



Memoirs of a Sword Swallower

Daniel P. Mannix

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Memoirs of a Sword Swallower is Daniel P. Mannix's autobiography as a sword-swallower with a traveling sideshow, illustrated with photos from the 30s and 40s taken by the author. An example of Classic Americana, this book offers a portrayal of a vanished world of working-class performance artists who earned a living by their unique bodies and imaginations. Stars include the Fat Lady, the human beanpole, the Ostrich man who ate broken glass, and many more. The "tricks" behind eating fire and swallowing swords are explicated with clarity and candor. This book will appeal to all who speculate about the outer limits of pain, pleasure, and revulsion. Mannix went on to become the supreme noir historian of the 20th century, penning *Those About to Die* (about the Roman games in the Colosseum), a biography of Aleister Crowley called *The Beast*, *The Hellfire Club* (about an upper-class British secret society), and many more. Mannix was sent a membership card from Anton LaVey's Church of Satan, although like Marcel Duchamp and Groucho Marx he was not a joiner, preferring to remain staunchly independent.

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