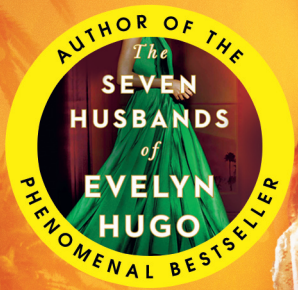

Daisy Jones & THE SIX

'I devoured this in a day' **REESE WITHERSPOON**

'I LOVE it . . . I can't remember the last time I read a book that was so fun'
DOLLY ALDERTON

TAYLOR JENKINS REID

'It's as if a woman wrestled the narrative from *Almost Famous,* drenched it in **sunshine, sex and tequila**, then left it for us to read on a rainy Sunday.'

GRAZIA

'I totally fell for Taylor Jenkins Reid's **engaging** recreation of the 70s rock 'n' roll scene – I was humming Fleetwood Mac for days afterward!'

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

'The band members' conflicting viewpoints on what really happened back in their heyday are both **hilarious and heartbreaking**.'

COSMOPOLITAN

'Unique, inventive and stylish . . . **exciting and intoxicating**.'

WOMAN & HOME

'With Daisy Jones, Taylor Jenkins Reid has conjured up a **legend** both on the page and off.'

STYLIST

'A book that reads like an addictive Netflix documentary meets *A Star Is Born* – despite being utterly fictional . . . It's also a call-to-arms that when you find your niche, don't doubt, **embrace it**.'

EMERALD STREET

'Utterly believable . . . fabulously **entertaining**.'

THE TIMES

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'A tremendously engaging, and completely believable tale of rock and roll excess . . . **inventive, persuasive and completely satisfying**.'

DYLAN JONES

'**Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll?** You bet, but it's Daisy's refusal to become a mere muse that powers this buzzy music-industry romance.'

MAIL ON SUNDAY

'Pretty crazy. Hugely readable.'

EVENING STANDARD

'The characters leap off the page, seducing you with their dramas, and making you wish the band was real. **Five stars**.'

HEAT

'The **perfect** book to read on a summer night.'

IRISH TIMES

'The heady haze of the 70s music scene, and a perfectly flawed Daisy, combine to create a fresh, rock 'n' roll read. **I loved it**.'

ALI LAND

'This **brilliant and unforgettable** novel will be as big as the fictitious band in their heyday.'

DAILY MIRROR

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'Once in a blue moon you get to discover a book you end up pressing upon many other people to read. Taylor Jenkins Reid has got every nuance, every detail exact and right. **I loved every word**.'

PAUL REES

'While reading this novel, you forget that Daisy Jones & The Six never existed. Every time you remember that they never existed, **your heart will break a little**. And when you finish this novel, it will break a little more.'

DAILY EXPRESS

'**Utterly refreshing** and too charming not to love.'

IMAGE

'It's a **thoroughly enjoyable** read . . . Reid puts it together so deftly that, more than once, I forgot I was reading about made-up people and events.'

IRISH INDEPENDENT

'I didn't want this book to end.'

FEARNE COTTON

'So brilliantly written I thought all the characters were real . . . **I couldn't put it down**.'

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'New obsession, incoming.'

TELEGRAPH

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To Bernard and Sally Hanes,
an honest love story if ever there was one

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This book is an attempt to piece together a clear portrait of how the renowned 1970s rock band Daisy Jones & The Six rose to fame—as well as what led to their abrupt and infamous split while on tour in Chicago on July 12, 1979.

Over the course of the last eight years, I have conducted individual interviews of current and former members of the band, as well as family, friends, and industry elite who surrounded them at the time. The following oral history is compiled and edited from those conversations, as well as relevant emails, transcripts, and lyrics. (The complete lyrics to their album *Aurora* can be found at the back of the book.)

While I have aimed for a comprehensive approach, I must acknowledge that this proved impossible. Some potential interviewees were difficult to track down, some were more forthcoming than others, and some, unfortunately, have passed on.

This book serves as the first and only time members of the band have commented on their history together. However, it should also be noted that, on matters both big and small, sometimes accounts of the same event differ.

The truth often lies, unclaimed, in the middle.

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THE GROUPIE DAISY JONES

1965–1972

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Daisy Jones was born in 1951 and grew up in the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles, California. The daughter of Frank Jones, the well-known British painter, and Jeanne LeFevre, a French model, Daisy started to make a name for herself in the late sixties as a young teenager on the Sunset Strip.

Elaine Chang (*biographer, author of* Daisy Jones: Wild Flower)**:** Here is what is so captivating about Daisy Jones even before she was "Daisy Jones."

You've got a rich white girl, growing up in L.A. She's gorgeous—even as a child. She has these stunning big blue eyes—dark, cobalt blue. One of my favorite anecdotes about her is that in the eighties a colored-contact company actually created a shade called Daisy Blue. She's got copper-red hair that is thick and wavy and . . . takes up so much space. And then her cheekbones almost seem swollen, that's how defined they are. And she's got an incredible voice that she doesn't cultivate, never takes a lesson. She's born with all the money in the world, access to whatever she wants—artists, drugs, clubs—anything and everything at her disposal.

But she has no one. No siblings, no extended family in Los Angeles. Two parents who are so into their own world that they are all but indifferent to her existence. Although, they never shy away from making her pose for their artist friends. That's why

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there are so many paintings and photos of Daisy as a child—the artists that came into that home saw Daisy Jones, saw how gorgeous she was, and wanted to capture her. It's telling that there is no Frank Jones piece of Daisy. Her father is too busy with his male nudes to pay much attention to his daughter. And in general, Daisy spends her childhood rather alone.

But she's actually a very gregarious, outgoing kid—Daisy would often ask to get her hair cut just because she loved her hairdresser, she would ask neighbors if she could walk their dogs, there was even a family joke about the time Daisy tried to bake a birthday cake for the mailman. So this is a girl that desperately wants to connect. But there's no one in her life who is truly interested in who she is, especially not her parents. And it really breaks her. But it is also how she grows up to become an icon.

We love broken, beautiful people. And it doesn't get much more *obviously* broken and more *classically* beautiful than Daisy Jones.

So it makes sense that Daisy starts to find herself on the Sunset Strip. This glamorous, seedy place.

Daisy Jones *(singer, Daisy Jones & The Six)*: I could walk down to the Strip from my house. I was about fourteen, sick of being stuck in the house, just looking for something to do. I wasn't old enough to get into any of the bars and clubs but I went anyway.

I remember bumming a cigarette off of a roadie for the Byrds when I was pretty young. I learned quickly that people thought you were older if you didn't wear your bra. And sometimes I'd wear a bandanna headband like the cool girls had on. I wanted to fit in with the groupies on the sidewalk, with their joints and their flasks and all of that.

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So I bummed a cigarette from this roadie outside the Whisky a Go Go one night—the first time I'd ever had one and I tried to pretend I did it all the time. I held the cough in my throat and what have you—and I was flirting with him the best I could. I'm embarrassed to think about it now, how clumsy I probably was.

But eventually, some guy comes up to the roadie and says, "We gotta get inside and set up the amps." And he turns to me and says, "You coming?" And that's how I snuck into the Whisky for the first time.

I stayed out that night until three or four in the morning. I'd never done anything like that before. But suddenly it was like I *existed*. I was a part of something. I went from zero to sixty that night. I was drinking and smoking anything anybody would give me.

When I got home, I walked in through the front door, drunk and stoned, and crashed in my bed. I'm pretty sure my parents never even noticed I was gone.

I got up, went out the next night, did the same thing.

Eventually, the bouncers on the Strip recognized me and let me in wherever I was going. The Whisky, London Fog, the Riot House. No one cared how young I was.

Greg McGuinness (*former concierge, the Continental Hyatt House)*: Ah, man, I don't know how long Daisy was hanging around the Hyatt House before I noticed her. But I remember the first time I saw her. I was on the phone and in walks this crazy tall, crazy skinny girl with these bangs. And the biggest, roundest blue eyes you ever saw in your life, man. She also had this smile. Huge smile. She came in on the arm of some guy. I don't remember who.

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A lot of the girls around the Strip back then, I mean, they were young, but they tried to seem older. Daisy just *was,* though. Didn't seem like she was trying to be anything. Except herself.

After that, I noticed she was at the hotel a lot. She was always laughing. There was nothing jaded about her, 'least when I knew her. It was like watching Bambi learn how to walk. She was real naïve and real vulnerable but you could tell there was something about her.

I was nervous for her, tell you the truth. There were so many men in the scene that were . . . into young girls. Thirty-something rock stars sleeping with teenagers. Not saying it was okay, just saying that's how it was. How old was Lori Mattix when she was with Jimmy Page? Fourteen? And Iggy Pop and Sable Starr? He sang about it, man. He was bragging about it.

When it came to Daisy—I mean, the singers, the guitarists, the roadies—everybody was looking at her. Whenever I saw her, though, I'd try to make sure she was doing all right. I kept tabs on her here and there. I really liked her. She was just cooler than anything else happening around her.

Daisy: I learned about sex and love the hard way. That men will take what they want and feel no debt, that some people only want one piece of you.

I do think there were girls—the Plaster Casters, some of the GTOs—maybe they weren't being taken advantage of, I don't know. But it was a bad scene for me, at first.

I lost my virginity to somebody that . . . it doesn't matter who it was. He was older, he was a drummer. We were in the lobby of the Riot House and he invited me upstairs to do some lines. He said I was the girl of his dreams.

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I was drawn to him mainly because he was drawn to me. I wanted someone to single me out as something special. I was just so desperate to hold someone's interest.

Before I knew it, we were on his bed. And he asked me if I knew what I was doing and I said yes even though the answer was no. But everyone always talked about free love and how sex was a good thing. If you were cool, if you were hip, you liked sex.

I stared at the ceiling the whole time, waiting for him to be done. I knew I was supposed to be moving around but I stayed perfectly still, scared to move. All you could hear in the room was the sound of our clothes rubbing up against the bedspread.

I had no idea what I was doing or why I was doing things I knew I didn't want to be doing. But I've had a lot of therapy in my life now. And I mean a lot of therapy. And I see it now. I see myself clearly now. I wanted to be around these men—these stars—because I didn't know how else to be important. And I figured I had to please them if I wanted to stay.

When he was done, he got up. And I pulled my dress down. And he said, "If you want to go back down to your friends, that's all right." I didn't really have any friends. But I knew he meant I needed to leave. So I did.

He never talked to me again.

Simone Jackson *(disco star)*: I remember seeing Daisy on the dance floor one night at the Whisky. Everybody saw her. Your eye went right to her. If the rest of the world was silver, Daisy was gold.

Daisy: Simone became my best friend.

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Simone: I brought Daisy out with me everywhere. I never had a sister.

I remember . . . It was the Sunset Strip riot, when all of us went down to Pandora's and protested the curfew and the cops. Daisy and I went out, protested, met up with some actors and went over to Barney's Beanery to keep partying. After that, we went back to somebody's place. Daisy passed out on this guy's patio. We didn't go home until the next afternoon. She was maybe fifteen. I was probably nineteen. I just kept thinking, *Doesn't anybody care about this girl but me?*

And, by the way, we were all on speed back then, even Daisy as young as she was. But if you wanted to stay skinny and be up all night, you were taking something. Mostly bennies or black beauties.

Daisy: Diet pills were an easy choice. It didn't even feel like a choice. It didn't even feel like we were getting high, at first. Coke, too. If it was around, you took a bump. People didn't even consider it an addiction. It wasn't like that.

Simone: My producer bought me a place in Laurel Canyon. He wanted to sleep with me. I told him no and he bought it for me anyway. I had Daisy move in.

We ended up sharing a bed for six months. So I can tell you firsthand that that girl never slept. I'd be trying to fall asleep at four in the morning and Daisy would want the light on so she could read.

Daisy: I had pretty bad insomnia for a long time, even when I was a kid. I'd be up at eleven o'clock, saying I wasn't tired, and my

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parents would always yell at me to "just go to sleep." So in the middle of the night I was always looking for quiet things to do. My mom had these romance novels hanging around so I would read those. It would be two in the morning and my parents would be having a party downstairs and I'd be sitting on my bed with my lamp on, reading *Doctor Zhivago* or *Peyton Place*.

And then it just became habit. I would read anything that was around. I wasn't picky. Thrillers, detective novels, sci-fi.

Around the time I moved in with Simone, I found a box of history biographies on the side of the road one day, up in Beachwood Canyon. I tore through those in no time.

Simone: I'll tell you, she's the entire reason I started wearing a sleeping mask. *[Laughs]* But then I kept doing it because I looked chic.

Daisy: I was living with Simone for two weeks before I went home to get more clothes.

My dad said, "Did you break the coffeemaker this morning?"

I said, "Dad, I don't even live here."

Simone: I told her the one condition of living with me was that she had to go to school.

Daisy: High school was not easy for me. I knew that to get an A, you had to do what you were told. But I also knew that a lot of what we were being told was bullshit. I remember one time I was assigned an essay on how Columbus discovered America and so I wrote a paper about how Columbus did *not* discover America. Because he didn't. But then I got an F.

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I said to my teacher, "But I'm *right*."

And she said, "But you didn't follow *the assignment*."

Simone: She was so bright and her teachers didn't seem to really recognize that.

Daisy: People always say I didn't graduate high school but I did. When I walked across the stage to get my diploma, Simone was cheering for me. She was so proud of me. And I started to feel proud of myself, too. That night, I took the diploma out of its case and I folded it up and I used it, like a bookmark, in my copy of *Valley of the Dolls*.

Simone: When my first album flopped, my record label dropped me. My producer kicked us out of that place. I got a job waiting tables and moved in with my cousin in Leimert Park. Daisy had to move back in with her parents.

Daisy: I just packed up my stuff from Simone's and drove it right back to my parents' place. When I walked in the front door, my mom was on the phone, smoking a cigarette.

I said, "Hey, I'm back."

She said, "We got a new couch," and then just kept on talking on the phone.

Simone: Daisy got all of her beauty from her mother. Jeanne was gorgeous. I remember I met her a few times back then. Big eyes, very full lips. There was a sensuality to her. People used to always tell Daisy she looked just like her mother. They did look similar but I knew better than to tell Daisy that.

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I think one time I said to Daisy, "Your mom is beautiful." Daisy said to me, "Yeah, beautiful and nothing else."

Daisy: When we got kicked out of Simone's house, that was the first time I realized that I couldn't just float around living off other people. I think I was seventeen, maybe. And it was the first time I wondered if I had a purpose.

Simone: Sometimes, Daisy would be over at my place, taking a shower or doing the dishes. I'd hear her sing Janis Joplin or Johnny Cash. She loved singing "Mercedes Benz." She sounded better than anybody else. Here I was trying to get another record deal—taking voice lessons all the time, really working at it—and Daisy, it was so easy for her. I wanted to hate her for it. But Daisy's not very easy to hate.

Daisy: One of my favorite memories was . . . Simone and I were driving down La Cienega together, probably in my BMW I had back then. They've got that huge shopping center there now but back then it was still the Record Plant. I don't know where we were headed, probably to Jan's to get a sandwich. But we were listening to *Tapestry*. And "You've Got a Friend" came on. Simone and I were singing so loud, along with Carole King. But I was really listening to the lyrics, too. I was really feeling it. That song always made me thankful for her, for Simone.

There's this peace that comes with knowing you have a person in the world who would do anything for you, that you would do anything for. She was the first time I ever had that. I got a little bit teary, in the car listening to that song. I turned to Simone and I opened my mouth to talk but she just nodded and said, "Me too."

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Simone: It was my mission to make Daisy do something with her voice. But Daisy wasn't gonna do a single thing she didn't want to do.

She'd really come into herself by then. When I met her, she was still a bit naïve but *[laughs]* let's just say she'd gotten tougher.

Daisy: I was seeing a couple guys back then, including Wyatt Stone of the Breeze. And I didn't feel the same way about him that he felt about me.

This one night we were smoking a joint up on the roof of this apartment over on Santa Monica and Wyatt said, "I love you so much and I don't understand why you don't love me."

I said, "I love you as much as I'm willing to love anybody." Which was true. I wasn't really willing to be vulnerable with anybody at that point. I had felt too much vulnerability too young. I didn't want to do it anymore.

So that night after Wyatt goes to bed, I can't sleep. And I see this piece of paper with this song he's writing and it's clearly about me. It says something about a redhead and mentioned the hoop earrings that I was wearing all the time.

And then he had this chorus about me having a big heart but no love in it. I kept looking at the words, thinking, *This isn't right*. He didn't understand me at all. So I thought about it for a little while and got out a pen and paper. I wrote some things down.

When he woke up, I said, "Your chorus should be more like 'Big eyes, big soul/big heart, no control/but all she got to give is tiny love.'"

Wyatt grabbed a pen and paper and he said, "Say that again?"

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I said, "It was just an example. Write your own goddamn song."

Simone: "Tiny Love" was the Breeze's biggest hit. And Wyatt pretended he wrote the whole thing.

Wyatt Stone *(lead singer, the Breeze)*: Why are you asking me about this? This is water under the bridge. Who even remembers?

Daisy: It was starting to be a pattern. Once, I was having breakfast at Barney's Beanery with a guy—this writer-director. Now, back then I always ordered champagne with breakfast. But I was also always tired in the morning because I wasn't sleeping enough. So I needed coffee. Of course, I couldn't order *just* coffee because I'd be too amped from the pills I was taking. And I couldn't *just* have the champagne because it would put me to sleep. You understand the problem. So I used to order champagne and coffee together. And at the places where servers knew me, I used to call it an Up and Down. Something to keep me up, something to keep me down. And this guy thought it was hilarious. He said, "I'm going to use that in something one day." And he wrote it down on a napkin and put it in his back pocket. I thought to myself, *What the hell makes you think* I'm *not going to use it in something one day?* But, of course, there it was in his next movie.

That's how it was back then. I was just supposed to be the inspiration for some man's great idea.

Well, fuck that.

That's why I started writing my own stuff.

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Simone: I was the only one encouraging her to make something of herself with her talent. Everybody else just tried to make something of *themselves* with what she had.

Daisy: I had absolutely no interest in being somebody else's muse.

I am not a muse.

I am the somebody.

End of fucking story.

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THE RISE OF THE SIX

1966–1972

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The Six started out as a blues-rock band called the Dunne Brothers in the mid-sixties out of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Billy and Graham Dunne were raised by single mother, Marlene Dunne, after their father, William Dunne Sr., left in 1954.

Billy Dunne *(lead singer, The Six)*: I was seven when Dad left, Graham was five. One of my first memories was when Dad told us he was moving to Georgia. I asked if I could come with him and he said no.

But he left behind this old Silvertone guitar and Graham and I would fight over who got to play it. Playing that thing was about all we did. Nobody taught us, we taught ourselves.

Then, when I got older, sometimes I'd stay late after school and mess around on the piano in the chorus room.

Eventually, when I was about fifteen or so, Mom saved up and bought Graham and I an old Strat for Christmas. Graham wanted that one so I let him have it. I kept the Silvertone.

Graham Dunne *(lead guitar, The Six)*: Once Billy and I each had a guitar, we started to write new songs together. I wanted the Silvertone but I could tell it meant more to Billy. So I took the Strat.

Billy: Everything grew from there.

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Graham: Billy got really into songwriting, really into the lyrics. All he'd talk about was Bob Dylan. Me, I was more of a Roy Orbison guy. I think we both had these stars in our eyes—wanted to be the Beatles. But everybody wanted to be the Beatles. You wanted to be the Beatles and then you wanted to be the Stones.

Billy: For me, it was Dylan and Lennon. *Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* and *Hard Day's Night*. Those just . . . I was . . . Those men were my guides.

In 1967, with the brothers in their teens, they brought on drummer Warren Rhodes, bassist Pete Loving, and rhythm guitarist Chuck Williams.

Warren Rhodes *(drummer, The Six)*: A drummer needs a band. It's not like being a singer or a guitarist—you can't just perform on your own. No girls were saying, "Oh, Warren, play me the drumbeat from 'Hey Joe.'"

And I wanted in, man. I was listening to the Who, the Kinks, the Yardbirds, stuff like that. I wanted to be Keith Moon and Ringo and Mitch Mitchell.

Billy: Warren we liked right from the start. And then Pete was an easy grab. Went to school with us, played bass for this high school band that played our prom. When they broke up, I said, "Pete, come on and join us." He was always really cool about stuff; he just wanted to rock out.

Then there was Chuck. And Chuck was a few years older than the rest of us, from a few towns over. But Pete knew him,

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vouched for him. Chuck was real clean-cut—square jaw and blond hair and all that. But we auditioned him and turned out he was better than me, at rhythm guitar.

I wanted to be a front man and now we had a full five-man band so I could do that.

Graham: We got a lot better, really quickly. I mean, all we were doing was practicing.

Warren: Day in and day out. I woke up, grabbed my sticks, and headed over to Billy and Graham's garage. If my thumbs were bleeding when I went to bed, it was a good day.

Graham: I mean, what else were we gonna do? None of us had girlfriends, except Billy. All the girls wanted to date Billy. And, I swear, it was like Billy was in love with a new girl every week. He'd always been like that.

In elementary school, he'd asked out his second-grade teacher. Mom always said he was born girl crazy. She used to joke it'd be the end of him.

Warren: We played house parties and a bar here and there. For maybe about six months or so, maybe a little longer. Got paid in beer. Which, when you're underage isn't so bad.

Graham: We weren't always hanging out in the, let's say *classiest* of places. There were a few times a fight would break out over something and you were worried you might get caught in the cross fire. This one time we were playing a gig at a dive bar and this guy in the front got a little too jacked up on something. He

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starts swinging punches at people. I'm minding my own business playing my riffs when suddenly he's coming for me!

And then it all went lightning fast. Boom. He was on the ground. Billy had taken him out.

Billy'd done the same thing when we were little kids. I was headed down to the five-and-dime and some kid tried to jump me for a couple nickels. Billy ran up to us and then just flattened him.

Warren: You knew back then not to say any shit about Graham if Billy could hear you. You know, Graham wasn't that good when we were starting out. I remember one time Pete and I were saying to Billy, "Maybe we should replace Graham," and Billy said, "Say that again and Graham and I will replace you." *[Laughs]* Honestly, I thought that was cool. I was thinking, *All right, I'm not gonna get involved then.* Never did bother me much that Billy and Graham thought of the band as theirs. I liked thinking of myself as a drummer for hire. I was just trying to have a good time playing in a good band.

Graham: We started to play enough that some people around town knew who we were. And Billy was just starting to get into his lead singer thing. He had a look, you know? We all did. We stopped cutting our hair.

Billy: I wore jeans everywhere, got really into big belt buckles.

Warren: Graham and Pete started wearing these tight T-shirts. I'd tell them, "I can see your nipples." But they thought that was cool.

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Billy: We got hired for this wedding. It was a big deal. A wedding meant we were gonna be heard by, you know, a hundred people. I think I was nineteen.

We had auditioned for this couple with our best song. It was this slower, folkier song I'd written called "Nevermore." Just thinking about it makes me cringe. Truly. I was writing about the Catonsville Nine and things like that. I thought I was Dylan. But we got the gig.

And about halfway through our show at this wedding, I notice this fifty-something guy dancing with this twenty-something girl and I thought, *Does this guy know what a creep he looks like?*

And then I realize it's my dad.

Graham: Our father was there with this young girl, about our age. I realized it before Billy, I think. Recognized him from the pictures our mom kept in the shoe box under her bed.

Billy: I couldn't believe it. He'd been gone ten years by that point. And he was supposed to be in Georgia. That asshole was just standing right in the middle of the dance floor, no idea his sons were up onstage. It had been so long since he'd seen us, he didn't even recognize us. Not our faces or our voices, nothing.

When we finished playing, I watched him walk off the dance floor. Didn't so much as look at us. I mean, what kind of sociopath do you have to be not to notice your own sons when they are right there in front of you? How is that even possible?

In my experience, biology kicks in. You meet that kid, and you know it's yours, and you love that kid. That's just how it works.

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Graham: Billy asked a few people at the wedding about him. Turns out, our father had been living a few towns over. Friends with the bride's family or something. Billy was boiling mad, saying, "He didn't even recognize us." I always thought that he probably did recognize us and just didn't know what to say.

Billy: It messes with you, when your own father doesn't care about you enough to say hello. I'm not saying it was a self-pity thing. I wasn't sitting there asking, "Why doesn't he love me?" It was more . . . *Oh, okay, this is how dark the world can be. Some fathers don't love their sons.*

It was a lesson in what not to be, I'll tell you that much.

Graham: Seemed like he was a drunk asshole anyway. So good riddance to him.

Billy: After the wedding had ended, and everyone was packing up, I had a few too many beers . . . and I saw this woman working as a cocktail waitress at the hotel bar. *[Smiles]* Gorgeous girl. Real long brown hair, down to her waist, and big brown eyes. I'm a sucker for brown eyes. I remember she was wearing a tiny little blue dress. She was short. And I liked that.

I was standing there in the hotel lobby, on my way to the van. And she was waiting on a customer over at the bar. You could tell, just watching her, that she wasn't taking shit from anybody.

Camila Dunne *(wife of Billy Dunne)*: Oh my word, was he good looking. . . . Slim but still muscular, which has always been my type. And he had these thick eyelashes. And so much

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confidence. And a really big smile. And when I saw him in the lobby, I remember thinking, *Why can't I meet a guy like that?*

Billy: I walked right up to her, in that bar, holding, you know, an amp in one hand and a guitar in the other. I said, "Miss? I'd like your number, please."

She was standing up at the register. She had one hand on her hip. She laughed at me and kind of looked at me sideways. I don't remember exactly what she said but it was something like "What if you're not my type?"

I leaned over the bar and said, "My name is Billy Dunne. I'm the lead singer of the Dunne Brothers. And if you give me your number I'll write a song about you."

That got her. That doesn't get every woman. But it usually gets the good ones.

Camila: I went home and told my mom I met somebody. And she said, "Nice boy?"

And I said, "I don't know about that." *[Laughs]* Nice never did much for me.

Over the summer and fall of 1969, the Dunne Brothers started to book more shows in Pittsburgh and the surrounding towns.

Graham: When Camila started coming out with us, I'll admit I didn't think she'd last much longer than the others. But I should have known she was different. I mean, first time I met her, she came to a gig of ours wearing a Tommy James shirt. She knew good music.

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Warren: The rest of us were really starting to get laid, man. And Billy was taking himself off the market. We'd all be with chicks and he'd be sitting there, smoking a joint, having a beer to keep himself busy.

I came out of a girl's room one time, zipping my pants up, and Billy was sitting on the sofa, watching Dick Cavett. I said, "Man, you gotta ditch that girlfriend." I mean, we all liked Camila, she was foxy and she'd tell you your business right to your face, which I liked. But c'mon.

Billy: I'd been infatuated before, called it love. But when I met [Camila], it was something different altogether. She just . . . made the world make sense to me. She even made me like myself more.

She'd come watch us practice and listen to my new stuff and give me really good notes on it all. And there was a calmness to her that . . . nobody else had. It felt like when I was with her, I knew everything would be fine. It was like I was following the North Star.

You know, Camila was born content, I think. She wasn't born with whatever chip on her shoulder some of us are born with. I used to say I was born broken. She was born whole. That's where the lyrics to "Born Broken" came from.

Camila: When Billy met my parents for the first time, I was a little nervous. You only get one chance to make a first impression, especially with them. I picked out his outfit, down to his socks. Made him wear the only tie he had.

They loved him. Said he was charming. But my mom was also worried about me putting my trust in some guy in a band.

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Billy: Pete was the only one who seemed to understand why I'd have a girlfriend. Chuck, one time, as we were packing up for a show, said, "Just tell her you aren't a one-woman guy. Girls get that." *[Laughs]* That was not gonna work on Camila.

Warren: Chuck was real cool. He would cut right to the heart of something. He sort of looked like he'd never had an interesting thought in his life. But he could surprise you. He turned me on to Status Quo. I still listen to them.

On December 1, 1969, the U.S. Selective Service System conducted a lottery to determine the draft order for 1970. Billy and Graham Dunne, both born in December, had unusually high numbers. Warren just missed the cutoff. Pete Loving fell in the middle. But Chuck Williams, born April 24, 1949, was assigned lottery number 2.

Graham: Chuck got called for the draft. I remember sitting at Chuck's kitchen table, him saying he was going to Vietnam. Billy and I kept thinking of ways he could get out of it. He said he wasn't a coward. Last time I saw him, we played a bar by Duquesne. I said, "You'll just come on back to the band when you're done."

Warren: Billy played Chuck's parts for a while but we'd heard Eddie Loving [Pete's younger brother] had gotten pretty good at the guitar. We invited him to come audition.

Billy: Nobody could be Chuck. But then we kept getting more shows and I didn't want to keep playing rhythm guitar onstage. So we invited Eddie. Figured he could pitch in for a little while.

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Eddie Loving *(rhythm guitar, The Six)*: I got along well with everybody but I could tell Billy and Graham just wanted me to fit into the mold they had set for me, you know? *Play this, do that.*

Graham: Few months in, we heard from one of Chuck's old neighbors.

Billy: Chuck died in Cambodia. He wasn't even there six months, I don't think.

You do sometimes sit and wonder why it wasn't you, what makes you so special that you get to be safe. The world doesn't make much sense.

At the end of 1970, the Dunne Brothers played a show at the Pint in Baltimore where Rick Marks, lead singer for the Winters, was in attendance. Impressed with their raw sound and taking a liking to Billy, he offered them an opening spot on a few shows on their northeastern tour.

The Dunne Brothers joined the Winters and quickly became influenced by the Winters' sound and intrigued with their keyboardist, Karen Karen.

Karen Karen *(keyboardist, The Six)*: The first time I met the Dunne Brothers, Graham asked me, "What's your name?"

I said, "Karen."

And he said, "What's your last name?"

But I thought he said, "What's your name?" again, like he didn't hear me.

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So I said, "Karen."

And he laughed and said, "Karen Karen?"

Everybody called me Karen Karen from then on. My last name is Sirko, for the record. But Karen Karen just stuck.

Billy: Karen added this extra layer, a lushness, to what the Winters were doing. I started thinking maybe we needed something like that.

Graham: Billy and I were starting to think . . . maybe we don't need somebody *like* Karen. Maybe we need Karen.

Karen: I left the Winters because I was sick of everyone in the band trying to sleep with me. I wanted to just be a musician.

And I liked Camila. She'd hang out after the shows sometimes, when she came up to visit Billy. I dug that Billy had her around sometimes or was always on the phone with her. It was a better vibe all around.

Camila: When they went on tour with the Winters, I'd drive up to any weekend shows they had, and hang out backstage. I'd have spent four hours in the car and I'd get to the venue—usually these places were pretty sketchy with gum all over everything and your shoes sticking to the floor—I'd give my name at the door and they'd show me through to the back and, there I was, a part of it all.

I'd walk in and Graham and Eddie and everybody would yell, "Camila!" And Billy would walk over and put his arm around me. Once Karen started hanging out, too . . . it just cinched it for me. I felt like, *This is where I belong.*

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Graham: Karen Karen was a great addition to the band. Made everything better. And she was beautiful, too. I mean, in addition to being talented. I always thought she looked a little like Ali MacGraw.

Karen: When I said that I dug the fact that the boys in the Dunne Brothers weren't trying to get with me, that doesn't go for Graham Dunne. But I knew he liked me for my talent just as much as my looks. So it didn't faze me much. It was sweet, actually. Plus, Graham was a sexy guy. Especially in the seventies.

I never got the whole "Billy is the sex symbol" idea. I mean, he had the dark hair, dark eyes, high cheekbones thing. But I like my men a little less pretty. I like it when they look a little dangerous but are actually very gentle. That's Graham. Broad shoulders, hairy chest, dusty brown hair. He was handsome but he was still a little rough around the edges.

I will admit that Billy knew how to wear a pair of jeans though.

Billy: Karen was just a great musician. That was all there was to it. I always say I don't care if you're a man, woman, white, black, gay, straight, or anything in between—if you play well, you play well. Music is a great equalizer in that way.

Karen: Men often think they deserve a sticker for treating women like people.

Warren: That was around the time Billy's drinking seemed like it was getting a little over the edge. He'd party like the rest of us but when we all went off with the chicks we met, he'd stay up drinking.

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But he always seemed fine in the morning, and we were all kind of going crazy out there. Except for maybe Pete. He'd met this girl Jenny in Boston and was always on the phone with her.

Graham: Anything Billy does, he goes hard. He loves hard, he drinks hard. Even the way he spends money, like it's burning a hole in his pocket. It was part of the reason why, with Camila, I was telling him to take it slow.

Billy: Camila came out with us sometimes, but a lot of the time she waited at home. She was still living with her parents and I would call her every night from the road.

Camila: When he didn't have a dime to make a call, he'd call collect and when I answered he'd say, "Billy Dunne loves Camila Martinez," and then hang up before the charge kicked in. *[Laughs]* My mom always rolled her eyes but I thought it was sweet.

Karen: A few weeks after I joined the band, I said, "We need a new name." The Dunne Brothers didn't make sense anymore.

Eddie: I'd been saying we needed a new name.

Billy: We had a following with that name. I didn't want to change it.

Warren: We couldn't decide what to call ourselves. I think somebody suggested the Dipsticks. I wanted us to go by Shaggin'.

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Eddie: Pete said, "You're never going to get six people to agree on this."

And I said, "What about The Six?"

Karen: I got a call from a booker in Philly, where I'm from. And he said that the Winters had pulled out of a festival there, asked if we wanted to play. I said, "Right on, but we aren't called the Dunne Brothers anymore."

He said, "Well, what do I put on the flyer?"

I said, "Not sure yet but I'll get the six of us there."

And I liked how it sounded, "The Six."

Warren: Part of the brilliance of the name was how close it was to "the Sex." But I don't think any of us ever talked about that. It was so obvious there was no need to put a finer point on it.

Karen: I was not thinking about it sounding like anything.

Billy: "The Sex"? No, that wasn't a part of it.

Graham: It sounded like sex. That was a big part of it.

Billy: We played that show in Philly as The Six and then we got an offer to do another show in town. Another in Harrisburg. Another in Allentown. We got asked to play New Year's Eve at this bar in Hartford.

We weren't making much money. But I'd spend my last dollar taking Camila out whenever I was home. We'd go to this pizza joint a few blocks from her parents' place or I'd borrow money from Graham or Warren to take her out somewhere nice.

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She always told me to cut it out. She'd say, "If I wanted to be with a rich guy, I wouldn't have given my number to the singer of a wedding band."

Camila: Billy had charisma and I fell for all that. I always did. The smoldering, the brooding. A lot of my girlfriends were looking for guys that could afford a nice ring. But I wanted somebody *fascinating.*

Graham: Around 'seventy-one, we booked a few shows in New York.

Eddie: New York was . . . it was how you knew you were somebody.

Graham: One night, we're playing a bar over in the Bowery and out on the street, smoking a cigarette, is a guy named Rod Reyes.

Rod Reyes *(manager, The Six)*: Billy Dunne was a rock star. You could just see it. He was very cocksure, knew who to play to in the crowd. There was an emotion that he brought to his stuff.

There's just a quality that some people have. If you took nine guys, plus Mick Jagger, and you put them in a lineup, someone who had never heard of the Rolling Stones before could still point to Jagger and say, "That's the rock star."

Billy had that. And the band had a good sound.

Billy: When Rod came up to us after that show at the Wreckage . . . that was the watershed moment.

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Rod: When I started working with the band, I had some ideas. Some of which were well received and others . . . not so much.

Graham: Rod told me I needed to cut out half of my solos. Said they were interesting for people that loved technical guitar work but boring for everyone else.

I said, "Why would I play to people who don't care about good guitar?"

He said, "If you want to be huge, you gotta be for everybody."

Billy: Rod told me to stop writing about stuff I didn't know about. He said, "Don't reinvent the wheel. Write about your girl." Hands down, best career advice I ever got.

Karen: Rod told me to wear low-cut shirts and I said, "Dream on," and that was about the end of that.

Eddie: Rod started getting us gigs all over the East Coast. Florida to Canada.

Warren: Let me tell you the sweet spot for being in rock 'n' roll. People think it's when you're at the top but no. That's when you've got the pressure and the expectations. What's good is when everybody thinks you're headed somewhere fast, when you're all potential. Potential is pure fuckin' joy.

Graham: The longer we were out on the road, the wilder we all got. And Billy wasn't exactly . . . Look, Billy liked attention. Especially from women. But, at least at that point, that's all it was. Just attention.

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