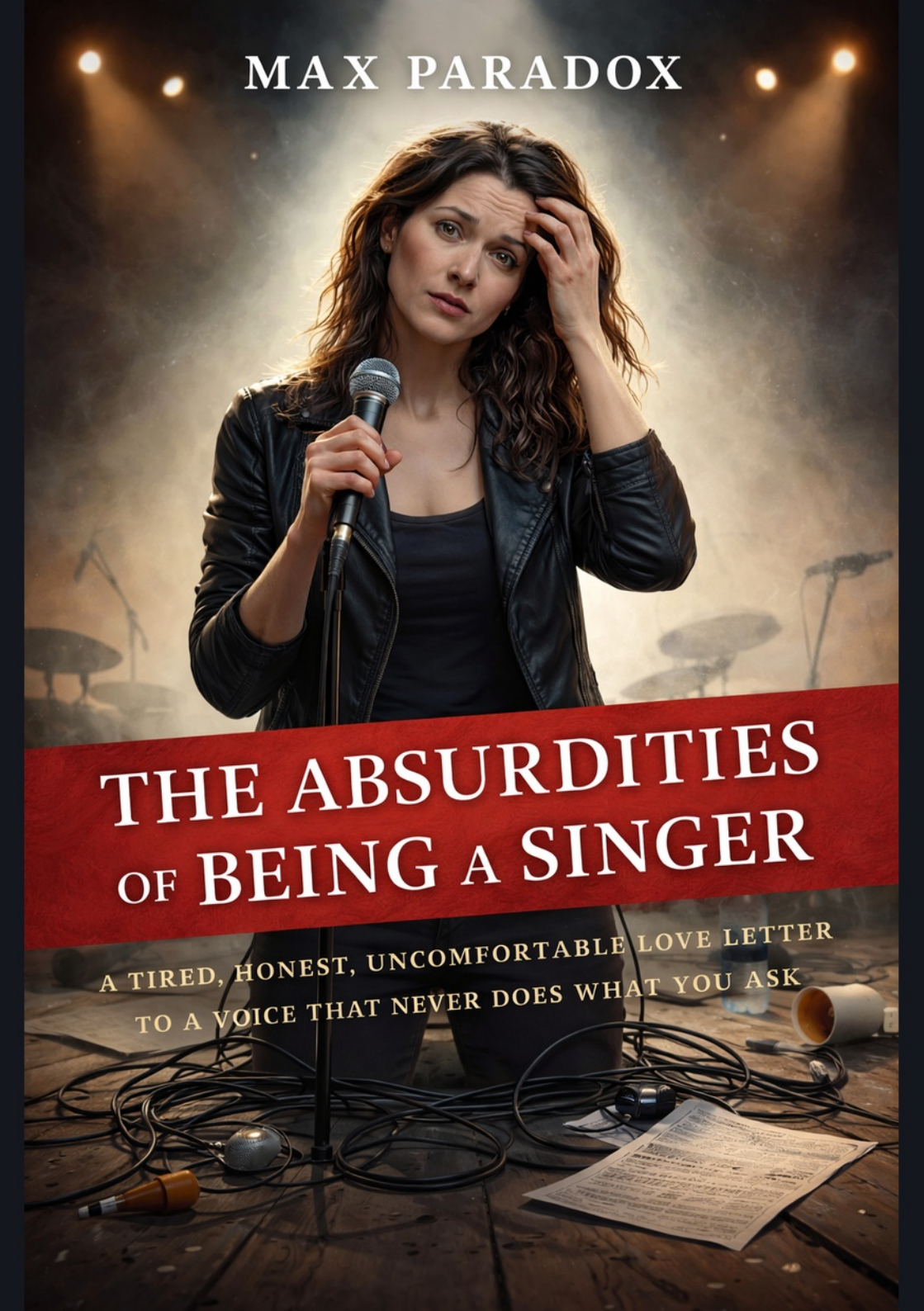




MAX PARADOX

THE ABSURDITIES OF BEING A SINGER

A TIRED, HONEST, UNCOMFORTABLE LOVE LETTER
TO A VOICE THAT NEVER DOES WHAT YOU ASK

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INTRO

Everyone wants to be a singer.
Until they become one.

From the outside, it looks suspiciously simple.
You sing.
People listen.
Someone claps slightly too long.
Money appears in mysterious ways.

From the inside, it looks like a long conversation with yourself
about whether this was ever a good idea.

Being a singer is not a profession.
It is a lifestyle disorder with a microphone.
A condition where your self-worth depends on sound waves
bouncing off indifferent walls and occasionally returning as
applause.

You don't wake up thinking, *"I am an artist."*
You wake up thinking, *"Is my voice tired or am I just
emotionally dehydrated?"*

- You measure time in gigs, not years.
- You measure success in reactions, not income.
- You measure failure in silence that lasts half a second too long.

The absurdity starts early.
Usually before anyone is paying attention.

You sing because someone once said you were good.
Possibly drunk.

Possibly lying.
Possibly your aunt.

From that moment on, you are trapped.

You will spend years chasing that first sentence.
Trying to recreate it.
Trying to prove it was real.
Trying to hear it again, but louder.

Being a singer means constantly explaining what you do to people who already decided it isn't real work.

- "So... what do you do during the day?"
- "And this pays the bills, or...?"
- "Have you thought about something more stable?"

You nod.
You smile.
You pretend stability was ever part of the plan.

Your voice becomes public property.
Everyone has an opinion about it.
Most of them didn't ask.

- You're too loud.
- You're too quiet.
- You sound better on that one recording from three years ago when you had a cold and low expectations.

You learn to hear yourself through other people's faces.
Through raised eyebrows.
Through phones that stay in pockets.
Through phones that appear immediately, but not for you.

Singing is the only job where people applaud and still don't pay.

It is the only skill people expect for free because it is "your passion."

- Exposure is offered instead of money.
- Gratitude is suggested as compensation.
- A beer replaces an invoice.

You start calling unpaid performances "opportunities."

You start calling exhaustion "commitment."

You start calling anxiety "stage readiness."

At some point, you stop asking if this makes sense.

You just adjust your breathing and go on stage anyway.

Because being a singer is not about singing.

It is about waiting.

Waiting for the sound engineer.

Waiting for the crowd to quiet down.

Waiting for your cue.

Waiting for your moment.

Waiting for something to finally click.

- You wait backstage wondering why you agreed to this.
- You wait on stage pretending you've always wanted this.
- You wait after the show pretending you're not counting reactions.

You learn to love applause while distrusting it completely.

You learn that silence hurts more than criticism.

You learn that compliments fade faster than self-doubt.

This book is not about music theory.
It is not about technique.
It is not about success.

It is about the strange mental gymnastics required to stand on a stage, open your mouth, and believe—just for a moment—that this matters.

It is about the absurdity of choosing a life where your instrument is your own body and your audience is sometimes the room, sometimes the algorithm, and sometimes absolutely no one.

If you've ever sung into a microphone and thought, *"Why am I like this?"*
You're in the right place.

And if you haven't—
You're about to understand why singers look tired even when they're smiling.

Chapter 1 – Everyone Thinks They Can Sing (Except You)

At some point, you realize something deeply unfair.

Everyone thinks they can sing.
Except the person who actually does it.

The audience is confident.
The relatives are confident.
The drunk guy near the bar is extremely confident.

You, meanwhile, are standing three meters from a microphone, wondering if your voice has always sounded like this or if it quietly broke sometime during soundcheck.

- You trust your voice the least when it matters the most.
- You doubt it most right before using it publicly.
- You analyze it like it personally betrayed you.

Singing professionally means living with permanent suspicion toward your own throat.

You know too much.
That is the problem.

You know how fragile it is.
You know how easily it changes.
You know it can disappear because of stress, air conditioning, sleep, weather, emotions, or a single badly timed sneeze.

Meanwhile, people who have never warmed up a day in their lives will confidently sing over you at parties.

Loudly.
Incorrectly.
With joy.

- They never worry about pitch.
- They never question tone.
- They never replay their performance in their head at 3:17 a.m.

They sing once, forget it forever, and sleep peacefully.

You sing once and remember it for years.

Because when singing becomes “your thing,” it stops being casual.

It stops being fun in the simple way.

It becomes observed.

Every note now carries consequences.

- That note sounded strained.
- That note was fine, but not *great*.
- That note will be remembered by exactly one person: you.

The audience hears a song.

You hear a performance review unfolding in real time.

And the cruelest part is that the more experienced you become, the worse it gets.

Beginners are fearless.

They don't know what can go wrong.

They don't know what they're supposed to sound like.

They sing freely.
Incorrectly, but freely.

You, on the other hand, are haunted by invisible standards.

- The version of your voice from last year.
- The version from that one perfect rehearsal.
- The imaginary version that exists only in your head.

You chase that version relentlessly.
You almost catch it sometimes.
Almost.

Everyone around you assumes confidence comes with skill.

It doesn't.

Skill brings awareness.
Awareness brings doubt.
Doubt brings control issues.

You start negotiating with your voice.

Just don't crack.
Just don't dry out.
Just don't suddenly sound like a completely different person.

- You drink water like it's medicine.
- You avoid conversations before shows like you're fragile equipment.
- You become socially distant for vocal reasons no one else understands.

"Why are you so quiet?"
Because I am preserving myself.

People assume singers love hearing themselves sing.

This is incorrect.

You tolerate it.

You monitor it.

You endure it.

Listening to recordings of yourself feels like reading your own messages from ten years ago.

- Why did I do that?
- Why did I sound like that?
- Why didn't anyone stop me?

Yet you listen again.

And again.

And again.

Because maybe this time it won't hurt.

It always does.

The absurd thing is that while you doubt yourself endlessly, others are completely unbothered.

They sing karaoke with full conviction.

They sing off-key with confidence.

They sing loudly and incorrectly and feel nothing but joy.

You sing correctly and feel exposed.

Because when singing becomes part of your identity, it stops being something you do.

It becomes something you are judged by.