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Because so many of you are constantly asking us to help you become a star, we are devoting the entire February newsletter to the introduction of **Volume Four, "Promotion"**.

But, before we begin, I have announcement. We have come across a super opportunity for two of you ladies. Susan Cooper, a friend of mine, is currently promoting a group of girl singers for record deals and gigs in the Los Angeles Area.

**If you live in LA, are between 14 and 18, are very serious about your career, have family support for a prolonged commitment to the group and will work hard, contact Susan at [firetrax@earthlink.net](mailto:firetrax@earthlink.net). Mention my name and she'll have you come to where her group rehearses for an audition. She has two singers already signed up and needs two more. You must be able to sing with power, harmonize with ease and move well! Please ONLY SERIOUS singers with the right qualifications mentioned above, should contact Susan!**

### **Volume Four - PROMOTION!**

I've decided to re-print the entire introduction to *Volume Four* of my Complete Singer Manual to give you some idea of what the volume contains. I encourage you to read the intro thoroughly and then, if you're still truly committed to becoming a singer, order the rest of it.

Okay, here it is... Congratulations! If you've gotten this far, it means that you are an accomplished singer and performer. You have original material, arrangements, costumes, equipment, a band or instrument you play to back you up. You know your music fundamentals, at least enough to know when the bass player is out of tune and by how much. You have been performing at local venues in your area and established a fair to good following of devoted fans.

If this is you, then you are now ready to begin promoting yourself for whatever it is you wish to accomplish next with your music. If this is not you, then you need to go back through my earlier volumes and come back to this one when you are ready for it. For when you are, that's when the hard work really begins.

As in earlier volumes, what I am giving you here is the benefit of my experience in the music business. I have made my living for over 30+ years in this business, raising 2 children and doing what I love more than anything else on Earth. If your interest is just to be famous and make a lot of money, you will probably not like much of what is in this volume, for I am about, always have been about and always will be about the love of singing rather than just the fame and fortune. Funny thing is that if you do what you truly love, the rest sort of falls into place. It may not fall the way you imagined, it might be better than you could ever wish for, or just different, but the thing is to DO WHAT YOU LOVE, and STAY IN THE NOW! As I have said many times, share your gifts and your life works! Keep your love inside of you and you go nowhere fast.

The key is BE, DO, and HAVE, because that's the natural order of things. For those of you who just want to HAVE without the BEING, and the DOING, well, the HAVING, if it comes at all, will be short-lived indeed.

Let me say right here that although my entire method of teaching, informing, and coaching singers is all about encouraging singers to stick to their vision and always believe in themselves, this volume contains some hard-hitting facts about the music business that you all need to know, but that you may not wish to hear from me. That being said, I suspect that many of you won't get through this entire manual before you throw up your hands in defeat and find another career. I may lose you as students after this, and for this I will be very saddened, but I wouldn't be much of a teacher if I didn't tell you the truth about this business of music. So even though it is my nature to be a warm and fuzzy cheerleader type, this volume contains the raw unvarnished truth of your chances for success. And some of what I say to you will be hard for you to take. I have tried in earlier volumes to get you to understand yourself as singer and performer, to prepare yourself vocally, mentally, emotionally and spiritually so that your confidence level is high enough to hear what I tell you in this volume. I am hoping that by now, you trust me enough to listen with an open mind and truly digest this material so that you can make the right decisions.

How to's - everyone, it seems, has THE WAY!

There are literally thousands of How-to type books, trade publication articles, and web sites that offer you advice on the subject of getting somewhere with your music, and many of them claim to have the answers. Many of these are offered free of charge on the Internet, and I will give you the addresses later on in this volume for you to check out.

This manual however, is from me to you and I hope, I pray, that this means, since we have been together for a while, there is a foundation of credibility in my words that you will not find in the other references written by total strangers. I can't sugar-coat something as serious as your future. I need for you to face certain facts, about you, about your talent, about your temperament,

and especially about your inner resolve and commitment, and then together we will get you where you need to be.

You all want to succeed. Of course, for many of you, success does not mean a record deal or a paid tour of Europe. To some of you, it might mean making your living as a local vocalist in the clubs and coffeehouses in your own communities. Some of you want to go to Broadway and star in a musical production culminating with a Tony Award. Still more of you want only for the church choir director to recognize what a huge talent you are and how much more devotion could be inspired within the church congregation if he allowed your voice to resound through the church every Sunday morning, singing a solo. And some of you just want to enjoy yourselves at Karaoke night, wowing your friends and family with your confidence on stage.

But let's face it! You all want your talent for singing to be broadly recognized, admired and compensated for - preferably in cash! If someone powerful in the music industry were to come to your town, and upon hearing you sing, promised you the world at your feet, you'd listen and be very VERY interested.

which brings me to my first story, (which many of you already know is a crucial part of my teaching method.)

Some years ago, I was singing in some of New York's hottest night clubs. They called them supper clubs then, and they were basically 4 and 5 star restaurants with a separate lounge, which offered live entertainment. My partner and I were the featured act. By the time we played NYC, we had built up our following by playing smaller clubs on Long Island and Queens to about 3000 genuine fans. We were able to go into a high profile club, boasting of our fan base to the owner, and command a high rate of pay because our fans would be assured of coming to this place to eat and then stay the evening in the lounge to listen to us, **and drink**. Club owners loved us, and we usually stayed in a club for 8 months to a year before moving on to another location, which we usually did of our own volition. The club owners were always sorry to see us go, and we were always welcomed back at any time. Life was good. We had steady work, making good money, and doing what we loved the most. We rehearsed constantly to keep our act fresh and up to date. We had the best sound equipment we could afford and learned new songs every week. We got some local press in Long Island, and our fans were growing every day. NYC was the big time, and we wanted to make the best of it, and we did!

The Promoter! A Wolf in Sheep's clothing?

One night, a very well-dressed man came into the club and sat up close to the stage. He was very attentive, applauding vigorously after every song, tipping generously whenever we played a request he made, and never missing a chance to tell us how great we were. He started coming in every night, sitting at the

same table, sometimes alone, sometimes with other people, and singing our praises to us and to whomever else was in his area. We started sitting with him on our breaks, to thank him for his continued patronage. He would buy us drinks and tell us how much he enjoyed us, and how wonderful it was for him that he found such a fabulous act he could listen to every night. He kept coming in for a month or more, when one night, he handed us his card. The card read, "Rick Cord, Talent Manager, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada." My partner and I just looked at each other, then at him.

"You're a talent scout for the Grand?" my partner Lenny asked.

"That's me." He replied and he took out some papers from his pocket.

"I took the liberty of drawing up a contract just in case you kids said yes to my offer. When can we talk?"

"Last call's at 2:45. We don't finish 'til then", Lenny said with wonderment in his eyes.

"Fine", Rick Cord replied.

"I'll wait!"

I still don't know how we were able to get through the rest of that night. Our heads were swimming with visions of Las Vegas success. You have to remember that before MTV and the Internet, before Indie Labels, the way to fame and fortune was through Las Vegas, and the MGM Grand hotel was the very best place to play in Vegas. And here was a guy sitting in front of us, listening intently to every song while cradling and caressing this "contract" in his hands, smiling, and applauding.

Finally, we sang our closing theme, and got off the stage to thundering applause. Rick had stayed and was smiling broadly as we approached his table. Lenny and I had been approached by so-called manager and agent types in the past. We usually listened to what they said, and could tell early on that they were, well, not what we would call "legit", so we usually shined them on. But this was different! Somehow, we both knew that our time had come, and that maybe this time, we were really on our way to greater success.

Everything about this guy exuded credibility, power and money! When we asked for credentials, he presented a notarized letter of introduction from the MGM Grand CEO, a union card of sorts showing him as a member in good standing with a national organization of promoters, talent scouts, and producers, several letters from thanks from people like Roberta Flack, Peaches & Herb, Gloria Loring, and Juice Newton, who had all had Number One hits on the Billboard charts. With each document he pulled from his briefcase, Lenny

and I became more sure of him, and when he told us of his plans for us, detailing a 12-week engagement in the lounge of the Grand, we knew he was genuine. We went through the contract line by line, but I gotta tell ya, that by the time we were reading it, my head was swimming with dreams bigger than I had ever dreamed before. 12 weeks in Vegas meant that I would make more money than I had ever made in my life, enough to last the rest of the year, and it was only March. I was a single Mom, and the thought of what this could mean for my kids was astounding.

An hour later, we had signed the contract, and decided to give notice to the club the following evening. Rick suggested we meet the next day for lunch to go over more details like costumes, lighting and sound, and to have an opportunity to change our minds if we wanted. We took that as another sign of his authenticity.

We sat spellbound in our favorite diner as Rick told us how it would be in Vegas, how we would arrive at the airport to a waiting limousine, and be driven to the hotel where we would each have our own suite of rooms to stay in for the duration of our contract, how he, Rick, would make certain that the movers and shakers of Vegas would always be in the audience to listen to our music, how he would make certain that we had our own sound man assigned to us, stationed in the lounge, to make sure we could be heard clearly in every corner of the lounge.

He talked as if we were already stars, detailing what the press kit would look like and say, how he would have to hire a publicity guy to take care of our promotional material. In the two weeks leading up to our last night at the New York club, all of our fans were showing up to wish us success. It was like one long party with well-wishers galore, bringing us gifts and cards. Rick was there too, every night, telling everybody that soon they'd be hearing us on the radio, seeing us on TV and on album covers.

Two days before we were to leave, Rick called Lenny and said the following:

"Lenny, my man! Had a bit of bad luck last night. After I left you guys, I was mugged on 34th and 9th Avenue, can you believe it? So, listen! Oh yeah, I filed a report, I'm not worried about it. I cancelled my cards and all that, but our plane tickets were on me, forgot to give them to you and Chrissy, and the damn kids took them, so listen, gimme your credit card number so I can re-book us on Saturday's flight and when we get to Vegas, I'll have the hotel write you out a check, okay?" Lenny told Rick he would have to call him back with the number because he didn't have his card on him.

He called me. "What do you think, Babe? We've come this far. I feel like he's on the level. Should I just give him my card number?" "How much is on it, Len?"

"Well, I got a 20K limit. I guess there's most of that left. You know how anal I am about paying my bills. So, whaddaya think?"

By this time, we were packed, we had costumes, new arrangements, we had taken our kids out of school so they could make the trip with us, heck! We were totally psyched for this chance. What do you think I said? "Sure, go ahead. You'll be reimbursed before the bill even comes in."

Saturday came. Lenny and I waited at the gate for Rick to show with our tickets. People were getting their boarding passes while Lenny and I chatted about our future and watched that our children weren't straying too far from our seats. 15 minutes passed.

No Rick.

People were boarding the plane, so Lenny decided to call the number we had for Rick to see if he was held up for some reason and if we should start thinking about taking a later flight. He came back from the telephone with an ashen face and tears welling up in his eyes.

"What?" I asked, with dread in my voice. "I don't even know how to tell you this, Babe. The number I called was disconnected, so I called the Grand to try and locate Rick, thinking that he was in touch with them and if he were hung up somewhere, they would know and tell me what to do next." His voice trailed off.

"And?" I insisted, my own voice starting to crack with fear. "Babe, they never even heard of Rick Cord! They never heard of us! We are NOT booked into the Grand Hotel for the next 12 weeks. They do not employ scouts to go out and find talent. That's not how they do business."

He was weeping openly now, as was I. "And to really stick the knife in further, I called my credit card company and found out that there's less than \$1000 left on the card." "Oh God! So you reported it stolen, right?" "Well of course. But do you get it? We're not going to Vegas. We were taken."

I will never forget the drive back to Long Island from LaGuardia. Lenny and me, Lenny's wife Karen, and 5 kids all asking questions at once. We were so devastated we couldn't even answer them. We just rode in silence. When they dropped me and the kids off at my house, Lenny said, "I'll call the club and see if we can get our gig back. If they haven't booked anyone in yet, maybe we could start on Tuesday. If they have, then we'll have to call the Sal, (A booking agent in town) and see if he can find us something! And fast!" I nodded and walked back into the house, my hopes and dreams shattered!

The Moral of this story?

I don't tell you this story for sympathy or to relive an absolutely awful experience in my career as a singer. I tell it because I want you to be aware of people out there who will tell you anything you want to hear and then rob you blind, delivering nothing of what has been promised. And I tell it because you need to know that there is nothing for you in this business without hard work, dedication and **HANDS-ON INVOLVEMENT IN THE BUSINESS OF YOUR MUSIC!**

And hopefully, since we have this online relationship and you've been listening to me talk to you for many months now, you believe that I would not tell you untruths, or paint an unrealistic picture of the way it really is out there.

Lenny and I never saw Rick again. We found other work, and our fans came by the droves to show us their love and devotion to our music, and after many months, we got over our humiliation. We also learned a big lesson that maybe you already know, and maybe you don't.

The lesson is ALWAYS VERIFY! In this volume, aptly named "Promotion", I will give you the tools to NEVER find yourself standing at the gate waiting for someone you hardly know to take you to your dream. It will be YOU who takes you, all the way, because you will know what you must know about the business to make all the right moves and decisions.

Oh, and one more thing. If you've been to the website recently, you see that **we are no longer "selling" Volumes 1, 2 and 3.** We have decided to give those to you for nothing so that you can prepare yourselves vocally and musically, with complete confidence in your product. YOU!

Now it is time to SELL it! If you have reached that place where you are satisfied with your voice, your performance skills, your musicianship, your charts and costumes, if you have a strict regimen of practicing and rehearsing new material, if you don't spend your time in the fast lane of drinking and doing drugs, ('cause that'll get you nowhere fast), then you are ready to begin the truly difficult work of promoting yourself to success.

This part is not fun, and you will be tempted to let someone else handle it! DONT! Just watch "**Behind the Music**" any night and see how many talented people came on the scene and vanished as quickly for lack of basic business sense.

Okay, it's time for hard truths. Have I sufficiently discouraged you yet? Are you cursing me yet? Are you re-thinking your career choices? If you answered "NO" to all three questions, then you are one of the special few who can really succeed, and all I want is to help you do it!

Volume Four, "Promotion" is in a process of constant revision to keep up with the changes in the music business, and the final revision is slated for completion by the end of February, but we are taking orders immediately! The cost of Volume

Four is \$24. Your purchase will automatically put you on the list to get every single update to Volume Four that we write. Why don't we just give this volume away as with the earlier ones? Because if you're serious, really really serious, then you'll make this investment in yourself and your music!

email: [voiceguru@singyourlife.com](mailto:voiceguru@singyourlife.com)

web: <http://www.singyourlife.com>