

O Z

B Y L E W I S S H I N E R

THEY FUCKING RIPPED the joint. Ozzie bit the head off a white lab rat during “CIA Killers” and Toad threw a 16-inch floor tom into the audience. Three girls rushed Ozzie during “Bay of Piggies,” one of them with no shirt on. The cops had to empty the place with tear gas.

The goddamn reporters were mobbed outside. “Twenty-five years,” one of them shouted. “How does it feel?”

“Piss off,” Ozzie said. He was pushing fifty, still skinny and barely strong enough to last through a two-hour set. How the hell was he supposed to feel? “I was acquitted, remember? You know who did it. They all went to jail. All hundred and fifty of them. So leave me the fuck alone.”

“But why rock and roll?” another one shouted.

Because I was going nuts. Framed, beaten, tried, but never forgiven. Fuck you all, he thought. You got the greatest era of peace in the history of the world. No more assassinations, America out of Vietnam before it even got ugly, manned colonies on Mars. All because one reporter stumbled on the biggest conspiracy in history, with agents everywhere from the Mafia to the CIA to the Birchers to the goddamn Rosicrucians. All of them in Attica now, the ones that had lived.

But what about me?

“Why not?” Ozzie said.

“Lee!” another one shouted. “Lee, over here!”

“It’s not Lee anymore,” Ozzie snarled. “It’s Ozzie Oswald, nice and legal, got it?”

Then he was into the limousine, soundproof, bulletproof, the kind Kennedy should have had. He laughed at the crowd and held up his middle fingers. If I had it to do over, he thought, I *would* have killed him myself. What do you think about that?

The limo took him off, laughing, into the night.

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