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# **A Devil On One Shoulder And An Angel On The Other: The Story Of Shannon Hoon And**



## Synopsis

One of the most tragic stories of the 1990s rock world was that of singer Shannon Hoon, and his band, Blind Melon. Despite scoring one of the decade's most enduring singles and videos, "No Rain," and a quadruple platinum hit with their 1992 self-titled debut album (in addition to touring alongside rock's biggest names), Hoon could not overcome a dangerous drug addiction. Only two records into a promising career, Hoon was dead from an overdose at the age of 28. "A Devil on One Shoulder and an Angel on the Other" is the first book to tell the group's story—culled from over 50 exclusive interviews (including the surviving band members and those closest to the band) and featuring many never-before-seen photos. "I am honored that Greg has painstakingly accounted for what the hell happened during those crazy times. He has summed up all the chaos, jubilation, and paranoia that is Blind Melon." —Brad Smith, Blind Melon bassist

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"People who know and love Shannon will enjoy reliving the moments chronicled. Anyone who didn't know him will certainly know him now. You managed to capture the personality of Shannon, the good and the bad, I'm thankful it was mostly good. Thank you for immortalizing my son in print."  
--Nel Hoon (Shannon Hoon's mother), letter to author "Probably as close as anyone outside the group will ever come to knowing our story, 'A Devil On One Shoulder' is an honest portrait of the Blind Melon experience as told by those who were there. A great read - thanks Greg." --Glen Graham (Blind Melon drummer) "Greg, you did a great job on the book, you captured so many

details. Maybe too many details. Ha! When my daughter is old enough, I will let her read it. On second thought, maybe I should let her read it after I am dead..." --Brad Smith (Blind Melon bassist)

"I was able to find out things that I never knew before. I really liked the perspective of having all the band's quotes basically in the timeline fashion. And also the perspective of family and friends from what happened. And from such a huge fan of the band, it also brought me back into my fandom. It made me go back to the records and I became an avid listener again of those records. It brought a whole new meaning and level to the records to read the book." --Travis Stever (Coheed and Cambria guitarist)"

"A Devil on One Shoulder' offers an unparalleled account for the many fans who were left bewildered by Hoon's untimely death." --subba-cultcha.com

"From its startling jacket image of Shannon Hoon standing on the ledge of a high balcony apparently about to step off, there's an air of melancholic inevitability about Greg Prato's excellent history of Blind Melon." --Classic Rock Magazine, December 2008

"I am absorbed by what already goes down as one of my favorite all-time reads... 'A Devil on One Shoulder.' I swear to you, it is a must read. I strongly recommend this. A killer effort." --Jeff Pearlman (Author, 'The Bad Guys Won!')

"Prato not only manages to gather the specifics, but more importantly paints a picture of a band and frontman possessed of brilliance yet troubled demons." --Under the Radar Magazine, Year End Edition 2008

"A Devil on One Shoulder' shows that Blind Melon was more than a one hit wonder band on some 'best of the 90's' show. It's gives you a real feel of what Shannnon really meant to music." --Stone & Double T WXRX, Rockford, IL

Greg Prato is a Long Island, New York-based journalist, whose writing has appeared in such renowned publications as *Rolling Stone*, *All Music Guide*, and *Classic Rock Magazine*. He is the author of several popular books, 'A Devil on One Shoulder and an Angel on the Other: The Story of Shannon Hoon and Blind Melon,' 'Touched by Magic: The Tommy Bolin Story,' 'Grunge Is Dead: The Oral History of Seattle Rock Music,' 'No Schlock . . . Just Rock!,' 'The Eric Carr Story,' 'MTV Ruled the World: The Early Years of Music Video,' and 'Sack Exchange: The Definitive Oral History of the 1980s New York Jets.'

A book of direct quotes taken from interviews is an interesting and admirable attempt to bring the reader an unfiltered account of Blind Melon's journey but doing so forfeits proper pacing and immersion. Many of the quotes are fragmented thoughts and incomplete sentences that pulled me out of the story frequently. I gave it five stars because this is the only book ever written about Blind Melon to my knowledge and Mr. Prato has my thanks for that.

I am generally not a fan of oral histories, but Greg Prato does a great job structuring this book to make it very readable and remarkably fascinating. I decided to read this after becoming obsessed with the "Soup" album for nearly a month, listening to it in its entirety everyday, sometimes more than once. This book really makes you feel as though you are a fly on the wall for the formation of the band, recording sessions, live shows and everything in between and even as Shannon's path is a given part of you still hopes the end will be different and it is the hope and passion with which Prato shows for his subjects and his understanding of the hopefulness of their recordings that give you a sense of hope where there is none. This is a wonderful, tragic story of a real band coming together with all their brilliant flaws on display and making some of the most powerful music of the 90s that was ultimately lost due to Hoon's untimely demise.

I have to say that at first I was a bit put off by the format. Interview pieces and quotes by the band and other people connected to the band, including Shannon. I was waiting for more of a storyline or timeline, but once I got used to how it was presented, I really enjoyed it. They were a great band that never truly got their opportunity to shine as brightly as they should have. Sure, they had a huge hit with "No Rain". I loved that song too, but it wasn't a full picture of what they really were or would have become. The book is a tragic story about a tragic man. Shannon sounds like a "magical" guy that touched almost everyone he met. I'm from the St. Louis area and played in a band before and during their rise to commercial success. They had a show at "Mississippi Nights" and I couldn't go because my band was playing at another club down the street. Sadly, our band played to a bigger crowd that night than they did. I remember thinking that it was a shame that everyone was missing this great band. After reading the book, it makes me wish even more that I could have gone to see them at least once. I never got the chance.

It is truly one of the most amazing books I have ever read. From the very beginning, I was quickly pulled in and felt as though I were there with all of them. Greg Prato is an amazing writer and I highly recommend this book. I truly did not want to put the book down and was sad it ended because I enjoyed it so much! I just wanted it to keep going! To be perfectly honest, it is a book that you could read several times over :) I would give it a 10 rating if I could. Thank you and whoever reads this, please read this book!!

As much as I wanted this to be a great book, it just isn't. The formatting is more like a list of quotes

from people who knew Shannon and although much of it is interesting it reads more like an interview run amuck than an actual look into this amazing musicians short life.

I could not stop reading this book once I started. I must admit at first I was a bit disappointed with the format, but as I started to devour the book, I became so enthralled with the first hand accounts that I now can't imagine the story being told any other way. This book is a wealth of information for any Melon/ Hoon fan. Everything was relevant and so well presented. I especially loved reading how the songs were written. I cherish the memories shared from Shannon's childhood friends, his awesome mom, his devoted girlfriend, the members of the band, and their lovely wives. I bought it on Kindle and I was very disappointed that there were no pictures. Other than that, I consider this book a masterpiece that I refer to often.

Not at all what I expected. It's a book of interviews with people who knew him, and it's all over the place. I love Shannon but if you ask me, don't waste your money.

Blind Melon, even 15 years after the death of their original singer Shannon Hoon, are absolutely still, one of my favorite bands of all time. Unfortunately with being a fan and not a close friend, I only knew them through their music and what I saw on tv, in magazines, etc. which was very limited and repetitive at best. That is until now. Greg Prato has poured his heart and soul into creating a piece of well documented rock and roll history for which myself and thousands of fans around the world are eternally grateful. On a closing personal note, after reading this book I will never listen to Blind Melon's Sophomore effort, "Soup" again without understanding or feeling all the love, pain, beauty and tragedy that marked this special time in music and I have Greg to thank for this.

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