, I couldn’t ask for a better job! I love it, it’s my life...”

*Composed by Julie A. Joyce  
England*

*Elvis, I can't stop Loving You  
It's an all too Familiar cry  
Made by Fans the Whole Worldwide  
Why did you have to die?*

*It's not so Funny, When Time Slips Away  
By all that's Right and True  
Futures come and Years have passed  
But Elvis we still love you.*

*Will they remember me? You asked your nurse  
You did not have to wonder  
For I will answer in this verse  
YES for Eternity and Yonder*

*Our Love Letters to you, Written in rhyme  
Are Steadfast, Loyal and True  
They Echo Every One of us  
And that's The Wonder Of You*

*E stands for Eternity, our love will go on  
L stands for Loyalty so pure and so strong  
V stands for Voice so wonderful and pure  
I stands for Idolize of that you can be sure  
S stands for Steadfast the way you carry on.  
They all stand for ELVIS - the Master of a song  
Though I never met you, And that's a crying shame  
The World since You left it*

*It just don't feel the same*

*Your smile so sweet, your soul so gifted  
When we hear you today, our hearts are lifted  
Goodnight Sweet Prince, and rest in peace  
Know our love for you will never cease*

*For now this poem will come to a close  
Our thoughts and feelings put down in prose  
Altogether our memories will keep you in touch  
Thank You Elvis, thank you very much.*

*Julie A. Joyce, England  
Used here by written permission  
2006*



## Long Beach Ca

Wearing the “Egyptian Vulture” suit that became known as his “bicentennial suit” as he wore it almost every concert performance he did that year (1976). He said the “bird” design was symbolic of eternal life to ancient Egyptians and he “wasn’t wearing the “same suite” at every show...he had 6 suits, 3 with white sleeves & blue body and 3 with blue sleeves... & white body so they were different suits! His logic was humorous!

The suit he wore at the last performances he gave that was filmed for television had the Mayan calendar on the front in an elaborate and intricate work of art. Elvis explained that calendar ended with the year 2012 and said that “will be an important year of radical changes for earth and its entire people; life will never be the same again...”

*A prediction from Elvis-- so far it looks as if he could be right--*





One of Starla's favorites, she sat right below, stage front.

## Wanda June Hill, Photo by Starla Hill—

Background is a poster made from a painting entitled "Cut Me and I Bleed"

Artist: Merryfield

I am now 73 years old, and look a lot like my Grandmother but I don't have "turkey neck" yet because of Elvis' instructions for keeping it away - thanks Elvis! (2013) Starla took this with her phone camera; the painting behind me hangs in her den/media room. The necklace is real carved ivory and silver, it's very heavy and was made for Elvis who said it was too heavy and bothered him: he gave it to me after I read an article to him, about Elephants and their phenomenal memory. I told him that in my opinion, HE had the" memory of an Elephant"!

He busted up laughing, saying his head wasn't big enough for that! I said well, what size is it? He snickered, "'Bout a 7  $\frac{1}{4}$  ...eh....dependin'.... hat size, that is...the ...eh...what we're talkin' 'bout?" Always that sense of humor ready to spring on someone.

(I would like to speak to either of the two young men and the one young blond haired woman who would drive down to the beach area where we lived and bring the many gifts that Elvis would send to us during Holidays or other special occasions. I should have asked and written down your names...but it did not occur to me then. My email is at the end of this book.)



Thank you for reading this work; it was a daunting challenge but “it was my purpose” and it couldn’t have been just “luck” that Elvis came into our lives.



Elvis said “there’s no such thing as coincidence”--- It had to be a part of “the plan” he so often spoke of---or as some might say---“just fate.” I think it had to be either one or the other; there is no other “logical” explanation of events and circumstances that took place in my life, Jimmie’s life or the “weird and strange” results of our lives together - after all, Elvis said, “It’s all part of a master plan an’ it ain’t for us to know everything – otherwise we’d surely screw it up tryin’ to second guess an’ change things.”

Indeed and in fact, Elvis was a wise man, whose heart was big, giving and open to love for everyone he met or heard about. And he was not afraid to care for his fellow man, woman and child; he did “love his Bible” and he tried to follow its teachings, the word of God he said, is a path meant for us to follow to the best of our ability. “God” he said, “doesn’t judge anyone who is down upon their knees; he blesses them!” Elvis was not afraid to speak up for what he believed, and he practiced his faith to the best of his ability even when confronted with those who didn’t like him, couldn’t stand his singing or just flat thought he was “evil” or “wicked”. A lesser person would have given up after a few years of being the “Elvis Presley” image; however, Elvis loved his life and said so even when it appeared that life was “falling apart around his feet” to other people around him. Elvis accomplished so much in those short years of his life; he did so with a birth defect, unseen by anyone as it was all internal, and very serious. He would have died but for his mother’s diligence in seeing that he would live. Elvis could not eat he was so tiny a newborn, an eye dropper became his “bottle” and he lived in spite of his health issues. Until his death hardly anyone was aware he was not ‘perfect of form inside and out’ it was a secret held by “the close mouthed one” who continued being Elvis for all of us, who were very greedy; we put him on the road, he displayed his beauty and made us “whole” and charged up our normal days with excitement. He was “jus an entertainer, an’ happen to be someone people are attracted to, that’s all man, I anin’ notin’ that special, really. Jus’ like ever’ body else...human- with all that goes with bein’ one.”

He is an example for people in many ways, some better than others, some a warning of what can happen if you let other people take “full charge of your

life and dictate every detail” to the point that you no longer have a way to “escape that life”. It can happen, it does happen and it did happen to him. Maybe he might have been able to get “free” but he was unable to make himself feel “right” about having to tell so many people they no longer had a job, would get no more money from working for him; they had families, he just couldn’t do it. He knew he wouldn’t be able to “live with ma’self” or enjoy his life knowing they had “nothin’ much to look forward to” and the struggle it could be for some of those people who had become so “dependent” on his ability to “bring home the money”. And too, he knew he didn’t have a lot of time to “get things done” because of his internal problems, he told several friends he did not expect to live to “be 50 or so years old” but he didn’t tell them all the details of “why” he thought so. Just that close members of his family tended to die “younger than most”. Bless his heart, he did the best he could with what he was given to do it with; those blue eyes, that smile and his personal appeal to so many people and his “way with a song”.

Fifty years from now and longer if our earth continues - he’ll still be singing, smiling and brightening the day for people all over the world; when times are tough, and without the least expectation --- *“out of the blue – here comes Elvis...”*

*See Ya, there!*



Photo by Robert Wines, San Diego, 1976

San Diego, California, '76. Saying "good- bye, thank you for coming" to the many people at stage edge as he ended his closing song; we were center front, at the stage as planned while guards stood at "the ready". Elvis lay down the microphone, coming forward to shake hands, one of them mine, and then touched as many as he could. Our presence helped keep things under control as people tried squeezing closer to the stage almost shoving some of us under it. Elvis backed up, posed for a few seconds in each direction and all the flash from so many cameras lit up the area and made the halo in this picture also. Notice on the right is one of his backup singers, standing ready to help Elvis. There isn't many ways to explain the noise that occurred at the ending of his shows, so many people crying out, calling his name, and other things that become a jumble of noise mixed with the band still playing exit music. It was beyond description, one had to experience it to fully understand.

We had sat in front rows at several concerts, but nothing prepared us for what happened in San Diego. Those of us who had end row center seating were shocked when he was gone and we turned back to leave. The seats on both sides of the first two rows had been ripped loose from the floor - and it was cement - and the seats had been secured to metal framing. That metal was bent, twisted and the bolts broken loose! Had we been in them that rush of people hell-bent on getting close to Elvis might have crushed us! Thank heaven the bright stage lighting kept him from seeing much of the commotion at the end of his shows, and his men got him off stage and out of it all, so he would never have to face anything like what happened to those ripped up seats. He had seen “it all” in those early years and at 40+ years old occasionally had “nightmares” about being caught like that again.

People ask me if I had it all to do over, would I have spent more time trying to be around Elvis... I can't answer that with a yes or a no, it happened as it was meant to happen; we were blessed, we lived during those wonderful, astonishing and sometimes sorrowful years. Thank you Lord, for giving us that chance. Amen

Thank you all very much; this is the end – “really”.

September, 2013

**Announcement:** MAIA NARTOOMID has published her spiritual book about Elvis and his life time. It is a great book that has taken 28 years to be finished and made available to the public. I highly recommend her work; she is a gifted psychic and spiritually enlightened woman who along with her

mother, saw 68 performances in Las Vegas during Elvis' concert years. She was seated at the stage front, handed him spiritual books and other writings that she had written and received. He was the first man she had kissed; he never spoke to her but Elvis was pleased with her gifts, he came to her while on stage to receive her materials, and he carefully gave them to Charlie Hodge for safe keeping until he ended the show. Maia has written a wonderful tribute book for him entitled: **BLUE STAR LOVE, From an AMAZING HEART OF GRACE**, it is available at Balboa Publishing or through Amazon Books. And you can get it as an e-book!

[www.balboabooks.com](http://www.balboabooks.com)

I have a few dozen copies of the poem "*For All My Friends*", that Elvis wrote after I "challenged him" to try. If anyone would like to have a one, it's on a large sheet of parchment paper with an ink sketch of the profile of Elvis, drawn by Danny Berg. I will send out a copy as a gift from him and me, just write me and give me your address. When they are all gone, there will not be any more available. They will arrive in a "tube" from the Postal Service. Be sure to send your correct address!

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For Elvis Presley

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&

Starla Hill





**Front cover sketch & back cover sketch created by Zey, front cover and back cover---she is a gifted artist, who draws and paints beautifully. She lives in Turkey and is also a talented musician who recognized Elvis as a masterful vocalist and musician who inspired others to achieve their goals in life. [www.elvislightedcandle.org](http://www.elvislightedcandle.org) to view her artistic treatment of Elvis Presley in a Flash presentation.**



