



Runnin' with the Devil: A Backstage Pass to the Wild Times, Loud Rock, and the Down and Dirty Truth Behind the Making of Van Halen

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The manager who shepherded Van Halen from obscurity to rock stardom goes behind the scenes to tell the complete, unadulterated story of David Lee Roth, Eddie Van Halen, and the legendary band that changed rock music.

Van Halen's rise in the 1980s was one of the most thrilling the music world had ever seen—their mythos an epic party, a sweaty, sexy, never-ending rock extravaganza. During this unparalleled run of success, debauchery, and drama, no one was closer to the band than Noel Monk. A man who'd worked with some of rock's biggest and most notorious names, Monk spent seven years with Van Halen, serving first as their tour manager then as their personal manager until 1985, when both he and David Lee Roth exited as controversy, backstabbing, and disappointment consumed the band.

Throughout Van Halen's meteoric rise and abrupt halt, this confidant, fixer, friend, and promoter saw it all and lived to tell. Now, for the first time, he shares the most outrageous escapades—from their coming of age to their most shocking behavior on the road; from Eddie's courtship and high profile wedding to Valerie Bertinelli to the incredible drug use which would ultimately lead to everyone's demise. Sharing never-before-told stories, Monk paints a compelling portrait of Eddie Van Halen, bringing into focus the unique combination of talent, vision, hardship, and naiveté that shaped one of the greatest rock guitarists of all time—and made him and his brother vulnerable to the trappings and failings of fame.

Illustrated with dozens of rare photographs from Monk's vaults, *Runnin' with the Devil* is manna from rock heaven no Van Halen fan can miss.

Runnin' with the Devil: A Backstage Pass to the Wild Times, Loud Rock, and the Down and Dirty Truth Behind the Making of Van Halen Details

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From Reader Review Runnin' with the Devil: A Backstage Pass to the Wild Times, Loud Rock, and the Down and Dirty Truth Behind the Making of Van Halen for online ebook

Matthew Treya says

Ah me! Nothing new here. Talented rock band falls prey to drugs, alcohol, excess, and ego. Sad. (Once again, my fault! What the heck was I expecting?). No surprise, either, that Alex is now a man of the cloth. I suppose he came to realize he was lucky to have survived.

Rod says

Horrific- like chatting with a conductor who tells you his journey off the tracks and then over the cliff... later to explode on the rocks. I pity Van Halens old manager... or even new manager.

I hope Michael Anthony writes a book. Especially since he's still friends with Sammy Hagar. I sure hope he made enough money off the Van Halen boys to make it worth it.

Seems similar to Steve Vai having few comments about his days with David Lee Roth.

Everything you NEVER wanted to know about Van Halen. Nasty stuff! I suggest reading Sammy Hagar's book instead - much healthier. Although, if you really want to know how the music industry works... this will scare the crap out of you. Alex Van Halen will probably put a hit on his old manager for this tabloid insanity. It is amusing that he said he signed a contract that prohibited him from telling this story for 30 years ---- yep, times up!

Joseph says

The opening to Running With the Devil is probably one of the most recognized opening lines from the age of hard rock. Van Halen made up quite a bit of my high school era rock but quickly faded out after the departure of David Lee Roth. Monk's book takes the reader from the formation of the band to the last concert with all the original members. Eddie and David Lee Roth seem childlike. Alex is shown as the adequate drummer and alcoholic. Michael Anthony is portrayed as the only normal person in the band, balanced and stable, but unable to stand up for himself.

The book is written from the manager's point of view and does not concentrate on the music. For example, an album is mentioned but none of the tracks. I really don't remember what songs were on Fair Warning. It's been a while since I listened to Van Halen.

I saw Van Halen live once. On May 29, 1983, Van Halen was paid a record \$1.5 million to perform on set 90-minute set. The event was the US Festival and I was one of the 350,000 people there. It was a day when Ozzy Osbourne was more coherent than David Lee Roth. Monk calls it the worst performance by the original Van Halen lineup. I remember David Lee Roth forgetting the words and cursing at the crowd (not in a fun way). We left before the set was over. Van Halen went downhill from there evolving into Van Hagar.

Monk offers his experiences as Van Halen's manager. The reader must remember that Monk was fired by the band right about the time it broke up. That may help explain the treatment of the different band members in the book. I listened to the audio version of this book and it did bring back some memories of the era of party rock and just plain partying.

Mr Breeze says

This book was awesome. I like the music of Van Halen quite a bit, but would not consider myself a fanatic or disciple of Eddie Van Halen. I like both Van Halen and Van Hagar. This book really pulled the curtain back for me on what happened in Van Halen's early days and rise to superstardom, at least from one point of view.

I was surprised on who the "bad guy" was in the end. I was not surprised at the characterizations of some of the main characters. This was a good view into the inner sanctum of the band.

Even if you are not a HUGE fan of the band and just enjoy "Jump" on the radio, but still love a good book about rock n roll tales, this is a great book. Not a totally trashy story either. Sure, still plenty of sex, drugs and r'n'r, but plenty of substance to be taken seriously.

Cynthia Harrison says

I'd give this 2.5 for the gossip factor. I'm not that interested in David Lee Roth but liked reading about Valerie and Eddie. This is more a book for a guy. The backstage sexual antics were crude and the endless drugging and drinking was monotonous and kinda sad. The guy who wrote this had an ax to grind and I don't mean a guitar. He was Van Halen's manager in their heyday and takes personal credit for a number of things including their first #1 single. I skimmed every time he went into a long winded digression about himself and his heroic sacrifices for the band. He had a co-writer but they needed an editor anyway. I feel kinda mean to say this but this book feels kinda mean.

Tim Trewartha says

Entertaining memoir from the former manager of Van Halen. This book covers the David Lee Roth era of the band, from 1978 through to 1985. Contains the usual quota of appalling behavior tales from life on the road from a hard drinkin', hard druggin', hard shaggin' hard rock band. And whilst this is a good read, it's also pretty sad, seeing a bunch of talented naive kids turn into a bunch of selfish, drug affected assholes. Their treatment of bassist Michael Anthony on the 1984 tour is just awful. Can't believe he stuck around for another 2 decades. Noel Monk was fired by the band in 1985, not long before singer David Lee Roth quit the band to pursue a career in self-parody. Monk goes the hack on the band a few times, but I think that time is a healer for the ex-manager. If this book came out in the late 80s it would have been way more ruthless. Ultimately i think he feels sorry for them. If you love the Van Halen you'll dig this. Can't believe he thinks 'Fair Warning' is a mediocre album. It's their best record, easily.

Twierking To Beethoven says

Meh.

Noel Monk writes a lot about managing the band, he really goes to great lengths when it comes to business. It might be interesting to some peeps, give you that. I, for one, already know Van Halen sold tons of records, and filled stadiums and arenas back in the eighties. And, honestly, I don't really care about the money they made, and how they made it. There's some debauchery tale here and there, but not much about the creative process.

Sadly, it was a tad boring.

2.5 stars.

Phil Thoden says

A fun read about life - mostly on the road - with Van Halen from 1978 to 1985, as recounted by manager Noel Monk. If you like the band, you'll enjoy the book. If not, don't bother with it. Interesting details are shared about the business side of the group's career, too, such as how a bad contract with Warner Brothers evolved into a much more lucrative agreement, scrapping with merchandise counterfeiters in arena parking lots, and handling paternity suit concerns.

Shannon says

A great read for hardcore Diamond Dave-era VH nerds. It whet my appetite for Michael Anthony's life story, which I hope a ruthless agent is pestering him for RIGHT NOW.

Casey says

40% of this is about t-shirt sales. The other 60% is Monk explaining why he is/was smarter than everybody in VH. Cool!

Lana Revok says

A highly entertaining look back at the David Lee Roth era of Van Halen written by the band's former manager. While the book offers some hilarious and horrifying insight into why the band imploded during the highest point of their career I still couldn't help but feel like there were a few lingering questions as to why the manager seemed a little passive during some of the fights and bad decision making. And I would certainly love to hear the band's point of view on all this (though I know that will probably never happen).

Straw says

A book that comes across as a vendetta and isn't all that interesting. Unless you a diehard fan, steer clear of wasting your time.

Tina says

I am a bit fascinated with Van Halen. I am not even sure why, I only like a few of their songs, but I guess the fact that a band can have it all and then literally implode amazes me - hoisted by their own petards has always been the saying that comes to mind when I think of them.

Noel Monk does an excellent job of describing the hectic, crazy and debauched life on the road, which is no small feat considering he was talking about Van Halen AND that he managed to never get too crude about the details.

I could not help but think how crazy people can get over show business and the "stars", be it, rock stars or tv and movie stars. When you read this type of book, you get an ideal perspective, that of looking in from the outside, which makes it easy to see just how corrupted one gets once that sacred "inner circle" is being sought. I have never been much of a follower, even in high school and anytime I have been in any kind of proximity to a "star", I have always found myself walking away, instead of to them - the whole thing is just too ridiculous, which, in short, is sort of Monk's overall attitude and take away on most of what he experienced.

Someone once told me "if you admire someone, just pray you never meet them" and I believe it.

Monk's writing style (or his ghostwriter?) was very engaging and acted as the only adult voice in a world of whinny babies. While he does not shy from telling it like it is, I suspect he also stayed away from a lot of stories, which in some ways, was apparent by the generality of most of what was written. I would have liked a little more in-depth comments, as much of what he writes is more of a generalization of the group, than specific events and people. Although he does not go easy on David Lee Roth or Alex Van Halen by any stretch.

But what is most incredible to me is that these four guys of varying talent, could not see that they were "best" together - that without each other, they would not be as successful. As predicted, large egos and even larger drug habits separated them, turning them all into crying, drooling babies. The way they imploded is fascinating and it appears as though nobody was stopping the slide into total destruction, not Monk, none of the wives - NOBODY - mind you, I am not sure that the members of Van Halen would have listened anyways.....I get the feeling that nobody wanted to be on their bad side, with everyone pushing it under the rug.

The amount of drugs these guys took is staggering (and I am sure we did not even hear the half of it) oh and the sex? they should all be on their knees thanking God that they were not doing this in the age of AIDS. How are these guys still alive I will never know.

This story was powerful and extremely macabre and Monk was excellent at giving us that feeling....he knows show business and he knows Van Halen and I thoroughly enjoyed this book, even if I found myself shaking my head at every page.

Oh and for those who want to know - Valerie Bertinelli is barely mentioned in this book although there are two scenarios that made me cringe - she should have been running the other way - you know AWAY from Eddie Van halen.

Chris Wagnon says

I think I enjoyed the overall book from an industry standard. But overall it didn't really shed any light on Van Halen for me. I did find the story about Steve Perry amusing. But it mostly reads like your typical "sex, drugs and rock and roll" book with enormous egos. Some of it might be true and some of it might be a stretch. The Micheal Anthony thing in 1984 seems very unlikely to draw up contract mid tour that would stand up in the court of law. Of course I agreed with him that they were a different band once Sammy Hagar came on the scene. I also agree with him while successful that the original lineup left a lot on the table. Overall I'd give it 3/5. To me Van Halen Rising is still the standard for Van Halen books.

Kinksrock says

This is the second rock biography I've read about VH recently, the other being Van Halen Rising: How a Southern California Backyard Party Band Saved Heavy Metal. This may confuse some because I am not a big VH fan. Despite having one of the best guitarists, I find their lyrics mostly unsatisfying and their lead singer's voice extremely limited. Nonetheless, I find their story interesting and I love rock bios.

Anyone who was around in the early 1980s and was into rock has to remember how huge VH was. But somehow, after their most successful album, they fell part.

This book tells the story from about where "Van Halen Rising" left off, when the new tour manager, later manager, came in, until his exit, right before the original VH ended.

It's an eye-opening rock bio, revealing how naive these four guys were. It's no surprise that they were clueless about the music business, but they were clueless about so much more, like Edward Van Halen, faced with a paternity suit, not being sure whether he could have gotten the girl pregnant through oral sex. The band not realizing that they were paying for all the damage they were doing to hotels, not Warner Bros. Edward breaking down and crying because he's homesick.

And, of course, loads of drugs, alcohol, and sex. And cruelty. (After reading this, I want nothing but success for the painfully disrespected Michael Anthony.)

A must if you are a VH fan. Still a great read if you are a rock fan who is not that into VH.
