

Behind These Eyes Such Sweet Madness Lies: (My Life On and Off the Stage) (Papa's Footprint) (Volume 2)

Brandon Roscoe Maggart

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Here, we have an eighty-one-year-old actor whose sharp memory and physical capabilities have begun to diminish. Out of necessity, he creates a stage beneath the proscenium arch of his brow and behind his eyes, on which he lives, acts, writes, paints, and makes love. Here, we have an intermingling of autobiography and metaphysical fiction. He thinks of this ability as something akin to quantum entanglement, meaning a nonlocal connection. Accuse him of self-mythologizing if you wish, but he creates his own work, holds soirees for his cast of fascinating and celebrated guests from times-past, and, he enjoys blissful intimacies with the beautiful, talented, and unpredictable actress, Vivien Leigh. In his own words: "I am able to revisit past performances on the legitimate stage, on the boards of burlesque, and in front of the television and film cameras. From here too, every day is a day for new and experimental work without boundaries. Each day, here, beneath the proscenium arch of my brow on this small attic stage behind my eyes, whether on canvas, parchment or by use of the spoken word; I attempt a work of art. If the work is to be theatrical, I do my own casting. If painting, I choose the paints and the brushes, and I do the painting. I am the sole arbiter of all productions, both the new and the revisited. I am unencumbered by any fear of stepping into uncharted territory. The stage is mine. Here is my realm. However, so far, I have been unable to lure the incredibly beautiful, Gene Tierney onto my stage. For reasons beyond my understanding, I cannot force my pen to write her entrance." Without having to use his Travel chair through space and time, the actor recalls and relates his personal history from, both, onstage and backstage, with Lauren Bacall, Carol Channing, Lynn Redgrave, Jerry Lewis, Soupy Sales, Tovah Feldshuh, Ronny Graham, Marshall Barer Howard Keel, Jane Powell, Leonard Sillman, Madeline Kahn, Jack Carter, dozens of others, and in private council with Athena, Goddess of Wisdom. He tells about his bizarre relationship with a famous guru to the stars. Although, an awardwinning operatic baritone, he confesses his winning of the National Hog Calling Championship. And, he shares tales of his own family of performers: the celebrated cabaret and concert singer, Maude Maggart, the iconoclastic, Grammy-winning, singer-songwriter, Fiona Apple, and actor, Garett Maggart. A sober alcoholic for the past 33 years, he confesses to his past excesses in the consumption of booze and the dancing of tantric tangos with the most desirable of women. "For performances, on this small stage behind my eyes, I call upon players, both the living and the previously-living, to inhabit these theatrical larks of mine. Most importantly, I remain a sympathetic and grateful audience for my own sweet self and my various productions as I trod the storied boards of my cherished attic stage, where quantum leaps abound." "In the midst of winter, I find within me the invisible summer..." Leo Tolstoy

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