



To Hell and Back: An Autobiography

Meat Loaf, Meatloaf, David Dalton

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"poor fat marvin can't wear levi's!" a radio advertisement boomed as a 240-pound seventh grader named Marvin Lee Aday shuddered in humiliation. Parents said he was "too fat" to play with their children, and his classmates picked on him, even ganging up to lock him in a storage box. Unflatteringly nicknamed "Meat Loaf" by his alcoholic father, prone to getting concussions (seventeen in all), and drawn to musical theater, no one pegged this misfit kid to become a rock star. That is, until he recorded the third best-selling album *of all time*. In *To Hell and Back*, Meat Loaf reveals his amazing story--a rags-to-riches-to-rags-to-riches life that would rival most fiction. As a boy, he had to face down lowlifes straight out of *Deliverance* in order to fetch his drunken father out of gutbucket saloons--the same father who would later try to kill him with a butcher knife. He was at Parkland Hospital when JFK was declared dead, picked up a hitchhiker who happened to be Charles Manson, got recruited for the musical *Hair* while trying to get a job as a parking attendant, and starred in a movie that became the biggest cult film of all time, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. From there, he collaborated with Jim Steinman to make a record called *Bat Out of Hell*, which went from being laughed at and rejected by every music executive in the industry to selling more than 28 million copies and launching Meat Loaf into international superstardom. Meat's story would be incredible if it stopped right there. But that's just the beginning.

The heights to which Meat had soared were matched only by the depth of his plunge back into the abyss. In a swirl of devious managers, drugs, lawyers, guns, money, nervous breakdowns (including the psychosomatic loss of his voice), and more lawsuits than he could count, Meat Loaf lost it all. He was bankrupt, his relationship with best friend and collaborator, Jim Steinman, turned ugly, and his wife, having a nervous breakdown of her own, was considering a divorce.

But the hardest-working man in rock and roll would not stay down. Returning to his family he set out with them to conquer the world again, club by club and through word of mouth--a struggle that culminated in a reunion with Steinman, the Grammy Award-winning release of *Bat out of Hell II*, and a return to the limelight. Illustrated with dozens of previously unpublished photographs, Meat Loaf's story is--like Meat Loaf himself--larger than life.

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