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STJEPAN JURAS

Stjepan Juras
666 DAYS WITH THE BEAST

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STJEPAN JURAS

666 DAYS WITH THE BEAST

AN EPIC BATTLE FOR PAUL D'ANNO, WITH ALL THE HIGHS AND LOWS

Zadar, December 2024

**HIGHLY CUSTOMISED,
LIMITED EDITION**

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PRE-WORD

Though Paul Di'Anno has passed away, his star shines brighter than ever and his legend will live on. By chance, I received the first test copy of this book on the very day of Paul's death. This was a book that Paul had eagerly desired and, at the same time, greatly feared. I had already explained to him that I would not be giving the readers some fairy tale or embellished biography, but rather they would see the naked truth. Some parts they would read with a heavy heart and tears in their eyes. It was my desperate attempt to use this book to snap Paul out of the fantasy world in which he had lived. I thought that the only way I could help him was by showing the truth to everyone; to show him that the time for excuses was over and that, if he really wanted to walk, he had to accept the facts. He would have to change his life habits; he had to listen to his friends and doctors and stop being the Paul that he had become. But Paul wasn't ready for that. Maybe he thought that he would lose the most important thing, his true self. Apart from the music of course, Paul was known for always being himself, an unbridled, unpredictable and untameable rebel. After his death, I didn't change a single word of this book, because that would have been dishonest to both the reader and to Paul's memory. It remains exactly the same, as a lasting record of an eternal legend and one of the creators of heavy metal music.

In the music world, it is completely unheard of for a manager to write a book about an artist he is still managing, as it is clear that in doing so, the manager will be getting into dangerous waters that could damage their personal and professional relationship or even escalate matters to a dangerous level.

Paul Di'Anno is the essence of everything that could be categorised under the label of a rock and roll/punk/metal rebel, and in today's world, there are fewer and fewer true wild legends of the old school. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to read dozens of biographical books full of incredible stories that, besides the music and accompanying iconography, form the very fabric of rock and roll, giving it its rebellious and untamed soul. However, it is often very questionable how much of all those stories are based on truth and how much are folklore and PR fabrications intended for better sales. I write this to you because this story is so incredible, strange

and scandalous that it's impossible to make up. You will often find yourself asking, "Did I really read this?" but the more you read, the more you will become part of this story yourself and start to experience the same stress and euphoria that I lived through all those days. At times, you will begin to question both mine and Paul's decisions, as well as the decisions of doctors, promoters and therapists, perhaps contemplating what you would have done in that situation and how you would have reacted.

Writing this book has put me in a position where I could be characterised as a backstabber and a person whose story delivers a death blow to a music legend who is already down on his knees. However, I believe that this book is the only and final way to help Paul Di'Anno. Throughout these three years, whenever we had any arguments, none could ever be resolved verbally, as every conversation would be doomed to failure, denials and a quick ending that solved nothing. Because of that, I started resorting to sending messages, knowing that at least they would be read. I did achieve some success this way. Therefore, I hope that Paul will read this book from start to finish (even though he has told me that someone else will do that for him), because only then will he fully understand the root of his recovery issues and what he needs to do to finally walk and end his career in magnificent style.

All of you who have ever had to care for a disabled person or are yourself disabled know very well that the world most of us live in is actually different and much crueler for them. And that those who have never found themselves in that situation, no matter how hard they try, will never fully understand it. Before I started working with Paul, I had never had a disabled person in my family, among close friends or even acquaintances. Despite knowing that life must be tough for them, I could not grasp how truly hard and cruel the world surrounding them is. All the aids they need are intentionally very expensive, taxi services for them are at least three times more costly, as are accessible hotel rooms. The world we live in is minimally or not at all adapted for them and they face thousands of daily problems that we don't perceive or can't comprehend (like reaching for something off a table, transferring onto a bed, going to the bathroom or overcoming a few steps). Entering that world of severe physical and mental suffering, I too found myself caught in a whirlpool that seems almost impossible to escape. I hope we can all learn something from this story.

WARNING!

Dear readers, my name is Stjepan Juras. For all of you reading one of my books for the first time, let me say a few words about myself. I'm known in the Iron Maiden community as the author and publisher of more than 20 books exclusively about Iron Maiden, their music, members of the band and the people who surround them. In an extraordinary set of circumstances, which I'll be describing in this book, in mid-2023 I became the manager of Paul Di'Anno, the legendary British singer who was the vocalist on Iron Maiden's first two albums and their debut vinyl EP 'The Soundhouse Tapes'.

You can purchase my books (in special hardcover editions) or download them for free in PDF format from www.maidencroatia.com, and for everything about Paul Di'Anno you can visit www.pauldianno.co.uk and the linked social media pages there.

Although this book and its sequel will be mostly about Paul Di'Anno and his life from the end of 2021 to the release of the final book, this is not his biography nor do I attempt to pass it off as such. This book is about me and my life, and all the changes that have happened since the dark and rainy afternoon in November 2021, when I shook hands with Paul and said, "My name is Stjepan, and I'm honoured to represent all the good people around the world who have given you a chance at a new life. I'll do everything in my power to live up to our collective expectations for you to get back to life, back on your feet, and spend many more years bringing us joy from the stage." I'm not sure if Paul was even listening to me in that moment due to his condition, or if my words just went in one ear and out the other, but looking back, I can safely say I had no idea what I was getting myself into. In those early days, everyone involved believed it was a matter of no more than a month's stay in Zagreb, Croatia for a routine knee replacement surgery. Only now do I see that in that moment, my life was irrevocably changed.

As logistical preparations were underway for Paul's arrival in Croatia, following months of planning, I was as yet unaware that I would become a first-time father in mid-2022 to a little girl called Iris. And it was absolutely not on my radar that I'd become Paul's booking agent in the same period, with the offer to become his full-time manager coming in July 2023. Many things have happened to me in the last couple of years; some people don't see as much in a lifetime.

After a nearly decade long break, Paul Di'Anno returned to the world stage with an incredibly emotional show in Zagreb, following which he's performed more than a hundred shows in Europe, North and South America and Australia (and calls from every continent continue to pour in). He's recorded and released a new album with his band, Paul Di'Anno's Warhorse, released a Best of album too and he's once again become a central figure featuring in the world's biggest hard rock and metal media.

All those of us who are involved in the music business in one way or another have spent lifetimes dreaming of gigs in cities like London, Paris, Milan, Rio, Santiago, Sydney, Melbourne, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, LA, New York and Tokyo; of passionate fans, paradise destinations, endless flights, crazy shows, backstage parties and everything that a wild life of rock'n'roll brings. Sometimes we don't know, however, whether we're ready for it all and to what extent, and often at the end of the story we ask ourselves if it was all worth our health, the effort and sacrifices we've made? In the end, all that's left are photographs, videos and the memories that somehow always filter only the wonderful, dreamlike side. As time goes by, I realise I remember only the nice moments, because life is too short and too beautiful to give space to bad things, distress and anger.

Not without reason, Paul Di'Anno carries a cross; the reputation he's had for most of his public life. Although an excellent, natural performer, with a God-given talent for singing and entertaining people, he has often been plagued by his demons, identified as an especially unstable personality, prone to unbridled rage, infantile sulking, manic behaviour, uncontrolled drug and alcohol abuse and very questionable interpretation of what could be called 'his own truth' in which he may well believe and believe fervently, but it

often doesn't have much connection to reality. Of course, I was only able to read about all these things in books, magazines and claims on social media before he came to Croatia for treatment. Prior to our fateful meeting in 2021, my only previous encounter with him was in Zagreb in 2009, when halfway through a show at the Boogaloo club, he simply decided to leave the stage and never come back, disappointing his fans. Not the most ideal moment for our first acquaintance, but that's exactly how it happened..



My first meeting with Paul, at the Boogaloo club, Zagreb, 2009.

That evening, not even a few minutes following a seemingly unprovoked and furious stage exit, Paul sat cheerfully on a couch, like nothing out of the ordinary had just happened. He had a beer and already carried a walking stick. He readily posed for photos with me, made a joke and chatted until it was time for a new fan. "Next!" he shouted, and I simply walked away. With that in mind, I truly didn't know what might await me before I decided to help Paul survive and get back on his feet.

I wasn't interested in what anyone had to say about him. What was important to me was that he was one of the heroes of my youth, the man who sang the songs that make up the soundtrack of my life, songs I grew up in and will die with, and now he needed help. Tours and concerts and travel were the furthest things from anyone's minds, because the question right then wasn't whether Paul would ever play again, it was whether he'd live to see another morning.

This book is my own story, a memoir written exclusively from my perspective, about coexisting with a rock legend, the posterchild of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal, and an icon who may not even be fully aware of the incredible influence he has to this day even among the youngest generations of headbangers. I'm fully aware of his significance. Ask James Hetfield whether there would have been a Metallica without Paul or ask members of many of the world's other greatest rock bands too, and you'll get a clear answer.

Paul Di'Anno isn't merely a vocalist. Paul is a lifestyle icon, a rebel who took the best of punk and merged it with heavy metal to make Iron Maiden's music fresher, more exciting and competitive. His accompanying unpredictable and self-destructive behaviour and character, which ultimately led to his being thrown out of the band, have stayed the same to this day and he'll take them to his grave. Paul Di'Anno isn't a faker, he's not a rock'n'roll poser who 'danced only for a summer'. This is who he is, immutable, raw, distinctive, explosive and unstoppable. Whether he's right or wrong, Paul Di'Anno will tell you what he thinks, and won't make it pretty, to you alone or in front of thousands of people. It would therefore be unfair of me to write this book with any kinds of brakes or limitations, or to try and auto-censor myself to emphasise just the cool rock'n'roll moments, to hide all the tough times, the nervous breakdowns, the personal conflicts and terrible situations that form an integral part of rock'n'roll moments. I can't hide all the tough times, the nervous breakdowns, the personal conflicts and terrible situations that form an integral part of this rock'n'roll story together with the beautiful and perfect things that happened during this uncertain and sometimes shocking battle for health and a new life. Paul's legendary, shining aura can only be more glimmering to fans once they read this book, because they'll finally have confirmation that this is

simply who he is and part of why we love him. On the other hand, we'll show fans that he's just a man like all of us with virtues and vices, good and bad days. He a man with basic needs, who longs for love and happiness just like the rest of us. Those of you who have never before encountered clinical depression or PTSD will have the opportunity to realise what tough and destructive conditions they are, not only for the person battling them, but also for those around them. Add to this the fact that the person is a heavyweight, confined to a wheelchair for years and irrevocably dependent on drugs, someone who was once a music star and on top of the world, and the suffering increases tenfold. Add still more, his many chronic vices and bad lifestyle habits that lead to self-destruction, a lack of money for medical expenses whether caused by his negligence or outside factors, and a constant rage against everyone, even those who are only trying to help, and you'll realise that the life of a rock'n'roll star is a far cry from what's served up to you on websites and social media.

I decided to write this book in order to give everyone who took part in the international effort to help Paul, an accurate insight into how terrible and complicated life with such conditions can be, with his diagnoses often being disclosed multiple times through the years by Paul himself. Despite the fact that many fans and friends played a part in this story, including the unique Kastro Pergjoni, owner of the legendary Cart & Horses pub, the birthplace of Iron Maiden, I've deliberately chosen not to involve them in this narrative or use their statements and opinions, because every one of us is entitled to their own viewpoint and stance. These are exclusively my own perspectives, thoughts, impressions, my highs and lows, my triumphs and trials, my joy and my tears and I want to present them to you on paper with no filter. It is therefore possible and probable that there are certain situations I experienced more intensely and differently to others, including Paul himself. Nevertheless, I've decided to back up every claim in this book in writing, photo and video evidence, and explain the causes and effects in the most transparent way possible.

I would be incredibly unfair to Paul, to myself and to you if I skipped a single moment or skirted a single fact. Therefore, I won't forget to praise anyone I worked with and who selflessly helped Paul on his difficult health journey. Nor will I forget to praise Paul himself for every nice and wonderful thing

he's done both for himself and for his friends, family and fans. Equally however, I won't spare Paul in this book and I won't spare myself. I will be honest and fair throughout.

I daresay that Paul and I have had a hot and cold relationship since the beginning, but one full of mutual respect. I believe we are essentially two completely different people, connected by a love and passion for music. During my youth, neither alcohol nor drugs were ever part of my sphere of interest, and I never spent much time with people prone to addiction or any of the problematic characteristics that Paul is known for in the public eye besides his music. I'm happy to accept that Paul can be a really nice guy but what I also noted were darker traits that the media have tied to his name for decades, and almost certainly not without foundation. Therefore, when there were moments on tour when the wild rock'n'roll party would get out of control, I preferred to retreat over staying and taking part, because things that may have been super funny for others weren't funny to me. Paul and I had a few crucial fall-outs; several of them in Croatia, one each in Chile, England, Greece, Australia and Argentina, of which the last was the biggest and most unbelievable. Thinking back on it, to this day I truly cannot fathom how I was able to keep my cool then and continue working with Paul (and vice versa). I believe Paul has his own story about each of these rows, his own stance and perspective, and his interpretation may be as right as any other, which is why I'm emphasising that this book is my interpretation alone of our life together and it is the only way you should take it.

Perhaps it is because of this, the honesty and unapologetic collaboration, that this weird mix can successfully work together. Through all of these years, I've seen many people who literally 'kiss ass' because of Paul's legendary star status, hiding their behaviour behind the mask of concern for his health while at the same time perfectly ready to join him in snorting a line. And when I throw it in their face later of course I'm the bogeyman, the party-pooper, and I'm the one who gets slagged off behind my back. I've never had a problem going so far as to tell him to, "Sod off," when I've felt it was necessary. I've never had a problem saying, "No, this can't happen," to some of the more ridiculous demands or to say, "No, you're wrong," when I've been convinced that I was right about something, regardless of what Paul or someone else thought about it. Some of these situations were very

difficult both for Paul and me and the people surrounding us in that moment. But at the end of the day, there comes a point when someone has to say something and stop floating in an imaginary world where everything is allowed and everything is sunshine and daisies. It's that thread that connected us, and I firmly believe that, in spite of the huge rows between us, it's what earned me his respect. I don't doubt that this book will be another example of the same. Of course, Paul will have full access to the text before it goes into print, but I don't believe he'll want to change a thing. This is the Real Paul Di'Anno, one of the last true rock'n'roll stars

He would know that any alteration would be a defeat for him as well as for me and for the kind of honest relationship I feel he rarely has with anyone. Paul's reputation before and after this book will be unchanged, moreover I believe it may even grow somewhat, as people will finally see the doors thrown wide open into never before explored areas of showbiz, a wondrous dance where the greatest heights of success are entwined with the deepest pits of public and private defeats. Regarding Paul's health and recovery, the only information in this book will be what's already public knowledge, whether it was reported in the media or by Paul in interviews and on his social media. Because above all, Paul is a human being deserving of dignity

Acting as his booking agent is tough. Acting as his manager is tougher still. But for me, the toughest aspect was always being his friend. I'm glad nevertheless that I faced these challenges with my family and with them, gathered the strength to write this book. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have supported my work over many years, for wanting to read about the last few years that I've spent with Paul. '666 Days with the Beast' is a memento of the best and the most challenging days of this unusual friendship, an ode to all the people in this world who give themselves selflessly to those who need help, and my small and humble contribution to the wondrous and never fully written Book of Rock'n'roll.

STJEPAN JURAS

I AM NOT AN ANGEL

One thing is clear. I'm not an angel, nor have I ever tried to be one. Angels, if they exist, are up in heaven and surely joined there by my friend Ian Schutz, known to many as Ian Man, who sadly passed away in early 2024 and who'll unfortunately never receive his ordered copy of this book. Ian was a longtime friend of Paul's, who also had a hard life and his own problems with addiction. But he got back on his feet, left it all behind and tried to help Paul too, however he was able; with donations, conversations and advice. Having been there himself and knowing it was a very tough journey he tried to steer Paul's thoughts in the right direction. We spent many nights talking and discussing how best to help Paul, and the more time passed the more Ian was convinced that Paul was aware that once his concert career was over, he'd likely be in for a long, difficult old age and a slow, hard death. Ian firmly believed, therefore, that Paul has been trying to commit suicide this whole time. This was something numerous other friends and fans had noticed and felt the need to warn me about.



Ian Man

He's going to die

Yes it's what he wants

Sad

I pray for God to help him

He should be happy how audiences worldwide love him. West Hans winning matches



He can walk if he wants

Every day, my conversation with Ian was harder and harder, as sent me screenshots of Paul's social media pages and commented on the statements, videos and photos he found there.



Ian Man



Paul is bitching about his pneumonia and smoking fags at the same time 🤔🤔

10. 12. 2023. 12:21

Silly



Death wish like we said yesterday

16. 12. 2023. 14:31

You find out about the Greece shirt ? Send my Paul figure

I'm pissed when he posts pictures drinking



Alcohol is a drug

I can send everything 19.12 when I am come back to home from tour

Steve must be pissed

Towards the end of 2023, it seemed that Ian was losing hope that Paul would ever change anything, and he slowly turned inward, focusing on himself and his own battles and goals for the remainder of his life, advising me to start focusing more on myself and my family, rather than making so much effort to help someone who simply didn't want that help.



Ian Man

We all need to pray for him

All we can do

He's a cat and his 9th life's running out.

I know the mental pain. Im never going to give up

It's selfish to give in



You're a good man

Reading the last words he sent me, you can feel the cruel hand of fate on an even deeper, more painful level.



Ian Man



My disease of addiction was rough too during Covid. Going to Vegas was a big help for me



My goal is going back to Vietnam

It is important to have a goal

Yes



I really want to say shit to Paul, I'm afraid if he'd do something stupid I'd live with pain and guilt

Ian was preparing to buy a plane ticket and fly to Australia (for Paul's then-upcoming tour), to talk to Paul face to face and tell him everything others were too afraid to say. He was afraid that, if he didn't do this, he would spend the rest of his life suffering and feeling guilty, eating himself alive if something happened to Paul before they had a chance to speak. Fate, however, decided differently. Ian, full of hope and with a wish to return to Vietnam, ready to spend the rest of his life in peace, enjoying music and concert trips, passed away suddenly and without warning, while Paul has continued to perform and tour the world. And that's life; you never know when the last seconds on the clock will run out. Once, in jest, I said to Paul, "Listen Paul, you're like a cockroach, able to survive even an apocalypse that would kill all the rest of us. As time goes by, it seems to me like we're all going to die of various things, and you'll outlive us by God knows how long and still entertain people on a stage." Looking at the situation with dark humour, I wasn't far from the truth.

That's why I want to reiterate what I said at the beginning of this chapter. I'm not an angel, and I'm not trying to write this book from the perspective of some kind of saviour. I have received hundreds of emails and messages that have brought tears to my eyes, where numerous people, known and unknown, have called me an angel and say there's not a person alive who would do what I've done for Paul and be as selfless and dedicated. Neither Ian nor I, none of us have been angelic in our lives. We're all human; we all make mistakes. And if we have enough strength, we learn from those mistakes and

make an effort to fix them. I've made many mistakes in my life. I've made a lot of wrong choices that have harmed both me and the people around me. As far as Paul is concerned, I think I was simply the right person in the right time and place. Every other fan and friend of Paul's, from all over the world, who helped in any way, is equally as deserving of thanks for his temporary reprieve and 'resurrection from the dead' as I am. Some started the fundraiser, some coordinated it, some amplified it and got more people involved, some donated, some helped with logistics, some gave advice, some gave just a few supportive words, but every individual act of help was unique and equally crucial. This isn't cliché or courtesy, but truly something that's difficult to explain, and the only way large projects like this can work out and function.

I'm not an angel and I can't be one because there were moments in some of our bigger disagreements when, even though I'd initially welcomed Paul with open arms, I told him, "Feel free to die, but leave me alone". There were many sleepless nights when I couldn't wait for him to move away, go home and end the torture. But there were also many beautiful moments and a unique opportunity to travel the world with a music legend. If I could go back and have the choice again to set off on this journey or not, even knowing how it would ultimately play out, I would still do it all again to help this legendary man find his way.



Determined to avoid self-glorification, as well as glorification or condemnation of Paul or anyone else in this story for all the successes and failures of this unbelievable journey we're still on and whose end is still unknown, I felt duty-bound to write this introduction and clarify my motives and their background before you read this book.

It's a completely open and unmasked account of how hard the paths are to both physical and mental healing, not only for the patient but the people taking care of them. The challenges and obstacles faced by people with disabilities, what depression looks like, the price of being a worldwide rock'n'roll legend, how fallen stars rise back out of obscurity and become relevant again, the planning and recording process for a new album, what a meeting with friends from the old days looks like, and many other things you might not even be ready to read or know.

Paul carries a huge burden of responsibility on his shoulders, the legacy of the NWOBHM, a music movement that was born in central UK and shone for a few years, galvanising the whole world. It was a movement to which the entire metal genre owes a great debt. And while we might all believe that we understand both Paul and his current situation, none of us ever can or will fully comprehend it. All that's left is to accept him wholeheartedly for who he is, or reject him outright. There's no middle ground solution.

Although this journey has been full of headaches and tough moments, I don't regret it and I'll be forever grateful for it. Moreover, I made this journey with my family; my then-pregnant wife and my now two-year-old daughter, with whom I've travelled the entire world, including a gig in Brasilia, from which I'm sharing the above photo of my family and Paul with some Hell's Angels.

Many famous musicians are also involved in this story, like Steve Harris, Bruce Dickinson, Gus G and KK Downing; legendary managers, promoters, journalists, producers, photographers and cameramen, and of course, the friends and fans without whom this story never would have begun, all of us united in a big, selfless and sincere love for music and a music legend who deserves it just for existing.

To the fans by a fan

NIGHT TRAIN, LOOPY EXPRESS

It was a cold, rainy day in November 2020, when I went down an internet rabbit hole and encountered a curious Facebook post. A fan had taken a screenshot and posted it on one of the Maiden-related Facebook groups. It was a post from Paul asking his friends, “What can I cook if all I’ve got in the house are lemons and spaghetti?” I was already aware that Paul was having massive health problems, and they were getting worse by the day, as fans often shared his updates, and since it was the height of COVID-19, we were all mostly at home, trawling the social networks and reading all sorts of things. When I saw that post however, I decided that I had to do something but as Paul used multiple accounts and changed them frequently, I honestly didn’t know which one to contact. I also knew that he doesn’t really reply to people he doesn’t know, so I decided to ask someone who knows him well to help me in some way. It wasn’t a hard choice. Steve Loopy Newhouse was a member of Iron Maiden’s original ‘Killer Krew’ and Paul’s friend. I contacted him the same evening and sent the following message.



Loopy Newhouse
Aktivno prije 18 min



10. 11. 2020, 20:34

[http://rockandrollgarage.com/ex-iron-
maiden-singer-paul-dianno-reveals-he-
hasnt-walked-for-4-years/](http://rockandrollgarage.com/ex-iron-maiden-singer-paul-dianno-reveals-he-hasnt-walked-for-4-years/)



Ex-Iron Maiden singer Paul Di'Anno reveals he hasn't walked for 4 years

accidentally, one of my friends is 5 times awarded the best doctors in croatia, specialized for this

private clinic

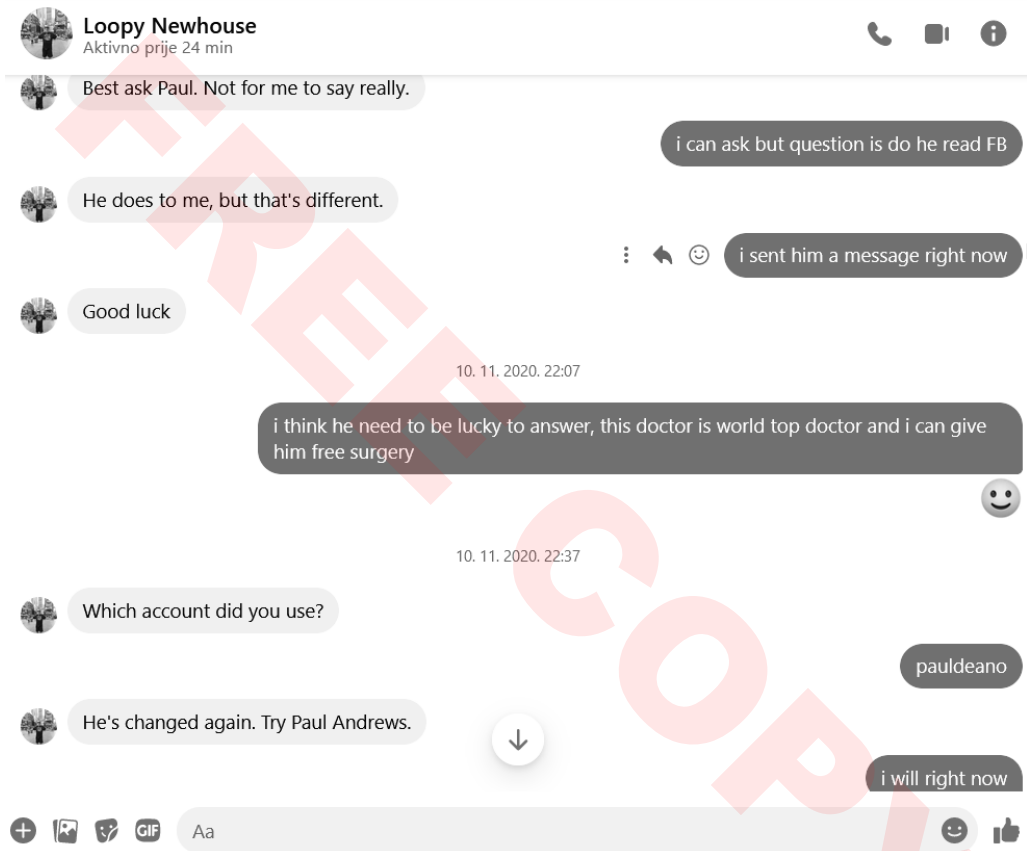
i can ask him to save paull free of charge if paul want

what do u think about this



10. 11. 2020, 21:12

A little nonplussed by my idea, Steve replied with what he thought was the most appropriate response.



Circumstances simply aligned and that's how it all began. My wife and I were doing PR for a private medical clinic (where Paul would later be treated), they were one of our clients as my wife owns Rhinoceros Media, a marketing, PR, photography, video and graphic design company. As a metalhead and a goth girl, she's a fan of some other performers like Alice

Cooper, Satyricon, Marilyn Manson etc, but she's always appreciated the classic bands like Iron Maiden and supported my mad fandom. One of those moments was during a family meeting when I asked the question, "What if I suggested we give up a salary for this year, specifically that we waive the yearly fee and benefits from the Ribnjak polyclinic and ask them to treat Paul Di'Anno and do his surgery free of charge? We could help him to walk again." My Violeta is a calm and wise young woman, she always puts our family and our future together first. She uses her woman's intuition and analyses the situation. In general, she makes correct, sensible and logical decisions, unlike me, the dreamer Aquarian, who very quickly gets carried away in altruistic and artistic imaginings and ideas. This time, however, she didn't hesitate to think even for a second before saying, "Yes, why not, why not help the man, since we're able to?"



Loopy Newhouse

Aktivno prije 13 min



Yep. Tell him I gave it to you because I think it's important enough. He might listen then.

thx.... i am really serous in this



I hope he sees it that way too.



because it is his life and i really don't want make a joke



If nothing else, it shows you care.

I am PR for one private clinic and my wife is official photographer for them

we have free of charge services

and we will do some free of charge jobs for them

so, i will work some time for free to help him

no problem for me and my wife

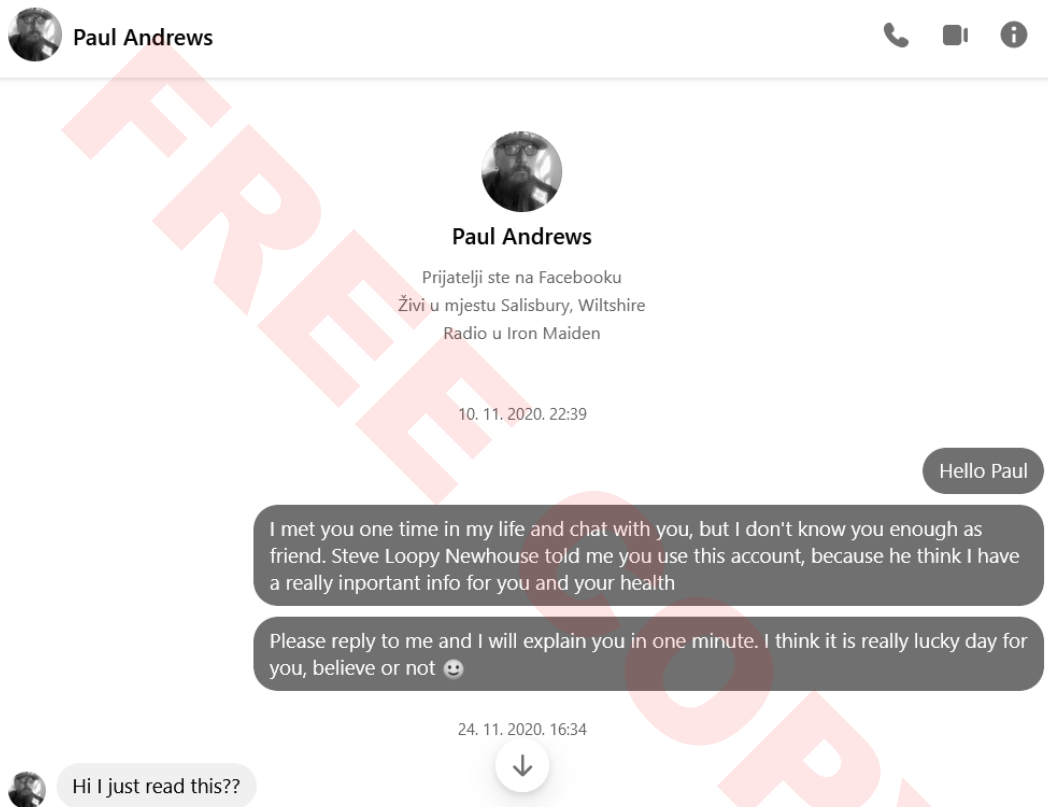


You see? The Maiden family grows bigger every day. Good man Stype.

thx... if i can, why not to help

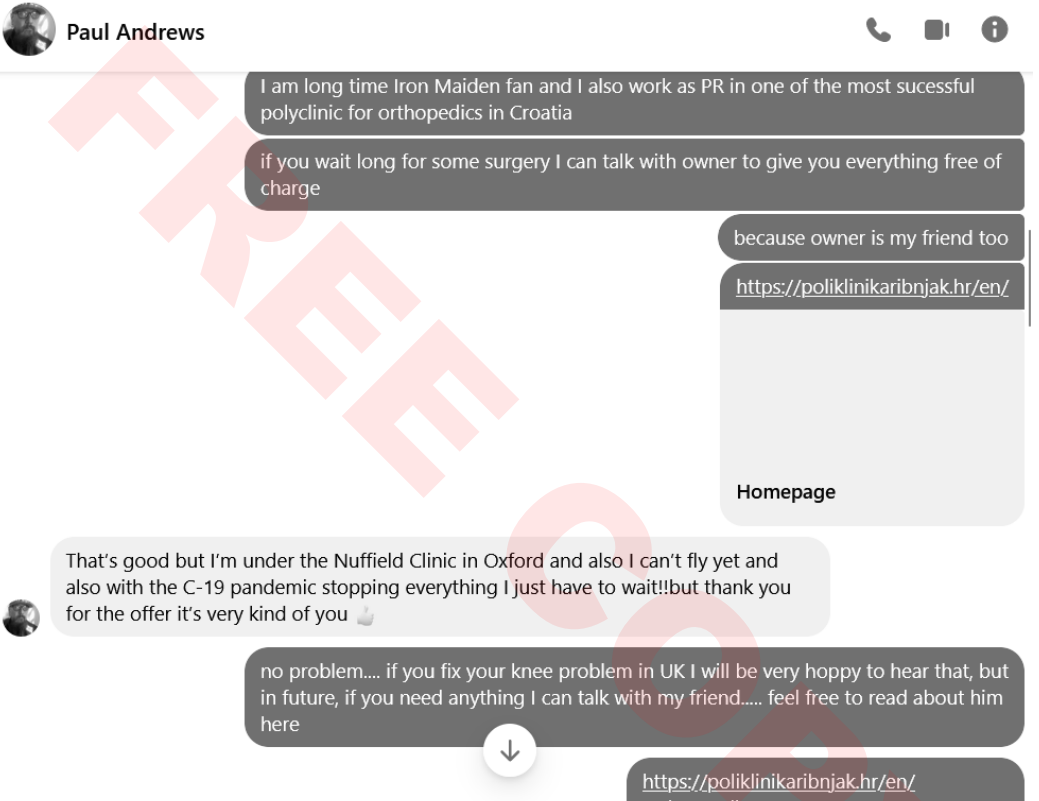


I contacted Paul the same night, finally happy to be able to make him an offer he simply couldn't refuse.



As you can see in the screenshot, Paul only saw and replied to my message two weeks later. If you've no prior knowledge of Paul's punctuation he often uses question marks after every sentence. This doesn't mean the sentence is necessarily a question, it's just something he does and something I've noticed a lot of Brits do. Keep this in mind for when you read some of the screenshots later in the book, where you'll see plenty of question marks where they shouldn't be.

Despite arriving two weeks late, Paul's response gave me the hope that things would now start moving, so I sent him more details.



As you can see, my initial enthusiasm that something would happen soon and that Paul would expressly agree to free knee surgery sadly didn't come to fruition. At the time Paul still believed that the situation with his leg would be resolved shortly at the clinic in Oxford and COVID-19 flight restrictions weren't helping either. While I believe these restrictions and difficulties could have been resolved, given it was a health issue there was another obstacle. No one believed Paul would be cleared to fly with his leg

in the condition that it was in. This turned out to be incorrect, since four years on, he's flown to more than fourteen countries on four continents. Also, at the time neither I nor anyone else really knew what was really wrong with Paul's leg. He simply claimed he needed knee replacement surgery. This is a fairly routine orthopaedic operation, not very challenging or expensive, and not requiring months of recovery. In fact, the situation was far, far more serious. Having kindly thanked me for the offer of help and free treatment, and mentioning the problem of his rotting teeth falling out, our conversation was very brief as you can see below, and he stopped responding to my messages after that.



Paul Andrews



Thank you I need rebuilding after my knees I got to get my fixed as they falling out from all the meds I had to take when I had sepsis to keep me alive it's been tough but thank you again best wishes to you 🙏



24. 11. 2020. 20:26

😊 best wishes and good luck

It's difficult to speculate how things would have gone had Paul come to Croatia a year before he eventually did. One thing is certain; most of the treatment, including at the Ribnjak polyclinic which ultimately had to be paid for, would have been free (or, my wife and I would have borne the costs by waiving the clinic's fees for our work). Also, the whole situation with his leg could have been resolved and fixed earlier, and better, with a full year's head start. Sadly, as you've seen, Paul declined the opportunity, for which I don't blame him at all, since in that moment he had no idea how he'd travel to Croatia, nor did he have the funds for the journey or the stay here, nor did he know me. He had no idea who or what I was, where bloody Croatia came into the picture, and how a place like Croatia could be better than what was available to him in Oxford?

Unfortunately, time brings changes and my wife and I no longer worked for the aforementioned clinic. We did however we remain on good terms with the owner and he was still prepared to meet us part way. In the event that Paul did change his mind, the clinic would be prepared to offer a good price, much lower than the same service would cost in the western world. Despite several further attempts on my part, there was no further contact with Paul until I joined the Facebook group that was started a year later to raise money because Paul's health had drastically worsened, and the now-famous photo with the plush giraffe went around the world and shocked fans, friends and people in the music business.





MISSION TO SAVE 'THE BEAST'

The summer of 2021 should have been a special summer in the life of our little family, filled to the brim with endless editions of my books and those written by my partners, as though I was churning them out on a production line. First, I published my long-awaited book about Iron Maiden's debut album and the famous 'Phantom Package', as well as 'Burning Records, Burning Books – Part 1', by my friend Erik Gustafson. So many copies of both books were sold that my wife and I spent most of the summer packing and posting them all over the world. Almost at the same time, we opened pre-sales on the second volume of Erik's trilogy, as well as the first of two volumes of 'Maiden Avenue', a book by my friend Ricardo Lira and published and distributed with my help. At the same time, my wife and I decided to completely renovate my birthplace, a house in a town called Kali on the island of Ugljan in the Adriatic Sea. We invested a great deal of money and energy in the work as it involved significant construction to be done. It was also the summer Iron Maiden fans battled each other to grab their copy of the band's 'Senjutsu' FC exclusive limited edition collectors' box. I also began to announce my future plans on social media. On August 29 2021 I announced that I'd started writing 'Virtual XI', the book about the 11th Iron Maiden album and that preorders would start on November 11 2021, with the publishing date planned in early 2022. I must note that as I write these lines, that book is still not finished. Just two days later, I also announced 'Charge of the Light Brigade', a new addition to my 'Iron Maiden and Classic Literature' series, which I'm happy to say has been released and I publicly started to speculate about an official biography of Clive Burr, and another interesting project I would title 'Book of Delays'; a rather apt title. Looking back on those days, such a packed schedule was nothing new for me; that's simply the kind of person I am, multitasking and publishing three, even four books in a year was my standard back then.

Kastro Pergjoni is the owner of the Cart & Horses pub in East London which is famous as the 'Birthplace of Iron Maiden'. I don't recall when and why I added him as a friend on Facebook, but I know that his first interaction with me there was on September 8 2021, when he commented on my 'Bring

Derek Riggs back' status and suggested that we should start a petition to get Derek Riggs back doing Maiden artwork. Derek Riggs, for those of you who don't know, is the legendary illustrator who created Iron Maiden's mascot Eddie and who painted some of their greatest record covers and other visuals. Looking up our Facebook friendship, I realised Kastro and I had been friends since 2017 and had a few interactions, mostly connected to my interest in the history of the Cart & Horses, and possibly wanting to write a book about it. I had known the pub's previous owner and I had the idea of a sort of full circle story. As the pub's new owner, Kastro wasn't involved in heavy metal in any way, nor did he know anything about Iron Maiden's music. He was a newcomer to the Maiden community and we should all count ourselves lucky that he wasn't one of those businessmen who buy pubs with incredible histories and sweep them all away with some new vision and business plan. There's an endless list of truly legendary pubs that have met this fate.

Kastro upgraded the Cart & Horses in a much more difficult, costly and risky way. Deciding to feel the pulse of the dying heavy rock scene in London's pubs and clubs, he made a long-term investment to breathe new life into his pub, to try to resurrect its reputation of old. Indeed, this was the very venue from which some London boys calling themselves Iron Maiden took the first steps of their meteoric rise to the world stage. Since then, not only have all the former members of Iron Maiden played there (Paul Di'Anno included), Steve Harris also made a triumphant return to it with two sold out British Lion shows and the club became a hot spot for many bands from all over the world. It's no longer important how small the club is, because getting to play a gig there has become a matter of prestige. Kastro and I have more than 1,500 mutual friends on Facebook, which isn't a surprise. He decided to connect with everyone in a smart manner, to learn something from everyone, and it's no wonder he added me and many other fans as friends and entered into communication. He was soon welcomed into the great Maiden family with open arms, which was one of the biggest catalysts for this whole story to happen. Keep in mind that in the moment Kastro took over the Cart & Horses, the London rock scene was far from ideal with all the dying pubs, and of course the cherry on top was the scourge that was the Covid-19 virus, which generated the ban on bars being open and multiple other aggravating circumstances which delayed the renovation

work and re-opening. This is approximately where the story begins, and I'll tell it only from my own perspective, because I neither know nor asked to know exactly how the ball got rolling to save Paul Di'Anno.

After that rainy November evening in 2020 when I decided to contact Steve Newhouse and then Paul, I have to admit I somewhat lost track of what was happening around him. Like every average fan, I knew he wasn't doing well, that he was in a wheelchair, that his career seemed to be over and things weren't just not looking good, they were getting worse. However, I felt that I had done what I could and I really didn't know what else I might be able to do, since Paul never got back to me following our brief online conversation. With the COVID-19 pandemic at its height, all of us were mostly in our own homes, spending most of our time at our computers, and it didn't seem odd when I noticed the rallying of a group of Paul's friends, led by Kastro, who started a crowdfunding campaign to raise money for Paul to have the knee surgery that was now needed more than ever. I'm not sure to this day who actually started the campaign but I assume it was Kastro (who has been an enterprising and resourceful man of action), together with friends of Paul. The campaign caught my attention, and I followed its course with interest. More and more fans were getting involved with the project and our Maiden community quickly showed how generous it is. I was incredibly proud and wanted to be a part of it.

If I remember correctly, the aim of the crowdfunding campaign was to raise about £25,000 for Paul's operation, so he could walk again. I should note that the information circulating among the fans was that Paul needed knee replacement surgery, and this confirmed by Paul himself multiple times. Looking at the amount in hindsight, it seems ridiculously small and infinitely naïve but at the time I thought it was unnecessarily high and I kept wondering, "Why does such a simple knee replacement surgery have to be so expensive?". With my basic knowledge, especially following my PR work for an orthopaedic clinic, I had the information that such an operation would cost around 50,000 Kunas (Croatia's national currency before we joined the Eurozone) and that it wasn't particularly complicated or difficult. At the time, converted to Euros, such an operation would cost an ironic 6,666 Euros, no more, no less. A new (old) idea started going through my head but

at the time I didn't mention it to anyone as I felt uncomfortable just pushing into someone else's project with ideas and plans of my own. As a fan and someone who always wants to help, I decided to join Kastro's campaign.

As I was promoting my two-book set, 'Iron Maiden' and 'Killers', at 100 Euros with shipping included, I decided to contact Kastro and offer a deal. There were 100 book sets available and I would donate 20 Euros for every set sold, and in order to boost sales, my idea was to ask Paul to personalize every book set with a special autograph card. Kastro was delighted to accept of course because every Euro was welcome. He contacted Paul and arranged the signing, which you can see in the photo on page 26 of this book. We announced the offer on September 9, 2021, a symbolic night in many respects. We didn't know it at the time, but Violeta and I conceived our little Iris, born in mid-June 2022. As you can see from the screenshot, all 100 book-sets were sold within a month. Thus we (with the help of all of you) donated 2,000 Euros to Paul.



Screenshot of my web pre-sale.



Stjepan Juras

9. rujna 2021. · 🌐

...

Dear fans

We were given a special opportunity to announce the release of a book set with two books 'Iron Maiden' and 'Killers' which will have a special dedication and signature by legendary Iron Maiden singer Paul Di'Anno. These two books cover the period of recording and publishing the first two, the legendary albums of Iron Maiden, as well as the period of accompanying tours. On 512 pages you will be able to find out many things that have never been discovered before, and with your purchase you will do a good deed. The purchase will help Paul during his stay in Croatia and his rehabilitation. Although both books have long been sold to many fans, I believe there are still those who want to have Paul's signature and dedication and who will gladly buy the book and help Paul in his life's battle. Paul Di'Anno will sign a special certificate for all who in this way helped raise money for his operation and with each signature comes a dedication. When this book set is sold out, all your details will be sent to Paul for signature, so we will start sending all the books to customers on October 31st. 2021, when Paul sends us everything back. This is a unique opportunity to get Paul's signature and do a good deed, with which you will help him significantly. Buy this special book here: www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno **Sažmi**

— s **Kastrom Pergonijem.**

continue as Paul's new original band to work on their self-titled debut album. When Hrvoje invited Violeta and I for a wonderful holiday, neither he nor I could have imagined how our lives were about to change; I would go on to become Paul Di'Anno's manager and travel the world with him and he would play in a band with him. Even now, it sounds unbelievable when I think of it and if anyone had told us then, we'd have laughed at them and said they were delirious. However, fate and God showed us they had other plans, like many times in the past. At that time though, Hrvoje and I had business plans to discuss regarding his previous band, Rapid Strike.

Although my memory is whispering that I suggested to Kastro that Paul should come to Croatia after I joined the fundraiser, this screenshot belies that and it seems we spoke about it much earlier, probably while Violeta and I were in Dubrovnik. Circumstances had aligned in the summer of 2021 that two of my friends invited my wife and I to be guests at their holiday apartments, to spend the late summer in peace and quiet, relaxing in the sea and sun, without excessive use of mobile phones and computers. Firstly, Hrvoje Madiraca invited us to stay in a beautiful apartment on Lastovo, one of the furthest southern islands in the Adriatic. And if my friend's name sounds familiar to you, that's because Hrvoje is a guitarist and founding member of the band Warhorse, which less than a year later would record and release their debut DVD single 'Stop the War' and

Following a week-long sojourn on beautiful Lastovo, another one of my friends and a great Iron Maiden fan, Vlaho Bogoje, invited Violeta and I to spend a week in one of his apartments in Dubrovnik. We took the ferry from Lastovo back to Split, where yet another Maiden fan and the best man at my wedding, Toni Bulić, had been looking after our car, and then drove straight to Dubrovnik. Toni, Vlaho and I are true 'Blood Brothers', and I'm naming them deliberately, because they're important to this story. Those moments on Lastovo and in Dubrovnik were definitely the best end to a summer I've ever had. My wife, Violeta and I were happy, relaxed and refuelling our batteries for new things to come. I had no idea that the new things would turn out to be Paul Di'Anno and our first child.

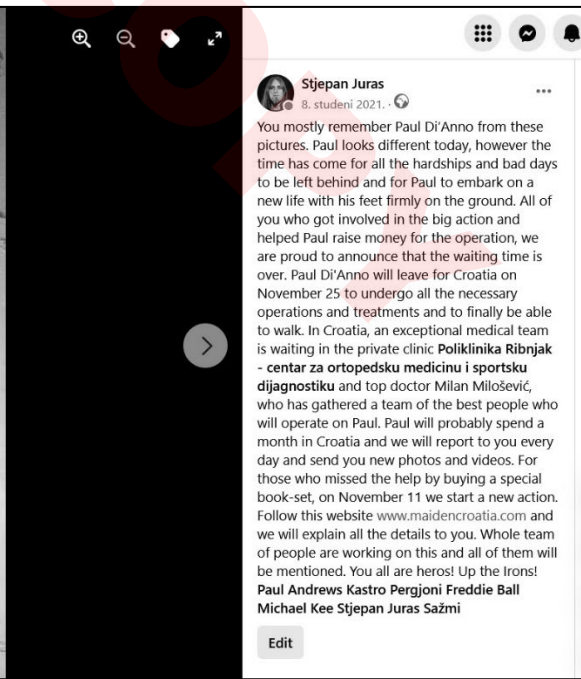


This photo in the pool, with cocktails in our hands on the final day in Dubrovnik, marks the last carefree day in our relationship before the start of the great battle to save Paul. It took me a long time to scroll back through all my Facebook messages with Kastro and recall how it all really began, but ultimately it was quite simple. In a series of Facebook messages and calls, I explained who I was and my relationship to the clinic and its owner, who was also its head surgeon. We discussed the prices for the knee surgery.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

From an initial 6,666 Euros we thought the total cost would rise to around 10,000, with the initial appointments and preparation and so on. We soon realised the surgery would cost at least several times as much in the UK, and as a sensible businessman, Kastro made the decision that Croatia was the ideal solution. Of course, he would first have to consult Paul and his friends, who were also involved in the campaign.

Given that we were all told, Paul included, that he only required a knee replacement, we were all convinced that one operation would permanently change his life and that Paul's stay in Croatia, should he decide to have the surgery here, would be brief. At most we thought he'd need a week before (to prepare and have the necessary tests pre-op) and a couple of weeks post-op so Paul could begin the crucial and very needed rehabilitation process of re-learning how to walk, aided by physiotherapists. He would then return to the UK and continue the rehabilitation program with a private physiotherapist. With £25,000, we thought we had more than enough to cover all the costs and were very happy that we'd managed to organise it. We reckoned that Paul would then spend the remaining funds when he returned to the UK on his rehabilitation. I was absolutely not prepared physically, mentally or logistically, for him to spend more than two or three weeks at the most in Croatia.



Soon, the time came for us to announce this big step, which I did on Facebook as you can see in the previous photo. In the meantime, Kastro and I exchanged hundreds of calls and messages, making all the arrangements down to the tiniest detail. I also introduced him to the doctor who owns the clinic and would be performing Paul's surgery. Of course, Paul would need to be in a care home during his stay in Croatia. In his condition he wouldn't be able to live in an apartment or hotel and he needed practically round the clock care. Paul, however, had some specific demands some of which were very difficult to arrange at short notice. He required staff who spoke English, which was reasonable, as well as internet access, cable TV showing English channels and West Ham United matches, and if he had to be in a care home, he wanted a single room to himself. There are several reasons something like this was difficult to organise. Private care homes are generally fully booked months, even years in advance, there are waiting lists, and single rooms are a hard to come by luxury. Add to this the fact that Paul would require the daily services of an adapted van with a driver in order to get from the care home to the clinic for treatment and appointments. Something like this was quite hard to arrange, but after days of endless phone calls, emails and meetings, we finally managed to arrange everything.

With all the new and totally unpredictable costs accumulating day in, day out, my thought was, "God, just so long as he doesn't stay in Croatia longer than planned, because if he stays longer than three weeks, with all these additional costs, not only will we blow through the money that's been raised but we'll end up in debt." I realised that for all our careful planning, the fundraised amount could quickly melt away.

The next conundrum was how to transfer Paul to Croatia? No one from our team had experience of working with people with disabilities, and we were all worried at the idea of Paul flying. I remember spending days googling the terms and conditions of all the airlines flying to Croatia and calling numerous travel agencies to ask about their experiences. Everyone I asked waved me off and said it would be impossible, that the crew

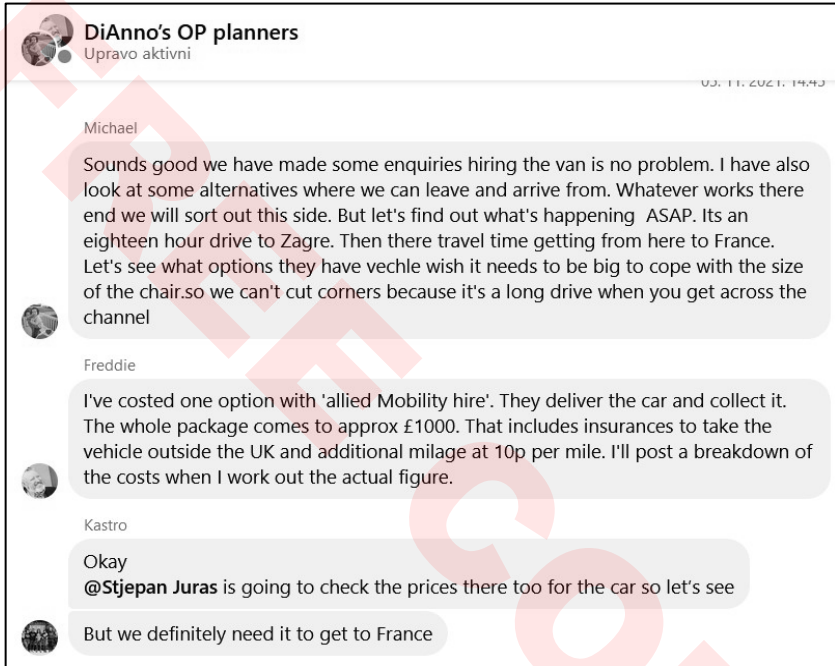
wouldn't let him on board or that the change in cabin air pressure might kill him.

I remember spending days googling the terms and conditions of all the airlines flying to Croatia and calling numerous travel agencies to ask about their experiences. Generally, I realised, an airline transfer shouldn't have been that big a problem, but everyone else tried to talk me out of the idea and recommended ground transport. I remember calling my long-time friend from Denmark, Rasmus Stavnsborg, a professional soldier in addition to being one of Iron Maiden's best-known fans. I believed that he would have more details about transporting people with disabilities, having been in some serious action on the battlefield himself. The final conclusion following this consultation was to avoid air travel if possible and choose ground transport, even though the costs would be up to ten times more expensive, eventually costing around 3,000 Euros.

Today with the benefit of hindsight, I'm aware this was probably unnecessary and that money was wasted. Since then, Paul has flown on over a hundred flights, from low-budget airlines to some of the largest planes on the longest flights in the world, like London-Perth. For his flights, we developed our own system of getting him on and off the plane and out of the wheelchair and into his seat, often bypassing the aircrew. I won't lie, Paul is an extremely difficult patient, and not just in terms of mobility, which means that if we managed to figure out a system for him, we'd move and handle any other patient much more quickly and efficiently. I've learned a lot working with Paul in the last three years, for which I'm grateful.

For Paul's trip to Croatia, Kastro created a private Facebook group called the 'Di'Anno OP Planners', consisting of Paul, the pair of us and Paul's friends Michael Kee and Freddie Ball. Michael and Freddie would organise a disabled access vehicle to take Paul from his home in Salisbury to Dover to catch a ferry to Calais where an ambulance from Croatia would meet him, all the while staying in contact with a film-crew who were making a documentary about it all. This operation had its unique challenges. The special ambulance from Croatia had to arrive a day early so the driver and

nurse could get a good night's sleep before the long drive back, so we had to book not just the van but also a hotel for two people. Below, you can see just a snippet of our conversations, which took place over a three-week period.



It was an interesting feeling scrolling back through hours and hours of conversation in order to select screenshots and other mementoes for this book, feeling again the initial enthusiasm and drive that we all shared in the early days. Only now do I have a perspective of how much time and effort we all invested just to get Paul safely from Salisbury to Calais and then on a further gruelling 18-hour trip to Croatia in a private ambulance. We chose a Croatian company for this as a British ambulance would have cost almost twice as much. The company we went with is Sanitet for various reasons. Not only did they seem to be the most professional company available, they also had staff who speak English, the necessary qualifications for the transport of people with serious medical conditions and had plenty of

experience driving throughout the countries of the EU. They were also the only company prepared to take on the challenge of such a special task, it being very difficult to find an available ambulance that was suited to Paul's needs.



In their company description and that of the van that would transport Paul, they wrote the following: *Sanitet d.o.o. is a company based in Petrinja. The main activity of the company is medical transport of patients for the purpose of providing medical services for which it was registered at the Commercial Court in Sisak in 2013. All our vehicles are equipped with state-of-the-art reanimation equipment as well as equipment for all types of emergencies, so in addition to classical medical transport, we can also provide urgent medical transport for seriously ill or patients with life-threatening conditions on the territory of the Republic of Croatia and all of Europe. All our vehicles are air-conditioned and remodelled to allow two family members (or friends) to accompany the patient. Each medical team consists of a driver, a medical technician/nurse, and if necessary, it is possible to be accompanied by a specialist doctor depending on the diagnosis and health condition of the patient. Our services are available throughout the Republic of Croatia and all of Europe.*

Our vehicles are equipped with: Defibrillator Zoll, Aspirator, Respirator, Cervical (Schanz) collar (of various sizes), Infusion solution bottles (of various types), Complete set for anti-shock therapy, Ked, Immobilisation board, Oxygen, Vacuum immobilisation mattress, Stretcher/portable stretcher (suitable for confined spaces), Cardiac chair for transport of patients with severe cardiac or neurological emergencies, Oxygen therapy kit, Reanimation kit, Splints (various sizes/dimensions), Medical bag, Medical technicians bag and Trauma kit.



The photos on pages 39 and 40 are courtesy of Sanitet d.o.o.

You have to bear in mind that, At every step of the way we were careful of Paul's safety and acted to ensure he would get the best quality professional care, leaving nothing to chance. We wanted him and everyone who helped to feel that all the funds raised were spent well, meeting all Paul's needs..

At this time, it is important that we note that Paul's arrival in Croatia was intended to be November 15 2021, but as he was unable to get the necessary paperwork in order before the trip, it was delayed until the 25th. During this whole time, I was trying to obtain Paul's medical documentation through Kastro, requesting it on a daily basis. And when I tell you this, I'm

aware it will sound ridiculous but Paul's trip to Croatia was agreed on and the plans underway before Paul had provided a single document about his medical state. All we could really do was believe his word that what he needed was knee replacement surgery, and this was the only thing the doctor in Croatia knew and the cornerstone of all our plans. Even with what I now know, I believe we made the right decisions. Namely, this was we kind of forced Paul to dig out and send us all the paperwork, because if we'd waited for the documents to arrive before starting to make plans, I don't know if or when we ever would have brought him to Croatia. I might be doing him a disservice and I stress again that this is just my opinion but on occasion I've almost felt like Paul sabotages, avoids, procrastinates and seems to do everything in his power to ensure all the effort to save his health made by other people falls apart, gets delayed or results in failure. I may be completely wrong (after all, who would deliberately sabotage themselves and their health?), maybe even after three years I don't really understand because I don't understand the nature of his mental condition which may drive him to act out like this. However, you'll see these moments many times in this book, and I invite you to draw your own conclusions. There were occasions that made me think that all of this amused him in ways that were totally incomprehensible to me.

Just a day or two before Paul's trip to Croatia, Kastro finally sent me some of the medical papers, which he had received last minute from Paul. They were several years old and were generally more about his mental state and the medications he needed to take, than what the Croatian doctors were interested in. Paul's problems with his legs were described briefly, in two or three sentences, but nothing that would indicate to the doctors anything about his actual state. We never got an x-ray of the leg, which we asked for almost every day and which was the baseline the doctor would look at to get an idea of what treatment would be needed. This lack of medical documentation, as I would later realise, is nothing new for Paul. For the duration of his trip, I collected and filed all the documents handed to me during various appointments and I still have them. Paul, on the other hand, had to go to some of these appointments alone and sometimes he wouldn't get the paperwork for his results, or I would never see them. Some he would throw away or leave behind when being moved from one care home to another, or he would put them somewhere and forget about them, and

unfortunately this means some key medical paperwork was lost and it will be difficult to get it reissued.

Knee replacement surgery is in fact a routine operation today, and if that had been all Paul needed (as we had been told), he'd have been back home and on his feet within a few weeks of the procedure. However, what we discovered in reality was vastly different. I got a hint of what we were in for from a German fan, my loyal customer Dominik Fox. He gave me a bit of friendly advice, to think carefully about what I was getting myself into, before I took on the responsibility of caring for Paul. Dominik was the drummer of Phantomz, Paul's backing band, and went on to record an album with him as a member of Architects of Chaoz. It's no secret that Paul and Dominik parted ways on bad terms, and Paul took several opportunities both on social media and at gigs to call him out, calling him a "traitor" during his last gig in Germany. In multiple conversations with Paul, he hasn't considered renewing his friendship with Dominik, but on the other hand, Dominik has always been above board with me. He's also bought any merch connected to Paul in order to ensure funds would be raised for his treatment. Dominik made a realistic and not very popular attempt to explain what he thought would happen. Given that the two of them were on opposite fighting sides, I had initial reservations about what Dominik told me, but what he was saying sounded logical.

"Have you had a chance to see his leg in real life?" he asked, and when I said no, he launched into a detailed description which horrified me and made me wonder just what I was getting myself involved in. By this point however, it was already too late. The travel arrangements had been made and paid for, the flights and hotels for Kastro and Michael were booked and paid for, the care home was paid and there was no way back. I had booked Michael's hotel and return ticket, Kastro his own. One thing I need to stress here is that, although a substantial amount of money had been raised for Paul's treatment and expenses, our personal expenses weren't part of that. For example, Kastro could have easily and legitimately paid for his travel and hotel with money from the fundraiser and no one would have begrudged him, but he insisted on paying with his own money to leave as much of what we had fundraised for Paul. Paul truly was in good hands.

Finally, Paul set off for Croatia on November 25, and I announced it with a post on Facebook, as you can see on the bottom of this page. All the teams were ready. Paul left the UK in the early hours of the morning, the meetup in France was scheduled for the afternoon and then a long, arduous drive to Croatia, mostly in the darkness and through the night, in bad weather. The whole time, I was in contact with the doctor, the staff at the care home, and all the people involved in Paul's transfer. Kastro arrived in Croatia in the early afternoon, so he and I could finally meet in person and finish the preparations together for Paul's arrival to go smoothly and efficiently. I remember vividly how my wife Violeta and I went to pick him up in our car and how Kastro, just a few minutes after we greeted each other, told us about Paul's current state and his own goals and expectations, saying, "Stjepan, look to save the left leg, if it's at all possible. It might be too late to save the right one already. If the leg has to go, it has to go! What can we do?"

TODAY IS THE DAY
Welcome to Croatia Paul Di'Anno!
You will be walking again soon!

www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno

Stjepan Juras
25. studeni 2021. · 🌐

Today, Paul Di'Anno is leaving for Croatia, on a journey that will permanently change his life. If you want to support us and help him in his battle, please visit this site:
www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno

Edit

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👍 Svidi mi se 🗨️ Komentar 📎 Podijeli

Najrelevantnije ▾

Rasmus Stavnsborg
All the best from Denmark Paul Dianno 🇩🇰 🇩🇰

2 g. Super Odgovor 3 🗨️

Stjepan Juras odgovara · 1 odgovor

Rob Festa
All the best Paul. We are all rooting for you.

2 g. Super Odgovor 6 🗨️

Komentirajte kao Stjepan Juras

RIBNJAK



GAJID AKST

138 0122 /
vrt.kajed@nauka
vrt.kajed@nauka

Killers

AN IRON MAIDEN CLASSIC



SHEPAN JURAS



BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

Yes, that was the goal and the only realistic option. No one in his team believed that Paul's right leg could be saved. It was in such a poor state, almost rotting, that anyone who saw it, myself included, was horrified. The solution on all our minds was to amputate and get Paul a prosthetic limb so he would learn to walk again. Then to focus our full attention on the rehabilitation of his left leg so the healing process would be faster.



With Kastro Pergjoni and dr. Milan Milošević in his office.

Of course, Paul knew nothing of these plans because everyone was too afraid of openly telling him that everything pointed to a necessary amputation, but I believe he was certainly aware that it was an option. My initial enthusiasm about Paul's rapid return to health quickly faded when I realised how long this would take and what I'd entangled myself in. Suddenly, two or three weeks had become possibly a year, maybe even two. I soon realised that the large sum of money we had raised, thinking we would have cash to spare, wasn't going to be nearly enough for Paul's needs. On a previous page, you can see a photo taken by my wife to be posted on social media, to boost awareness of the fundraiser and keep it going. Kastro and I found that while we both wanted the best for Paul, we didn't entirely agree on how this should all happen. Therefore, I posted frequently on Facebook, posts shared by major music media, to raise public awareness. I posted daily photos and videos from the clinic, Paul's everyday life in the care home and trips around Zagreb. I also felt that Paul's fans, friends and donors had a right to know where and how the money was being spent.

Kastro, on the other hand, felt that I should reduce the number of posts to a minimum and occasionally surprise fans with photos and videos of his unexpected progress, and leave the exclusivity of insider information for the documentary that was being made by the famed American director Wes Orshoski. Kastro felt my posts would lessen the exclusivity of the documentary, which was also intended to be a source of income for Paul. Until Paul's arrival in Croatia, I'd never met Wes but since then he's become a good friend and we've worked together very well. I'm sure that once the film is released, you won't be able to stop watching it.

Despite the differences in our approach, Kastro and I managed to cooperate well and we continue to do so this day. I'm proud to call someone like him my friend. I continued posting daily progress updates, convinced that spreading the story would help. This proved to be a sound financial move later on. Also, Paul himself is active on Facebook and his specific mode of expression (if you're not friends with him on the site this is impossible to explain) essentially forced me to keep people updated with realistic information that would give them a complete picture of what was happening on the ground. Those of you who only

followed Paul on social media would have been very misled. For this reason, I've included plenty of screenshots in this book, in chronological order.

When Paul started his journey to Croatia, I noticed on a Facebook post that he was wearing a woolly hat with the number '1312', symbolising the first three letters of the alphabet or 'A.C.A.B.' which is an acronym for the phrase 'All Cops are Bastards'. I immediately sent the driver a message instructing him to ensure Paul didn't cross the border wearing it. Croatia is at least on paper, a parliamentary democracy but in reality, we're not far from a police state and if his hat was noticed at the border, he could have been turned away with no possibility to appeal. When it comes to this acronym, freedom of speech and freedom of expression simply don't apply here. Paul would have been returned to the UK and lost all the money which was paid in advance for the travel and the month in a care home.

When the driver called me back however, it was in a state of panic. He told me that he'd met with Paul in France as planned but Paul was now refusing to get in the van and start for Croatia. 'What's happened now?' I wondered, and the driver told me in one long breath that Paul was refusing to get out of his wheelchair and on the hospital bed. Namely, he wanted to spend the entire drive (a full night and almost a day, over 20 hours) just seated in his wheelchair. This was impossible, both for safety and legal reasons. The van wasn't adapted for that and didn't have the seat belts required to secure a wheelchair. Had Paul stayed in his wheelchair, he could have been seriously injured on any sharp turn or sudden stop. Moreover, the protocol for transporting such patients strictly requires they are transported lying down and if the van were to be stopped by the police, the company would have received a large fine. No one wanted to risk this, and it was only with great difficulty that Paul was persuaded to lie on the bed, which he finally did, miserably, grumbling and complaining.

The driver was also a medic, and he and the nurse called me several hours later in the middle of the night, to inform me that Paul had urinated and soiled the van and was now refusing to let them change his clothes and

clean up. The driver explained this was part of their training and it wasn't a problem for them as they do it all the time but what was a problem was Paul's unusual behaviour and constant refusals of assistance.

I recall it was a cold, rainy autumn day, and the driver called to update us on their progress and location every few hours. When they told us they were at the border between Slovenia and Croatia, which is located close to the far western edge of Zagreb, my wife and I began to get ready for the agreed rendezvous at the Medisa care home. I called Kastro at his hotel and we agreed to pick him up on the way. When Paul's ambulance finally arrived, the driver and nurse got out first, followed by Michael, who was groggy from the long journey. He staggered across the car park, then noticed Kastro approaching him and stopped to speak to him. Paul was left alone in the van for a minute, and I, led by the instinct of a fan, went up to the door to peer in and shake Paul's hand. I still vividly remember that first impression. After all the work of planning, organising assistance, doctors, transport and everything else, I'd somehow expected that, at the moment of meeting, he would at least smile and say a word of thanks for all that effort. What happened when I peered inside and started to say hello was a roar, "Will someone finally get me out of this bed? I've fucking had it with lying here, you're treating me like livestock. I want an English Breakfast tea, now, not your stupid European teas. Only Twinings!" I have to admit I was shocked, unpleasantly shocked that the person we'd all done so much to help was literally growling at me like I was the biggest villain, not even bothering to shake hands in greeting. My mouth was still on the "Hello" that I'd wanted to say but got only as far as "Hell...". So, walking away without a word I took my wife in search of a shop that sold Twinings tea. Kastro and Michael stayed outside with Paul to wait, since the care home staff wouldn't admit him without a rapid COVID test; we were still in those unfortunate pandemic months when such things were compulsory.

I remember returning from the store with the tea some fifteen minutes later, while Paul was still waiting for the test results. His mood slightly improved when he got his tea and was moved into his wheelchair. That was when I finally got the chance to offer him my hand and say the words I

wrote at the start of this book, “My name is Stjepan, and I’m honoured to represent all the good people around the world who have given you a chance at a new life. I’ll do everything in my power to live up to our collective expectations for you to get back on your feet, and spend many more years bringing us joy from the stage.” I’m still honestly not sure if he was even listening, but I felt better having said it.

With the Covid test coming back negative, Paul went to his room. Of course, this was no luxury hotel, but a solid, clean room on the ground floor. It had air conditioning, a television, internet access, a bed and an en suite bathroom adapted for people with disabilities. It was also close to the care home’s reception and Paul would be able to request assistance at any time. All the key personnel such as receptionists, social workers, nurses and physiotherapists spoke English. The TV had cable, but not the channels Paul insisted on, so my wife took out a separate contract with an internet and cable TV provider, so Paul’s days in Croatia would be as carefree as possible under the circumstances. Paul initially grumbled a little, but then calmed down, realising after all that this wasn’t a holiday in some resort but medical treatment.

As Paul had funds that had been raised to be spent strictly on his treatment, we had to make a budget as it became clear as early as his first real checkup, a day after he arrived in Croatia, that Paul wouldn’t be here for a few weeks but several months at a minimum. Back then, absolutely no one had any idea that Paul would remain in Croatia for more than a year but we soon realised this too. The agenda and budget were decided as follows. Kastro, who was in charge of the donated funds, would be sent the invoices from the clinic, care home and hospitals, and pay them directly. Meanwhile I would be left with a small amount to take care of day-to-day costs like purchasing medicine in pharmacies and the nearly daily transport in an adapted van, from the care home to the clinic and back. Working with Paul, I learned an important fact; everything pertaining to people with disabilities is automatically at least twice as expensive, not just in Croatia but everywhere in the world. Simply, they depend on other people and their services without a choice, and these services are accordingly expensive. Orthoses, walking frames, toilet chairs, accessible hotel rooms, adapted cars and ramps and more. Everything is inhumanly

expensive. The cheapest transport solution I was able to find for Paul, which generally involved a 12km drive to the clinic, waiting 2-3 hours and then driving back, cost 600 Croatian Kunas plus VAT (around 90 Euros). Now consider the fact that Paul needed this service three, four or sometimes up to five days a week, for a full year and three months. The minimum weekly average would be about 300 Euros, times about 60 weeks this comes to 18,000 Euros alone. Almost all that we'd raised. So, I negotiated with the transport company for a better price as we had a long-term arrangement and that we could pay in cash. This got the price per journey down to 400 Kunas and no VAT but made it essential for me to have actual cash on hand at all times.

Paul of course, had a certain amount of his own money, but we didn't bother him or ask him to pay for anything himself, so he was able to purchase some personal things he wanted that I personally didn't want to use the donated funds for. Kastro and I agreed we didn't have room for some things in the budget. I'm talking primarily about cigarettes, mostly Marlboro Lights, and menthol vapes. I've seen some big smokers in my life, but I've never seen one like Paul. He would ask one of the staff to buy him cigarettes, and everyone would think they'd stocked him up for at least ten days but they'd be gone in an instant. I really tried to avoid buying him cigarettes even with his own money, out of worry about his frequent hacking cough and breathlessness, but sometimes I simply couldn't make an excuse to avoid it. Sometimes he simply needed it. It's a form of addiction after all, and if he couldn't get cigarettes, he'd become aggressive. For this reason, I would carefully weigh up when to buy him something he wanted and when to say no. Every time my mobile phone screen would show a message beginning with, "Hi mate. Can I...", I would dither over opening it, because then it would be 'seen', and if it was 'seen', whatever he asked for I'd have to immediately do. I allowed a compromise in the form of the menthol vapes, although he went through those just as ridiculously fast. I began to realise that his journey to health would be less than easy, in spite of our hopes. In addition to cigarettes and vapes, he spent money on tea (enormous amounts which he drinks fast, whole boxes of tea, something I'd also never seen), baby wipes, junk food like KFC and čevapi, biscuits, Jimmy Fantastic chocolates and outings to bars. However, the donated money was never used for any of those things.

The third and final source of income for Paul's day to day expenses were my books. During the first few months of his stay in Croatia, I decided to sell about 200 copies of my books 'Iron Maiden', 'Killers', 'Killers – West Ham Edition' and 'Killers Shopping Bag', and donate all the proceeds to Paul for his daily needs. These costs weren't insignificant, they were pretty substantial. You should keep in mind that in addition to hiring a van to go to the clinic, Paul also needed it for private use. When he went shopping in the city or to restaurants and bars, the adapted van and its driver had to be paid at the aforementioned price. Someone had to pay for cable TV every month, cab fares every time I'd be contacted to make the 12-kilometre trip to the care home and told it was an emergency, all his lunches and dinners in restaurants, his clothes, skincare creams, Listerine, new prescription glasses, and many other living expenses. Paul was now de facto living in Croatia, with his daily needs. My plan was therefore not to touch the donations but to use the money from sales of my books to ensure he had the means to get whatever he needed. This way, everything was covered and appeared to be OK on the surface.

As an author, I've lived almost exclusively from writing and publishing Iron Maiden books for over a decade. I've taken on other projects in the meantime and made some money on the side but these books are my main source of income. I believe some fans will justifiably ask whether there were hidden motives in my decision to help Paul, and how is it possible to absorb the cost of printing and postage in order to do so. I believe people could ask the same thing of Kastro. He owns the Cart & Horses, the pub that is directly tied to Iron Maiden's legacy. All these years, I've watched him develop his club's PR story successfully by inviting select guest performers and flirting with the Iron Maiden story. It would be a lie to claim that the whole event of helping Paul and the fundraising campaign didn't help Kastro and the Cart & Horses become even better known, bring in more customers and help his business. It certainly did and that's okay. The same thing goes for me. When I started helping Paul, just a few weeks of media attention led my number of customers to nearly double and I easily recouped my donation of more than 10,000 Euros to Paul. Remember if you will, how we sold more than 1,000 'Axes High' shirts and the 666 copies of the 'Stop the War' single sold out. I have never tried to hide the fact that this came

back around in a good way for me in that I gained the support of the fandom and ensured my family's needs were met. But my prime motive to assist Paul was never more than the true wish to help the idol of my youth get back on his feet. Few will know or remember that, when Iron Maiden's late drummer Clive Burr needed help for his multiple sclerosis, my friend Goran Knežević and I embarked on the making of a life size wrought iron sculpture weighing over 100 kilograms, which we transported to London by plane to sell it at a big auction for Clive. Sadly, Clive passed away shortly after, but have I continued to help his wife, who suffers from the same condition. These were things that were never made public. They're mostly done in private, from the heart and incognito. In Paul's case however, the public was necessary as we could never have done it alone.



Iron Maiden in wrought Iron by Goran Knežević ordered by Maidencroatia.

I feel it's important to mention these three financial sources: the crowdfunding for medical needs and Pauls personal funds and the sales of Maiden Croatia books for his personal needs, so anyone reading this will get an insight into the processes of the campaign and those of you who donated will know how your funds were spent.

Let's return to the first day. As soon as we settled him in his room and the ambulance had gone on its way, a second vehicle (this one an adapted van with a hydraulic ramp) arrived to pick Paul up, and around 6pm we headed to the Ribnjak clinic, where Dr Milan Milošević awaited us. I remember there were many of us present: Paul, Kastro, Michael, Violeta, Wes and his cameraman, the main dentist from the dental clinic, clinic staff and myself, and for a moment everything became crowded and full of the murmuring of several languages. As I've learned over the years this something Paul hates more than anything, so in his usual style, he shouted in a loud, penetrating voice for everyone to shut up and speak one at a time, preferably in English so he could understand. There was a moment of silence, and then the nurses got busy and started looking over his leg. Its condition had worsened since he'd urinated on himself on the drive to Croatia and the urine had permeated to his leg. Fortunately, no infection had set in and when he arrived at the care home, the staff gave him a quick shower before we went to the clinic. Dr. Milošević was absolutely not happy with what he saw, since we had told him and he'd expected, a patient who needed knee replacement surgery that would be quick and easy. What he saw, I'm afraid to say, was a dying man. He came closer to me and said, "Wow Stjepan, what is this? Look at him, he doesn't need knee replacement, he's grey in the face, he's dying." We commented on Paul's massively swollen legs with open sores below the knees, the extremely neglected condition of the rest of his body, enormous toenails more like talons than nails, a hernia the size of a large apple and extremely rotten teeth. The dentist who had come to consult and get an orthopan scan just shook his head in disbelief. No one who saw Paul then held any hope that he would live even a few months in the state he was in. The doctor immediately wrote us an urgent referral to x-ray both legs and the only open clinic that late in the afternoon was Agram, one of the best in the field. I recall Kastro commenting about a possible amputation in one moment, quietly so Paul wouldn't hear, but the doctor's natural speaking voice was louder and his response was, "Not a chance, with

the state his leg is in, if we amputated now he would probably die from sepsis and other complications.” Paul didn’t hear all of that as there was background noise again, but on hearing and recognising the word ‘amputation’ he went pale and exclaimed, “If it’s amputation, you’d better kill me now!”. We then had to calm him down, explaining that the doctor had said his leg couldn’t be amputated because of possible complications, and that he would try to save it and see how things went from there.

While Paul was being loaded back into the van, the doctor approached me away from the others and said, “Stjepan, this is a lost cause, I’ll do everything in my power but don’t expect miracles or for the leg to be saved. If he lives long enough to get well enough for it, perhaps an amputation and prosthetic is the best solution.”

The next stressful moment happened at the Agram clinic, where we went to get Paul’s legs x-rayed. Paul had left his passport at the care home, and they wouldn’t let him in without ID. As the day was almost over and the clinic was about to close, despite Paul’s loud complaints, we agreed to return the following day around noon. The next day we all arrived at the clinic together, but were told that only two of us were allowed to access the basement rooms where the large x-ray machine is kept. This simply wasn’t possible as we soon showed them. Paul is a very heavy man but also fragile because of his legs, and the staff would find it difficult to lift him on the table and into position to take the x-ray. This was the largest x-ray machine in Zagreb and if this didn’t work, we’d be in big trouble. One of the technicians who worked there was a metalhead with long hair. He recognised me and asked, “You’re Stjepan Juras, aren’t you?” but in that moment he was unaware that the person being brought to the Agram clinic where he worked was Paul Di’Anno, who he’s a huge fan of. When he finally saw Paul, he was overwhelmed and immediately got to work to ensure everything ran with maximum professionalism.

As I predicted, it was a big problem to lift Paul from his wheelchair and lay him on the table. I remember one moment where two of the clinic technicians, Kastro, Michael and I were trying to lift him, but it just wasn’t happening. We desperately needed another set of hands and there was Wez just filming the whole thing on his camera.

Paul was screaming in agony, "Wes, leave that fucking camera and come and help us!" but Wes didn't move or blink, even when I begged him again. I thought, "What the fuck is wrong with this man? Who does he think he is?" and put all my strength into lifting Paul, which we somehow finally managed, accompanied by his cries of pain. I thought to myself, "Wes is a big guy, I'm sure he's strong. Why wouldn't he help us?" It ended okay, but Wes noticed I'd taken a dislike to him and had decided to avoid him. He approached me and said, "Stjepan, don't be angry. It's nothing personal. I'm the cameraman and I don't exist. You can't count on me for these things. If I'd put the camera down and come to help you, we'd have lost a priceless shot which is so powerful and evocative it will astound people. This documentary is something that will also earn income for Paul and it has to be raw, authentic and totally without frills and embellishments. You can't go on safari to see a lion killing a gazelle, and then try to help the gazelle." I understood his attitude and accepted it and since then we've never had any issues but only now, several years later as the documentary is about to be released, I see how right he was.

As we were getting ready to leave the Agram clinic, we went to pay for their service. However, the technician, Danijel Delibašić, surprised us all with a very kind gesture. He told us that he's a big fan of Paul's and we didn't have to pay for the x-ray. The news quickly spread across the world.



Stjepan Juras

27. studeni 2021. · 📍

...

What a day!!! Listen people, miracles are always around us, they just need to be noticed. With today's story I will show you how big and significant the Iron Maiden community is around the world. Today we were at Agram Special Hospital to have Paul Di'Anno do an X-ray scan of both knees before surgery. When we went inside a miracle happened. The engineer who worked on Paul's X-ray scan is a massive Iron Maiden fan. His name is Danijel Delibašić (on the pic on the right side). He made sure everything was done professionally and painlessly for Paul, whose weight and immobility made it almost impossible to lie down on the scan table. But, after everything was done safely and painlessly, Danijel astonished us when he said that we should not pay anything, that he would pay everything, that he would ask to be deducted from his salary. Words cannot describe how much his gesture touched all of us and Paul as well. A lot of good people have been around Paul all day and everyone is trying to make him feel cheerful and positive. Massive thanks to Kastro Pergjoni, Violeta Juras, Wes Orshoski, Michael Kee and Poliklinika AGRAM, Poliklinika Ribnjak - centar za ortopedsku medicinu i sportsku dijagnostiku & Dom za starije osobe Medisa, Ordinacija dentalne medicine dr. Baltić, Dr. Zvonimir HRALA, Centar Dentalne Medicine stuff and to all fans and supporters all around the world; you are the best!



Kastro, Paul and Daniel in Special hospital Agram.

When Dr Milošević saw the x-rays, he was horrified by the state of Paul's right leg but at least he could prescribe preliminary therapy including lymphatic drainage and muscular electrostimulation, set up a schedule for appointments and delegate several of the therapists to look after Paul. One of the therapists was Matteo Šoštarić, a fluent English speaker with a well-developed sense of humour similar to British humour, who Paul liked immensely. They quickly bonded, and Paul's progress was visible by each passing day. His leg circumference significantly lessened and the skin colour improved. Very quickly after he started going to the clinic it was time for something special- verticalization.



Paul Andrews

2 h · 👤



Well that was fkn scary I stood for the first time in 7yrs well shakey a pissed bambi 🤔🤔🤔



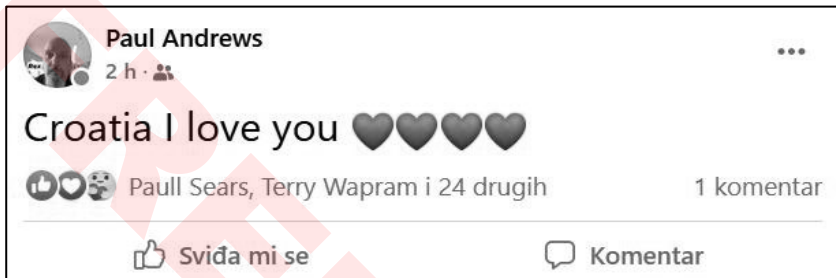
Kastro Pergjoni, Phil Cole i 130 drugih

69 komentara

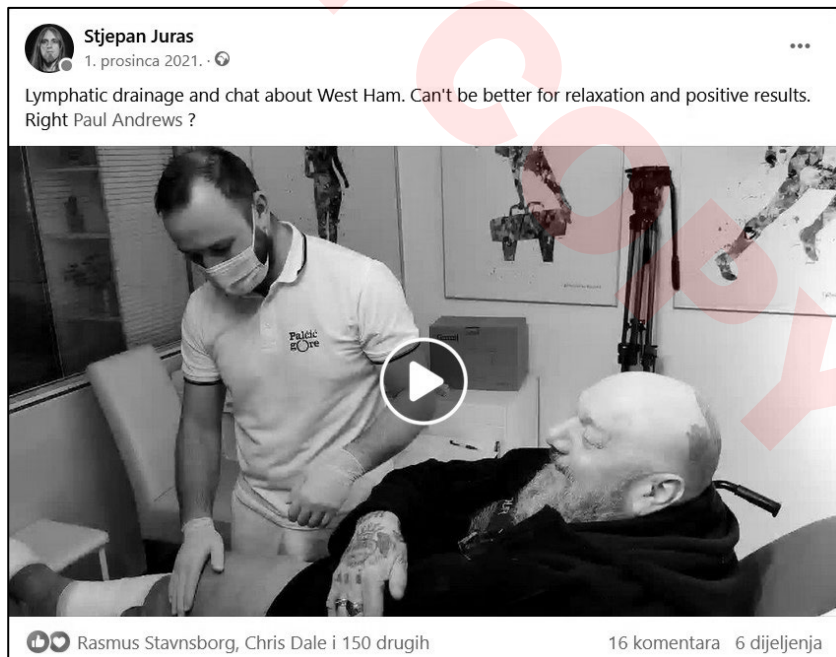
👍 Sviđa mi se

💬 Komentar

That was the first time I saw Paul crying. Or not crying really, but a kind of bewilderment between sobbing and hysterical laughter. With the help of professionals and an orthosis, Paul had managed to stand up for a few seconds. It would take too long to describe the ups and downs of each individual day but we were making progress and Paul was happy and showing it clearly.



In those days, he was keen to go to therapy and couldn't wait for every new day. We kept the fans informed about every new milestone on social media and I took loads of photos and videos.



Not ten days into Paul's stay in Croatia, on December 4th, Paul received a message while I was in the room with him, from none other than Steve Harris himself! It came following a West Ham victory at football. Paul was happy to hear from Steve and immediately posted about it on his social media. It showed that Steve was definitely following the situation and his supportive message in this early phase on the road to recovery was certainly appreciated.



Just a few days later, Dr Milošević measured Paul's legs again and noticed extraordinary improvements in their circumference, skin colour and texture. He wrote Paul new referrals for a full medical check-up to ascertain his overall condition and whether he would even be able to have an operation. As our little Facebook group to help Paul was still online, I posted the following message.

Hello everyone

This is a very important message. Paul was commissioned on December 10 for a complete systematic examination and internal examination. This examination is necessary for doctors to find out the true condition of Paul's body and to be able to decide what types of surgeries Paul can tolerate

(knees, teeth, etc., and whether and to what extent he can tolerate anesthesia). They have disabled access, elevator, etc. It is easy to get in. The check-in is at 8 am, so a taxi will pick up Paul half an hour earlier. It is very important that Paul is on an empty stomach. So, I ask Paul to have an understanding of the diet that day. The day before the staff will take a stool (poo) sample, and in the morning on the day of the examination will take a urine sample. This examination is very important because doctors will then know the condition of the whole organism and how Paul can be treated... On the same day at 3 pm Paul has regular treatments at the Ribnjak Polyclinic with his physiatrists and kinesiologists, so I ask him to be strong and patient that day, followed by a weekend and three days of rest.

Here's what the doctors will review:

Clinical examination

ECG

laboratory diagnostic

SE

KKS

urine complete

GUK

lipids (cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides)

liver enzymes (bilirubin, ALT, AST, gamma GT, ALP)

urea, creatinine, urate

electrolytes (K, Na, Cl)

Fe, TIBC, UIBC

feces on occult bleeding

PSA (on indication)

Abdominal ultrasound

Prostate ultrasound

X-ray of the heart and lungs (on indication)

Ultrasound of the heart with Color Doppler

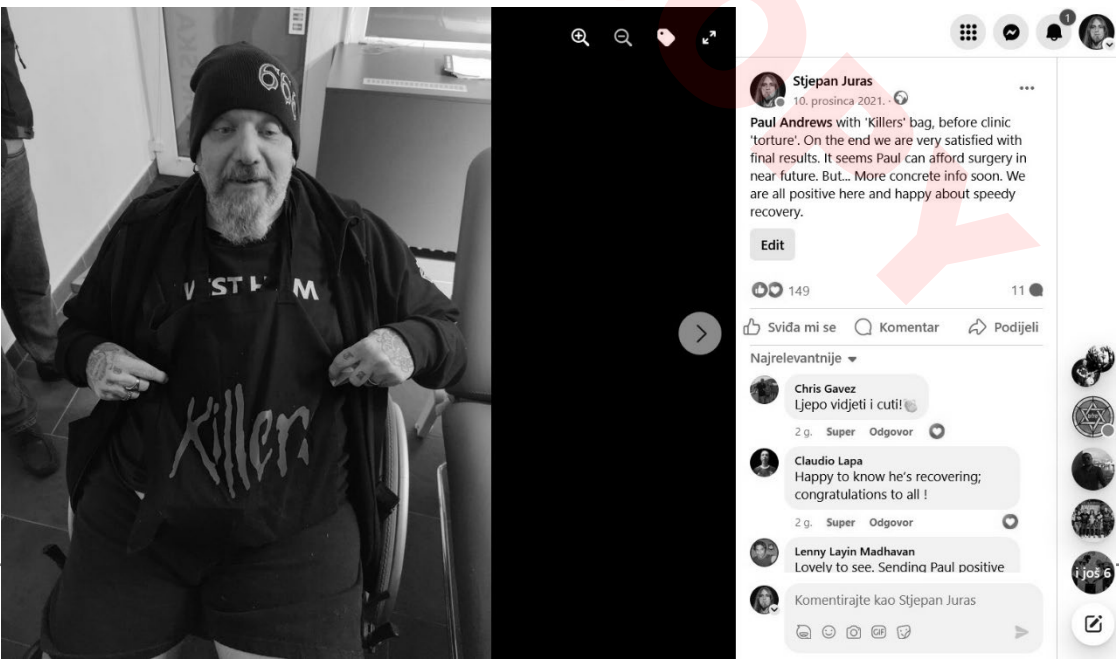
Doppler of carotid arteries

Concluding opinion and conversation with each examined patient

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

When we arrived at the clinic that morning, Paul was in an unusually good mood. He'd been driven there by Dino, a driver with whom Paul had already formed a firm friendship, while I took a taxi. I remember going through loads of medical paperwork and we spoke to several specialist doctors. Paul was most taken with an older doctor who told him that he's an incognito biker and showed Paul his motorbike and the music he listens to on his mobile device. We got most of the results the same day but some we had to wait for. All came back very positive. As you can see below, I was already updating Facebook with the good news. Paul's body was pretty well preserved in spite of many years of constant destruction in his younger days, be it stressful lifestyle or drugs and alcohol. Even the doctors wondered how it was possible. But there we are; it is possible!

The bad news on the other hand, was that we finally learned how long Paul would have to remain in Croatia before he would be in good enough condition to withstand surgery. It was no longer, "He'll be home by Christmas" as was previously thought. In fact, there would be no talk of any surgery before April 2022 at best, except maybe dental implants. When Kastro and I learned this information, we were worried. We remained positive in public and on social media and my posts on Facebook were full of hope and positivity, but we knew that by the time the surgery rolled around we'd be penniless.



Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

A solution had to be found and I didn't lose hope that it would happen. There's always an opportunity that pops up somewhere. The air already smelled like Christmas, which was twenty days away. The streets were full of decorations, kids were letting off fireworks and Paul became a little depressed for the first time as he realised that he wouldn't be home by Christmas, much less standing on his own feet. So, I thought about doing something to cheer him up and published a call to fans to send him postcards and Christmas cards at the care home. The response was huge. This made every new day interesting and special for Paul and for us and the doctors. Sometimes Paul made us laugh, sometimes he made us proud and sometimes he drove us so mad we were tempted to send him back to the UK.



Stjepan Juras

11. prosinca 2021. · 🌐

...

Dear Iron Maiden fans and friends of Paul Di'Anno. If you want to send greeting card or Christmas gift or letter to Paul Andrews you can send on this address:

Medisal (for Paul Andrews)

Čulinečka cesta 2b

10000 Zagreb

Croatia





Paul Andrews

10. prosinca 2021. · 

In the clinic 



I have to tell one little anecdote, which happened on the day of Paul's full medical where I accompanied him. With all the work to be done around Paul, I'd not had the chance to get a photo with him and kept forgetting to ask. I had a feeling that everyone in Croatia was going to have a photo with him other than me but it wasn't something I needed. But when we got to the clinic that day, Paul said, "Stjepan, you and I don't have a single photo together. I wanna take one here and now, with you." He pulled his phone put and took a selfie which he immediately posted on Facebook.

I very quickly stopped seeing Paul as something exotic, a rock star who had come into my life. Paul soon became part of the everyday fabric of my life, almost like a family member and photos and videos of us together were the last thing on my mind. The priority was for Paul to get proper care each day, to get to his treatments, get enough tea and skin cream, to take his antibiotics regularly and get back on his feet as soon as possible. In the same way, I had no need to take photos with my father (for example), which I regret now.

Each day, I learned something new to help me cope with Paul's physical difficulties. All of us have met people with disabilities in our lives but it's not often many of us have had the chance to take care of someone in those circumstances for a long period of time and realise the kind of obstacles they face in life. Although Paul had been here just over two weeks, no one could predict when he might go home, and we had to get into the headspace of understanding and being ready for this to possibly last much longer than anyone expected.

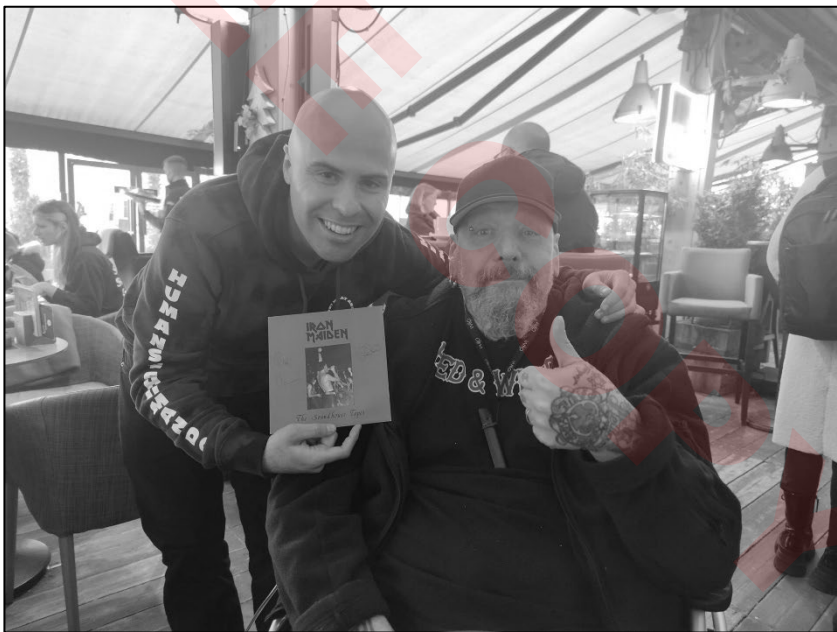
Paul, who had also expected a quick turnaround before coming to Croatia, now also had to start accepting in his mind that his journey towards health wouldn't be brief, easy or simple. All our initial expectations had evaporated and I had to adjust my communication of the situation to the public accordingly. We had a long, cold winter ahead of us but we were all warmed by the hope that we were doing a good thing, something worth the effort. After all, Paul Di'Anno isn't just anyone, he's a rock and heavy metal legend and deserves a new chance.



Henri de Jong and Paul in front of care home Medisal.

There was a lot happening in December; my every day was filled with Paul and his needs from morning to night. I slowly began to realise I was losing myself in all this. I had time for nothing else. The 'Virtual XI' book that was supposed to be published in early 2022 was untouched, I'd given up all my other routines and plans and my pregnant wife had to battle all the daily problems that come with pregnancy on her own. And since I don't have a driving licence, she often drove me to Paul and back every day. Violeta also ordered Paul's food and shopped online for anything he needed. What no one knew at the time was that she had a high-risk pregnancy which could have meant the loss of our little Iris, and she needed to take extra care of herself with as little stress as possible, which really wasn't an option. From January on, guests and friends arrived to visit Paul from all over the world, and every time we would need to spend time with them, invite them to dinner at a restaurant as thanks and courtesy, and so on. For example, my loyal customer from the Netherlands, Henri De Jong, is a truck driver by trade and on January 7 2022, he called to say he was on a route going

through Zagreb and would be parking his truck at the Zagreb Freight Terminal, a huge logistics and customs centre in our city. I waited for him at the terminal on the east side of the city for two hours, since that was the only one that I knew of, only to realise that there's a second terminal on the west side. These are things that make one lose a whole day, since you then have to spend the rest of day with the guest, taking them to see Paul and so on. Of course, Henri is a friend and it was great to get to spend time with him, but I'm simply illustrating the fact that every such day was a day we weren't able to do other things. Paul's care home had a busy time with fans and friends arriving from all over. Andy Brown from the UK, Troy Schurer from the Netherlands, Elias Aravides from Greece, Steve Kenton again from the UK, Marco Giovanetti from Italy, while Alvaro Ferreiro Gómez flew in from Spain and several fans made the trip from Poland too.



Alvaro Ferreiro Gómez and Paul in Zagreb club Johan Franck



Paul in the down town centre of Zagreb, Tkalčićeva street

In early December, although Paul was nowhere near well, I often took him into the centre of Zagreb to boost his mental health, whether with some retail therapy or for a meal or drinks with friends, whenever the adapted van was available. Since coming to Croatia, he'd taken tons of photos with friends, people who were helping him, doctors, therapists, nurses, and everyone else, and I realised in one moment that, although I was spending the most time with him, I actually had no photos or an autograph or anything like that. That's why I told you the anecdote about the selfie, the day of his full medical, when he noticed this and invited me to take one. I felt pretty proud that day.

At the time, I was also getting lots of messages from my friends, wanting all kinds of information about Iron Maiden and the old days. I felt it wasn't the right time for such things, because I needed to be a friend and a helper, not a fan in this situation.



Paul and Vlaho Bogoje, interview for his podcast.

Soon, it was time for Paul's first proper interview since coming to Croatia, where he'd tell the world how he was doing, how he was feeling, what treatments he was getting and what the doctors were saying as well as all the other things the fans were interested in. The whole heavy metal world was waiting for this, and I was sure his old friends from Iron Maiden would also be paying careful attention. Do you recall my old friend Vlaho Bogoje from Dubrovnik, mentioned earlier in this book? Well, he was just the right person to broadcast Paul's interview to the world in his podcast titled 'Just another Podcast', which was followed and spread by many big media sites, including Blabbermouth and Brave Worlds. As a journalist and a long-time Iron Maiden fan, Vlaho did a fantastic job. I have to note that the two aforementioned giants in the world of heavy metal media had followed and written about Paul's situation from day one, and wrote articles that weren't the usual tabloid vulture tripe but affirmative posts, and they helped whenever there was a fundraising sale. Both Borivoj Krgin and Tim Henderson, owners and

editors in chief of the two sites, are massively deserving of praise for this because the rest of the heavy metal media then shared the information and all the people who had lost touch with Paul through the years and didn't even know he was still alive, now finally knew what was going on.

As someone who worked in media for a long time (with daily papers, music magazines, radio and web portals) I was well aware of the unquestionable importance of the media in shaping a public image, and to use surfer vocabulary, I jumped on the perfect wave and rode it to the max.

It's important to emphasise one thing at this point. When Paul first arrived in Croatia, I never spoke to him about a possible career revival. Not only because the state of his leg and his general health condition made it distasteful to even think about, but he'd publicly ended his career a decade earlier, announced his musical retirement and a final concert; which ended up being cancelled. This was how the fans remembered him. In his music life, I assumed Paul still had an entire team, a circle of people like a manager, booking agent and such like, and so it never crossed my mind to suggest something like that to him. I reckoned he'd simply continue where he'd left off, leave Croatia, say goodbye to me and go on tours and record albums. On the other hand, I couldn't help but wonder, "OK, if Paul has his people in the UK or wherever, where are they now, that he needs help? Does he even have his old band, a manager, does he have roadies, a label? At the end of the day, does he have a family, and why the hell aren't they helping him?" The more I thought about it, the weirder it seemed to me. Until then, Paul had never mentioned any family members, let alone anyone he worked with. In my opinion, it would have been natural that a campaign like ours would have involved his family and business managers who would be calling the shots. At the end of the day, Kastro is Albanian, I'm from Croatia and Paul is from the UK. And except for Michael and Freddie, who helped transport him to Croatia, I hadn't met a single concrete person (not counting the many fans who donated) who was actively involved in the campaign. "Did it really take Albanians and Croats to step up and do something to save a UK rock icon?" Many such questions went through my head at the time. I'm telling you this because at the time, I had been a band manager for twenty years and I realised I'd started to unconsciously pull the

PR strings within my own network and use the knowledge I'd gained in the business. I knew that if I had Blabbermouth and Brave Words on my side, I also had Metal Rules, Whiplash, Metal Underground, The Metal Voice, Loudwire, Metal Injection, Louder, Decibel magazine, even Classic Rock and many more. I knew from experience what news to serve up and how regularly, what information would get the most clicks and views and how people would react to different kinds of news.

Very soon, my predictions came true and bore fruit as I served the fans and the media what they wanted to hear. The spotlight was back on Paul, the spotlight focusing on him again and this was an opportunity that had to be seized. From a man who had been ridiculed towards the end of his career, he was once again a man everyone wanted to interview on an almost daily basis, following his journey to recovery. This was the ideal groundwork to give a fallen legend a new chance and to raise a potential new career from the ashes of his old one.

Borivoj Krgin of Blabbermouth published a series of positive articles about Paul. Although his web portal is sometimes accused of being vulture-like, picking over artists who get on their bad side for years and digging up poorly worded statements made decades earlier to drag them through the mud, he was extremely good with Paul. I'm not saying anything we don't already know when I write that Brave Words is their direct rival in the business, so I was very careful to give both sides an equal number of exclusives. I suggested as much to Borivoj on one occasion, but he was very collegial about it and said, "I really don't mind it if you send it to Brave Words too, I really just want to help." On the other hand, Tim Henderson, the owner of Brave Words and another man I've got a good working relationship with, was in the process of establishing the Brave Words Records label, which I had no idea about at the time. Still less could I have imagined that Paul would someday have a new band and that he'd record his comeback album for Tim's label. Yet this is exactly what happened. "Listen, Agent Juras, I've got an assignment for you," said Paul to me one day. He always calling me 'Agent Juras' when he was about to send me on a mission impossible. "I don't just wanna sit here and do nothing and I see my story's hot again. I want you to find me a new band, in Croatia."

BIRTH OF WARHORSE

“Sorry, what?” was my first thought. “Is he messing with me?” I’ve always been a man of action but I don’t like to impose on people. I never would have thought of going to Paul with such a suggestion, because I felt it would be a violation of everything I was doing for him. I was perfectly OK with the idea that I’d help him get back on his feet (quite literally) and that someone else would take the opportunity to continue working with him. And if I’d ever dreamed about working with him, it was to imagine myself as a rock legend’s roadie for a few gigs, so I could die in peace and a happy man.

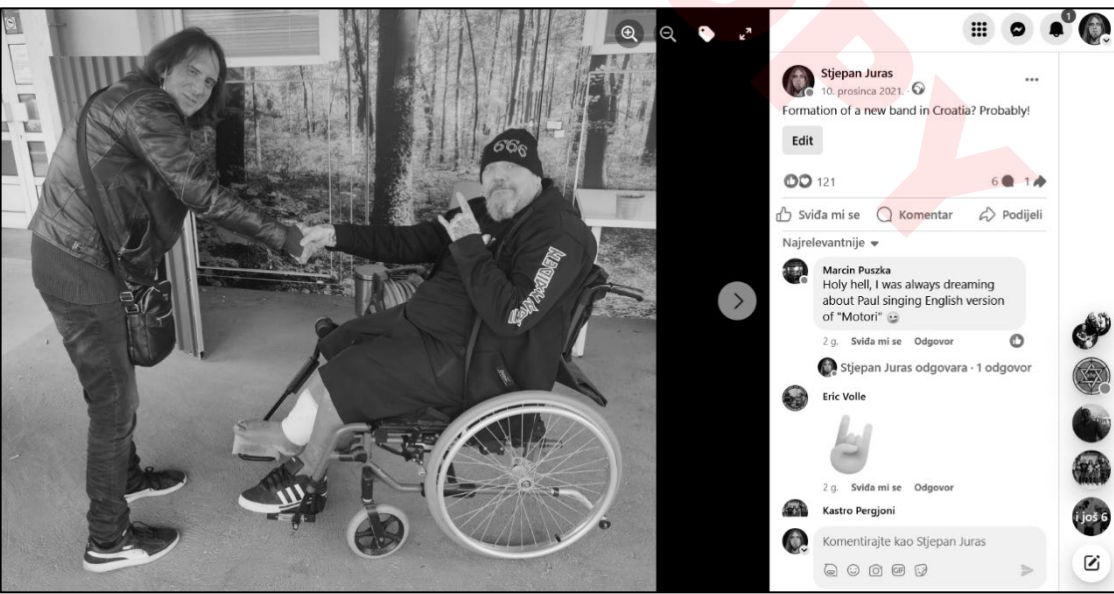
But Paul wasn’t messing around. He was dead serious, “I want a band, yes, here in Croatia, I want to write songs with them and play gigs.” I don’t have to tell you how seriously Agent Juras took this assignment. Within an hour, with an idea forming in my head, I dialled a number. The call was answered on the other end by one Joško Barbir, guitarist and founder of a band called Rising Dream, whose long-time manager I am and who even opened for Iron Maiden at the Poljud stadium in Split in 2008. Today, the band is called Arises, their line-up is still the same minus a keyboard player and with a new singer. Joško was interested in creating a side band with Paul. Knowing how well he plays and composes, and what a good band they are when performing live, I was sure that with Paul they could conquer the world. On the other hand, my other friend Goran Paleka, another guitarist and a massive Maiden fan, refused the idea not only because he wanted his own band to be a priority, but because he felt Paul’s career was over and anything new would be flogging a dead horse.

Although I know probably all of Croatia’s metal bands and musicians, the next person who popped into my mind was a young guitarist, Split lawyer Hrvoje Madiraca, whose current band was called Rapid Strike. I’ve already mentioned Hrvoje in this book, you’ll recall him as the friend who invited me to spend part of the summer at his apartment on Lastovo, and how neither of us imagined in that fateful summer of 2021 that things would turn out this way. I had several key reasons for choosing Hrvoje. He had started his career with a wickedly fast trash metal band, but as he got older and

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

matured, he was influenced more and more by Richie Blackmore, Slash and bands across the spectrum of rock'n'roll, from Thin Lizzy to classic heavy metal. He was particularly fascinated with the era and production values of Metallica's 'Black' album and he very much appreciated Di'Anno's work with Iron Maiden as well as his solo efforts, considering him very underrated in terms of both singing and talent. Hrvoje had some great experiences of performing live, touring Europe and Japan and to top it all off he's a lawyer, which is always a good thing. Also, Hrvoje shares an important quirk of mine; when he puts his mind to something, he goes all the way until he gets it. We're definitely not quitters and I liked that personality trait in him. To be fully transparent, another bonus is that Hrvoje had a certain level of financial security, which was essential to get the Warhorse project off the ground because if anyone thought things were easy when there's a star in the band, they'd be wrong. You can't look at who Paul Di'Anno is now, but who he was then; a person the music industry no longer had faith in, abandoned by everyone. And it would take significant effort to make a successful comeback, finding a good studio, a good producer, designer, photographer, musicians, making great songs and videos. And all those things that take money.

As you can see, after numerous phone calls, Hrvoje decided to travel from Split to Zagreb to meet Paul in person and present his vision. They and they shook hands outside the Medisal care home, signalling the band's formation.



Considering that Paul arrived in Croatia on November 26, and Hrvoje shook hands with him on December 10, after a few days of talking and cajoling, it should be noted that Paul, after just a couple of weeks, went from a horrible physical and mental health state but had improved to the point that he was mentally in a place where he felt ready and able to work. As I write this book, going through the screenshots, I actually cannot believe the speed at which it all happened.

There was a long road ahead of us. I didn't initiate the founding of a new band as their manager but more as a friend, although I was doing all the things band managers usually do. Now however, we had to organise how this would all work, how the songs would get written and choose a name for the band. Everything was in its infancy, but the timing couldn't have been better. On December 1, Iron Maiden announced that they'd added six new dates to their 'Legacy of the Beast 2022' tour, their first tour since a long break caused by the COVID pandemic and with the release of their latest album, 'Senjutsu'. The first city on the list was Zagreb, then Belgrade, and for the first time in history, they would play in Ukraine. At the time, no one could have imagined what would happen in Ukraine just a few months later. It was clear that Iron Maiden had decided to begin their tour in Croatia. The idea of opening tours in eastern Europe wasn't new to them, as they had already done this in Poland in 1984, kicking off later tours in Belgrade, Hungary, Czechia, Slovenia, then Belgrade, Zagreb, and finally Ljubljana in 2023. I don't know how other people's brains work, but in mine everything fell into place and the second I saw 'Zagreb' and the date beside it, I had just one thought. If I could have planned it, I could not have thought up a better scenario for Paul's live premiere. Paul and Warhorse on stage, playing not just new material but Iron Maiden classics, just a day before Iron Maiden's big show in Zagreb Arena, with his old mates from the band coming to see him and support him. Anyone coming from anywhere in the world to attend a Maiden show is usually in town a day or two earlier, and anyone who can't is online, following every second of the set list on social media in real time. It wasn't hard to put two and two together and see how it all lined up. The Iron Maiden show was scheduled for May 22 2022, a Sunday, so Saturday the 21st was the perfect day for fans from all over the globe to gather in Zagreb and attend a big free Paul Di'Anno gig, exclusive to members of the

official Iron Maiden Fan Club and a few locals. I already had the whole scenario planned in my mind; although I had no idea where we'd hold the gig or if the band would be ready by then or if Paul would even agree to do it.

I pitched my idea to Kastro who was a little sceptical. Although he initially liked it, he felt I was rushing a bit. Paul had barely arrived in Croatia and already someone was trying to organise a gig. For my part, I could see several benefits. Firstly, that Paul could use the gig to debut his new band's first single (as yet unwritten and unrecorded at the time), to be seen by some of the most loyal fans in the world, which would at once throw the doors of renewed success wide open. Secondly, the show might be attended by Iron Maiden themselves (or at least representatives of their team), which could be truly useful in case Paul needed additional financial aid for his medical needs. Paul could possibly meet up with his former bandmates after many years, which would be of great interest to the media. And finally, the obligation for Paul to perform would be a great motivator on his journey to health, making him focus on his exercises and upcoming treatments. He needed to live for that gig. I promised Kastro I would be careful about all of it and I'd keep him posted about my steps and ideas at all times.

Hrvoje was tasked with getting the band ready, although he was also sceptical dare I say, afraid of the idea of playing in front of fans on such an important occasion. Having shaken hands, he and Paul agreed to talk over Facebook and write songs together. Hrvoje promised to find the rest of the band, as well as organise recording sessions and film videos. There were several ideas for a band name but Warhorse was Paul's idea, as he was unaware that there were several existing bands with the same name. For this reason, it was decided to name the band, 'Paul Di'Anno's Warhorse', a little bit like 'Richie Blackmore's Rainbow'. Paul said the idea was that they'd be a real band, not him plus a backing band. He didn't want to stand out as an individual. He wasn't too happy about his name being added to the band's, as he wanted to create something new rather than relying on his past reputation. He wanted a new, reborn energy and ferocity to show the world he still had a lot to offer.



COME ON YOU BLOODS!

1981

AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY
THROUGH THE EARLY DAYS
OF IRON MAIDEN'S
LEGACY

Read more about the band and their... What? The first and only book that...
had more than... and... and... What? The first and only book that...
had more than... and... and... What? The first and only book that...



Killers
AN IRON MAIDEN CLASSIC



STJEPAN JURAS



CHRISTMAS IN THE GULAG

Of course, I immediately started thinking about the ideal venue to kickstart this magnificent story. The spacious and distinctive Bikers Beer Factory, a place I regularly go to, presented itself as best option by far. Not only because it has the capacity to host a large number of people both inside and out on the open terrace but also because the atmosphere and ambience are fantastic both day and night. I happen to know the owners and the staff are super friendly, and throughout the years the people going there have always felt like a big family. It's a bit like London's Cart & Horses today in its atmosphere, but much larger. The day after Iron Maiden's tour announcement I went straight there, and was seated in the evening with Alf, the club's co-owner at the time, having a drink and trying to explain what would happen at the club on the day. They weren't really aware of how big it could be. You know that every club has its regulars, capable of putting away enormous amounts of beer, but when they're joined by beer drinking champions from all over the world that's not your regular night out drinking beer and enjoying a gig. It's carnage, lasting from the early afternoon until the very end late into the night.

It was time to present my idea for the show to Paul, and to prepare him I first took him to the Bikers Beer Factory club as though in passing, so he could drink in its atmosphere. I introduced him to Alf, the owner who he instantly clicked with. How could he not when the owner treated him to food and drink? When we finally told Paul about our idea for a show there, he was initially speechless. He hadn't hoped for something like this, and at first, he shook his head in disbelief and took on a kind of 'I can't do this' attitude. I could see the emotions crashing into him and that he was weighing a lot of things up in his mind. Neither Paul nor I knew then how his health situation would progress, if he'd even be able to sing, if his voice had rusted and failed after so many years of neglect. If it came to that, would he simply embarrass himself in front of the fans, after all these years? In that moment, Paul was leaning more towards telling me 'No', but maybe he changed his mind when he saw the way my eyes were shining with a great

wish to make it happen. After some thought, he said, "OK, let's do it, but there are conditions. I don't want it to be with Warhorse. We can do a promotion of the new single and everything, but I want to play with my Norwegian band. I feel safe with them and I know there won't be any mistakes. Bring me the boys from Norway and we'll have a gig, but also, please take care of fixing my rotten teeth. I can face people in a wheelchair if I have to but not with these teeth." I immediately gave Paul my hand to shake and told him we had a deal. As early as December 17 I posted a little pre-announcement that Paul would be checking out the venue. Three days later, the show was officially announced and the news was published by all the metal portals.



Lunch with Paul at the Mex Cantina restaurant, next door to the club.



The days after we announced the news were truly unbelievable. Emails from journalists were arriving from all sides and fans were asking in disbelief if it was truly happening. I opened a thread on the IMFC forum to keep everyone updated on the show with information on coming to Croatia and letting them know all fan club members would have free entry.

THE FIRST PAUL DI'ANNO SHOW AFTER SEVEN YEARS!!!

The story of Paul Di'Anno's arrival in Croatia so that doctors could save his legs, so that finally, after seven years, he could walk and return to performances, has just gained a new dimension. Exactly the day before the big Iron Maiden concert in Croatia, Paul will perform at a free concert in Zagreb, to greet all the fans and thank them for everything they did for him. We hope you find a way and time and come to witness the first Di'Anno concert in seven years and the first Maiden concert in two and a half years.

We ask you once again, if you want to do one special and good thing this Christmas time, please click on www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno and see how you can help Paul by purchasing a special WHU edition of the book 'Killers' which will be printed in just 50 copies.

Many of them sent messages saying “No, we don’t want a free concert. We want to pay and help Paul more this way,” but I was uncompromising in my decision. We’d figure out Paul’s finances so far and anyone who wanted to donate could buy merch at the gig and help that way. But as it was the fans who had organised themselves and helped Paul so much already, donating and making the effort to get him back on his feet, I felt it was simply right that they get something special back. Paul agreed, of course, provided I would ensure his boys from Norway would have their work permits, travel, hotel and other expenses covered.



As you can see in the above photo, as Christmas approached and I was running around doing what needed to be done for Paul, my wife, now three months pregnant, was packing numerous books for shipping, their numbers dominated by 'Iron Maiden' and 'Killers', the sales of which were being donated to cover Paul's costs. This is what our living room looked like for a full fortnight.

The books were a truly great source of income and really helped in shopping for Paul's day to day needs, which were numerous. I constantly and almost maniacally wrote out shopping lists, noted expenses and such like. Sometimes I felt quite lost in all that was going on. Violeta's pregnancy, several hundred unsent books, new books on pre-order, Paul's expenses, organising the event, communicating with all the doctors, organising transport to therapies, visiting the care home and more. When I think back on it now, I really don't know how we managed it all.

As Christmas came closer, I utilised its marketing value to once again remind people there were still books available to buy, and it worked. Very soon they were all sold out.



The above post referred to Paul's visibly less swollen leg and its return to a healthy colour. The colour gradually returned, first returned to his thighs then below the knees. With the improvement to his physical health, Paul's mental state also became significantly better, although there were oscillations here and there. Somewhere around Christmas, maybe seeing all the colourful lights and people going back to their families, Paul started to feel homesick. For the first time in almost a month in Croatia, he started posting on Facebook about wanting to go home.

When he first arrived at the Medisal care home, Paul praised the food every day, the courtesy of all the staff, and especially one young lady named Irena. He called her his 'Tea Angel', as she was always on hand to make his tea and bring him anything he needed. He was full of praise and writing posts like the one I quoted earlier, 'Croatia I love you'. But in the run up to Christmas, the care home got a new nickname from him, and from then on he would only call it the 'Gulag', after the infamous and horrific Russian prison camps. Now the food became awful and only pork based when he doesn't eat pork, the staff were suddenly inadequate and surly, no one spoke English any more, their treatment of him worsened, the walls of his room became narrower and anything that could get worse, did. Of course, none of it was actually happening, but this was the other side of Paul, depression and PTSD, and while I had sympathy for him, it was something I could never truly understand. All I could do was give him words of support and try to ensure he would feel at least a little bit at home for Christmas. Thus, my wife and I had the idea of buying him a Christmas tree for his room and decorating it in claret and blue baubles, the colours of his favourite football team, West Ham United..

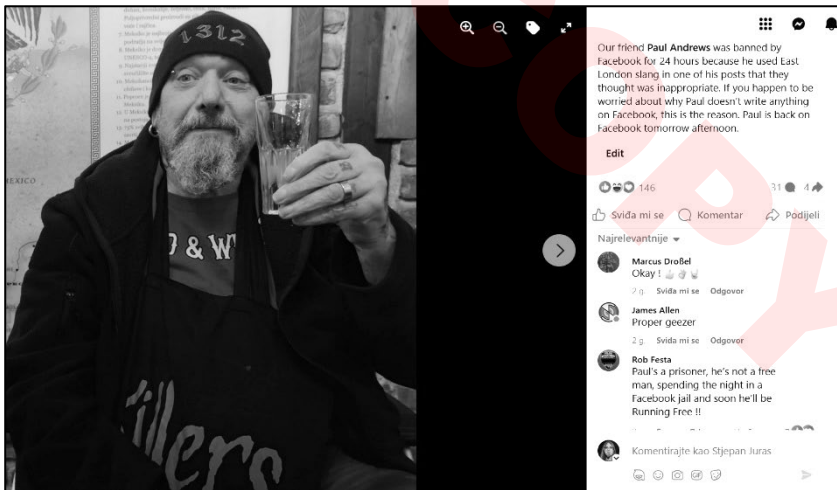


Paul maintained to me that the term Gulag didn't have a negative connotation in his mind and that it was just his sense of humour. I was coming to understand him and his specific sense of humour better with every passing day, but while it may have been funny to him, the care home's management definitely didn't see the funny side. It was very hard for me to explain to them that he was only joking. Something that was supposed to be a bit of a PR and advert for them, on the basis of which they'd even given us a hefty discount, now became something they disapproved of, especially when they realised that Paul is quite active on Facebook. No one from the care home wanted to read that the food is bad, that the staff are crap, and so on. Several times, I was called in to the care home to discuss the issue. But as much as I tried to explain the problem to Paul, it was in one ear and out the other.

On December 28 2021, at the very end of the year, I wrote the following newsletter to the fans who were keeping abreast of the situation. This was based the information told to me by Paul's doctor. *'Paul Di'Anno's health is getting better and better. His left leg will be ready for normal walking by April 2022. His right leg, which is in a much heavier condition today, is almost twice as small in circumference as it was when Paul came for treatments. Today Paul was very happy as he finally started to feel his toes and move them. According to the plans, the first of the two planned surgeries should take place within two months. After that, Paul will be able to stand and walk with the help of a carbon orthosis, and this will happen until his first concert in seven years, on May 21st. 2022 in Zagreb, the day before the Iron Maiden concert. The concert will be free for all fans who come to Zagreb. Although we have raised a considerable amount of funds for operations and treatments, his daily life in Zagreb requires costs. If you have an opportunity, click on the website www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno and order one of several book packages. With your purchase, you are helping Paul directly, because that money goes into his hands on a daily basis, so that he can live here with dignity. Paul thanks you from the bottom of his heart and will gladly sign the certificate and dedicate it to you. Show once again that we are truly powerful when we come together and help Paul by purchasing books at www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno'*

Working with Paul wasn't the only challenging thing during that time, there were many other things surrounding us that needed attention. For instance, while he was still in the UK, Paul had signed and personalised autograph cards for every purchased book. Kastro now sent them to me by post, the same way that I had originally sent the blank cards to him. When the signed cards arrived in Croatia, our postal service, like any other in the EU, seemed to be in a vendetta against the UK over the matter of Brexit. Even the smallest item had to go through customs, so they tried to charge us for fifty signed pieces of paper, insisting I send them an invoice to show what I paid for them. It took me a long time to convince them that they were only autographs, sent for charity purposes in order to help a specific individual. This is what I wrote on my Facebook at the time.

Damn postal customs in Croatia! They wanted to clear customs and charge for the signed autograph cards that Paul Di'Anno signed to the buyers of my books, which thus helped his treatment. A scandalous and inhumane attempt. After ten days of stretching and numerous proofs that Kastro Pergjoni from London did not send me anything of any value other than sentiment for those who helped Paul, the autograph tickets finally went into delivery and will be with me in two to three days.



Paul and his standard Facebook Jail activity.

As you can see by the previous photo, Paul had livened up completely, both in his positive and sadly his less positive characteristics. Paul can sometimes be very funny, a good guy anyone would want to befriend. And other times he's a total nightmare. He was no stranger to going to 'Facebook jail', whether because of what he calls his sense of humour or for something Facebook characterises as hate speech. More than once, I had to let fans know that Paul was OK, that they don't need to worry and that he was only offline because he was temporarily suspended from the platform.

Living with him these past three years, I've come to the conclusion that there are no actual 'triggers' for his behaviour swings. They can happen at any time, in any circumstance. They simply happen and are fast, unannounced and usually very forceful. However, as quickly as they come, they also disappear and Paul is once more happy, wonderful and smiling, as though nothing's happened.

This behaviour has been a subject of much discussion among fans on social media and in personal conversations. You'll all be aware of the fact that since the inception of social media, everyone is suddenly an expert on everything, and multiple people piped up to justify Paul's behaviour by armchair diagnosing him with serious mental health issues and disorders like borderline personality disorder, bipolar disorder or worse.

According to Wikipedia, *"borderline personality disorder (BPD), also known as emotionally unstable personality disorder (EUPD), is a personality disorder characterized by a pervasive, long-term pattern of significant interpersonal relationship instability, a distorted sense of self, and intense emotional responses. Individuals diagnosed with BPD frequently exhibit self-harming behaviours and engage in risky activities. Symptoms such as dissociation (a feeling of detachment from reality), a pervasive sense of emptiness, and an acute fear of abandonment are prevalent among those affected, and can be triggered by events other people consider normal. The behaviour usually starts in early adulthood and in various situations. Misuse of substances, depression and eating disorders are also linked to some cases of BPD and in about 10% of affected people die by suicide.*

"Bipolar affective disorder, formerly known as manic depression, is an endogenic mental disorder characterised by alternating episodes of mania and

depression. It falls under the umbrella of severe endogenic psychosis. The change between phases is irregular, so there can be brief periods of mania followed by prolonged depressive episodes, or vice versa. It doesn't adversely affect the patient's personality, and between episodes the patient appears healthy. It's somewhat more frequent in overweight persons. The clinical presentation depends on the episode the illness is currently in, whether manic or depressive. Bipolar disorder is a severe health disorder with a high rate of affected patients and a high mortality rate. It's characterised by typical repetitive episodes and vulnerability that lasts a lifetime. Subsyndromal symptoms are often present, as well as clearly delineated episodes of mania and depression (abnormally good or bad mood), of varying frequency and intensity. This disorder carries a high risk of suicide, as well as the proclivity for misuse of alcohol, psychoactive substances, and is linked to a significant reduction in quality of life and economic consequences."

However, prolonged drug use, especially cocaine (something Paul Di'Anno openly bragged about in his autobiography and was known to mention publicly on stage) also has long-term consequences. Having a 'short fuse' is one of the main characteristics of cocaine users. Now, I'm not a doctor or an expert, nor do I have Paul's consent to discuss this or speculate, so I'll just say this: having seen Paul's medical files and heard his own recent public comments on the subject where he has openly spoken about having been diagnosed with severe depression (which he and many others call 'the black dog') and heavy PTSD. Though there's no indication which trauma in his life the PTSD refers to. He's never mentioned it and ultimately, it's up to us to take his stance at face value and respect it.

I was in two minds for a long time about how I'd write this book. Would it be in chronological diary form or simply start the story and let it move forward and take me where it wants to? Looking back now, I can't deny that our journey was riddled with stressful, even horrible and seemingly hopeless situations, in which I questioned all my decisions and almost regretted getting myself into all this. But in other situations, Paul Di'Anno made me feel truly proud of him and I can say with absolute certainty that as long as he's alive, so is rock'n'roll!

Precisely because of all these everyday moments, I realised that if I described each day in detail the book would be thousands of pages long.

There has literally not been a single day where something didn't happen, either stressful, weird, or unusual, or something wonderful, motivational and exciting. The first month of Paul's stay in Croatia was full of such moments, so in the rest of this chapter I'll compile a selection to give you an insight into all the complexities of our collaboration and so you'll understand everything I've written on the past couple of pages.

Until I started writing about this, I didn't realise but the Paul who arrived in Croatia back then and Paul now are not the same person. There are drastic differences. From late November to mid-December 2021, Paul was a very different person, sincerely or not. He was well-disciplined and prepared to listen to instructions and rules. For example, as he wasn't able to quit smoking, he was allowed out into the care home's yard every day. To do this he would have to announce his smoke break in advance so the staff could come and take him outside. This way, he'd only smoke a couple of cigarettes a day. If he had to wear a Covis mask, he would. He respected the care home's opening hours and if he went out, he would always come back by 6pm. He was always ready on time when he had to go to his therapies. I was ecstatic at this development and hoped his self-discipline would last as long as possible, at least until he was fully healed. Alas, I was so very wrong. It's not for nothing that Paul Di'Anno's nickname is 'The Beast'. You can't tame the beast. It's why Tim Henderson, owner of Brave Worlds said, "This is why we call this business rock'n'roll." Paul doesn't respect any rules and I'm not saying this in a negative way but just describing how the situation always was. On his last stay in a Croatian care home, Paul would open the window and casually smoke a whole packet of cigarettes inside his room. The care home staff alerted me to this several times, since institutions have rules in place and the smoke could have been a problem for the other residents but Paul didn't care. Moreover, he smoked like this in every hotel he stayed at on tour and he once even dared to light up on a flight, but more on that later. That's Paul, uncontrolled and untameable and you either love him or hate him but he's not going to change. I only realised this later, but I remember talking to Steve Harris, excited and naively enthusiastic, telling him how Paul had changed and wasn't the old him anymore, that he'd realised some things. How he was exercising and improving daily; and how Steve looked at me like he was about to pat me on the head and said, "Stipe, dear Stipe, you don't know anything yet."

At the very start of this adventure, we'd subscribed Paul to cable TV and bought a gadget that turns regular TVs into smart TVs, so he could watch his favourite shows. Then, every day either he or the cleaner would clumsily move or disconnect a cable or Paul didn't know how to work the remote control. Whenever this happened, any time of day or night, he would call me to come to the care home ASAP and help him fix it, since neither he nor anyone else at the care home knew how to do it. It was always an easy fix that would take all of ten seconds. However, as we lived about 12 kilometres away across the city, it was a whole process getting to him. It didn't matter if we were cooking, eating, making love, working, entertaining guests or if we were sick and shouldn't leave the house. If he called, my wife and I would have to get in the car or I'd have to take a cab to the care home. Paul would yell at me over the phone to get there right away or he'd die of boredom and so on. Even worse was that he would immediately start posting on Facebook things like, "Bored, bored, bored", or something like, "Nobody cares about me, I'm left alone again!!!". And then people from all over the world would start asking what's wrong and replying, "You poor thing. What kind of monsters are these people. How can they do this to you?" Paul's vocabulary doesn't contain the words 'wait', 'soon' or 'later'. It has to be 'immediately' or 'now'.

When he had just arrived in Croatia and was being cooperative, it was because he was in really bad health and entirely dependent on others. I'd even go so far to say he was practically on his deathbed, having lost all will to do anything, maybe even live. His demanding nature returned gradually like the colour in his face, as his health improved, physically and mentally. Even the biggest beasts are harmless when they're dying, but Paul truly had new life and new hope breathed into him and very soon he felt alive again. The Beast was awakened and if anyone was expecting anything other than Paul as he naturally is, they were sorely mistaken. The gates of hell were open and the chains that held him down had broken.

One day at the clinic, Paul tried to explain to us that he needed someone to take care of his feet and asked for a podiatrist. As the Croatian 'podijatar' is very similar to 'pedijatar', we were confused. "Why would you need a paediatrician, they treat children?". "Not a paediatrician, a podiatrist," he

kept repeating, and spelled out the word. We exchanged more confused looks and shrugged. Because no one at the clinic, even the doctor knew what he was talking about, Paul was getting mad and angry at us. I went aside to google it and learned something new to me that day; there is an entire branch of medicine dedicated exclusively to diseases of the foot and it is very different to a pedicure. Googling further, I also found out that until recently, podiatry hadn't been represented in Croatia at all, and even now there was no one who practiced it exclusively. I learned many such things living alongside Paul, because all of us living healthy lives, are unbothered with medical and disability issues. We only see the surface, maybe there's even a primal kind of terror keeping us from wanting to peer into that world but to be an invalid and face the problems Paul has faced is in fact terrifying. And until we've been in that position, we cannot comprehend his behaviour, his needs, or anything else about him. We may think we understand but we're far, far from it.

Therefore, even though I don't understand it, I have to forcibly try to make sense of Paul's constant displeasure, his auto-destructive urges even when things are going well and all the other unbelievable things he was capable of doing. I truly couldn't understand the maniacal replacement of his walking aids he kept losing and paying for new ones or his abandoning several wheelchairs on a whim, and ordering new ones and spending more money (his own, not donations). Since we met in 2021, he's gone through at least five new wheelchairs and every one of them he said was "shit" and that he couldn't move in them. Some had the wrong kind of brake, some didn't have the right kind of footplates, some didn't have a good seat and others had terrible pillows. The wheelchairs all had one thing in common however, when he first ordered them and they were delivered, they were all initially perfect and everything functioned well. The real problem was deep inside Paul. He's always searching for something but never quite knowing what. We searched different stores endlessly, but there was always something wrong and after a while, Paul would inevitably and brutally reject the latest wheelchair and never look at them again, saying, "Do what you want with it, throw them in the bin for all I care." A big part of the problem, something every doctor, physiotherapist and wheelchair salesperson told us during the last three years, is that Paul doesn't actually know how to properly sit in a wheelchair. He never sat properly upright but more on his back than his

bum. This is also why he was constantly sliding out of the seat, something he complained about incessantly. His legs jutted too far out and not a single footplate was ever big enough for his demands.

The Christmas and New Year holidays are never a very good time for patients and residents in care homes. Croats are the world champions of combining public holidays and the workdays around them, so often extend their holiday from the week before Christmas to January 2nd only coming in for a few hours on some days. Anyone residing in an institution like a care home, even a private one, is condemned to basic care from a skeleton staff who come in for a little while and then go home or other towns to visit family. "Eternal boredom", as Paul would say. In that context, I completely understand his frustration and slow descent into depression in those days. I did what I could to spend as much time as possible with him. I brought him cakes or small gifts, while some other friends were doing the same. We tried to cheer him up with drinks and even home-made čvarci (a traditional and trademarked Croatian delicacy of pork and bacon scratchings). But Paul was still sinking. He was less and less focused, and it was beginning to show in various ways. He started being unready for his treatments and despite the van being on time and waiting for him, he often arrived late. Then I would have to pay penalties to the company if his driver Dino, who'd become his good friend in the meantime, had told them about this every time. Dino did his best to cover for Paul's mischief and in doing so, saved him a lot of money.

I've got one hilarious (though frustrating at the time) situation carved into my memory. Paul contacted me via Messenger on Christmas Day, right around lunchtime, but instead of, "Merry Christmas", the message read, "Disaster, disaster!" I really thought some huge shit had to have happened, that he'd hurt himself maybe even fallen and broken a bone on top of everything else. I called him back urgently, only for him to tell me in a dead calm voice, that he had run out of tea on Christmas Day and he would kill himself if he didn't immediately get some. "You're out of tea?? I just got you a whole pack yesterday!" I replied, to which he said he'd drunk it all. I pleading with him that it was a holiday, that nothing was open for the next two days, that there was no chance I'd find that Twinings tea anywhere but it all fell on deaf ears. He wouldn't hear of taking any of the continental teas we had at home, he just kept growling that he needed his tea, immediately

or he would go mad. This meant I had to get up from my family's Christmas dinner, get on my laptop and google for hours to see if I could find a single shop mad enough to work on Christmas that sells Twinings English Breakfast Tea. That brand isn't commonly sold in stores in Croatia, only in the massive supermarket chains. Several hours of searching and calling around, I managed to find a store that was open in (as we say in Croatia when we want to describe some obscure, out of the way location) some 'fucking wolf den behind God's feet'.

One late afternoon, when it was already dark, Paul called me and was yelling something I couldn't understand but I got that he was in the bathroom and had fallen on the floor. He was yelling so much however, that I nearly had a heart attack from the fright. In that moment, I thought he had fallen and hurt himself, all the effort's been in vain. The whole time, Paul was shouting something like, "Craaaaamp! Craaaaamp!" but I'd never heard this English word before and didn't understand it. As it turned out, Paul had a sudden cramp and he was writhing in pain. I yelled to Violeta to immediately call Dr Milošević, and he talked us through it in real time. The thing was that this happened while Paul was in the bathroom and he'd been crying out and calling for ten minutes, unable to reach the emergency button. As luck would have it, all the staff were upstairs on the first floor, giving the residents their dinner so couldn't hear his cries. I called Kristina, the home's social worker, on her private number and asked her to alert the staff urgently to go and help him, get him up and massage his leg so the cramp would go away. The silver lining was that the doctor told me cramps were a positive thing in all this because while the leg was 'dead', there were none. As the leg began to wake up and get better, the muscles began working at last and the cramps were just another bit of proof that we were doing a good job. There were many more situations like this with a different emergency each time. This is just one example so you can get an insight into what we were going through.

There were many unexpected requests for shopping trips often when it was inconvenient for all of us. Then we'd have to organise the adapted van and there was a lot of improvising to avoid having to pay for it. The drivers had become friends of us and they risked their jobs more than once driving Paul outside of the pre-agreed and pre-paid schedule. Luckily, I had distanced

myself from becoming Paul's 'everyday boy for fast food ordering', but against her will, Violeta ended up having to do it. And it was not just against her will; all the doctors and therapists warned us that Paul was eating and smoking too much and that he would never lower his weight with that behaviour. Instead of daily exercising and working to lose weight, Paul was putting it on. However, he was regularly posting on his Facebook in bold capital letters, variations on the theme of "I'm Starving!" and his online friends were replying with, "It's a shame how they're treating you" and, "Come back home and eat normally." Honestly, I was sick reading all this and being unable to say anything. People were led to believe that Paul was being mistreated when he truly had everything he needed and more. His doctor had written specific recommendations for his nutrition; what he was and wasn't allowed to eat. Paul however, never stuck to this regime. One day, he requested that we order him something from KFC (he was in his third care home by this point, more of which later) and I let the care home social worker know so she could meet the deliveryman outside. She replied, "Why did you order him food, are you mad?" I told her he'd called us and told us he was dying of hunger and hadn't eaten anything, at which she laughed and told me, "He's lying. Not only did he eat a full dinner, one of the other residents got some cakes and he ate all of those too." That's when things started becoming a bit clearer to me.

Paul will probably hate reading this chapter but everything I've written here happened exactly as I said and I stand by every word. The fact is, I'm still around as both a friend and a business associate and this issue (and many others) is behind us. I'm not writing this so someone can pat me on the back and say, "Poor you, the things you had to go through..." because as ugly and frustrating as some of the things were, there were at least three times as many fantastic moments. I'm writing this so you could all picture it in your heads. I want you to understand that helping someone when they're sick isn't ever easy and any one of us could end up in this kind of situation with a family member. And if no one else will step up when something like that happens, we simply have to roll up our sleeves and get to work. To be honest with you, this was my first such experience and was all a shock and a huge lesson for me.

Paul is also the world champion of buying needless things that he'll never use, especially expensive ones. I'll mention this at several points of this book, and his very first purchase was the most innocent of the lot. When he

initially arrived in Croatia, Paul was convinced that it would be extremely cold here and he sent us on a mission to buy him a size XXL jacket. Of course it wasn't plain sailing. Paul specified several requirements for the jacket: the colour, the cut and a hood with a fur trim. I remember Violeta and I spending the whole afternoon searching several different shopping centres and sending him photos of our finds, every one of which was rejected. "No", "Not good", "Awful" and so on, until he finally replied at around the twentieth attempt, with, "That one's great, get it". The money for this came from sales of my books. I say that because, while it's perfectly understandable that someone wants a winter jacket, when we brought it to him it ended up in his wardrobe with the tags on for the entire winter. When he had to move from the care home to a different one, he simply left it behind without having worn it once. I didn't like these events. In fact, I hated them. I thought, "Why the hell am I even writing and selling these books to help someone who treats that help in this way?" I even felt sorry for the people buying the books in good faith that they were helping, but at the end of the day at least they got a book and Paul's autograph.

One day he expressed a wish to get out of the care home and go to a restaurant in the city for a meal. "No problem", I said and decided to take him to what I think is the best and most exclusive burger place in town, '#We're 50'. I arranged and paid for a driver to pick him up with the adapted van and drop him off at Zagreb's Europe Square, where we met him. But when we got to the restaurant itself, there was a small step to climb in order to get to the terrace. It was something that any of Paul's helpers who push his wheelchair could handle in about ten seconds flat without any problems. In that moment, however, I don't know why, Paul decided that this was the toughest manoeuvre in the world and he started shouting loudly, making a scene that had people turning around in wonder. He was screaming that he didn't want to eat now, that he wanted to go back to the care home, demanding the van come back and pick him up. The van that we'd just paid 55 Euros for and arranged for it to come back in two hours? The van which was now driving other customers? We eventually managed to get him to calm down and not five minutes later we were at another restaurant named Johann Frank where he was laughing and acting like nothing had happened. These are the kinds of behavioural swings I mentioned earlier that are often compared to bipolar and borderline disorders.

I'll end this part of the story with Paul's fascination with the Adidas brand. He wouldn't accept us buying him any other brand, or any colours other than black or claret and blue. Because of the state of his leg, which couldn't fit into regular trouser legs even if they were XXXL, he insisted on a specific retro Adidas line where the lower leg was cut at the seam and held together with small buttons, meaning these could be unbuttoned and made wider. The problem was that this product had been discontinued more than a year earlier, and it was possible to find only if there was an odd article left in an outlet. Unfortunately, the only size we were able to find was medium. Paul really couldn't understand how it was possible that no one in Croatia seems to stock any size above XXL, it drove him crazy. This country has relatively few obese people, and sizes like 3XL, 4XL and 5XL can only be found in a few specialised stores. Dino the driver, also had a difficult time of it, dragging Paul from one Adidas store to another, as it was nearly impossible to find the things he wanted I know we wasted at least a week on Paul's orders searching for a special limited edition West Ham United pair of claret and blue trainers in all the stores we could think of. Looking back today I wonder why on earth we bent over backwards like that. It never crossed my mind at the time to even think, let alone say what I really should have said, "You're here for medical treatments to get you back on your feet. This is pointless stuff and you're not in a position to be making demands. If you really want Adidas, we'll buy you a pair of black ones. If you want something special, look for someone else to help you." But that's not me, I'm just not built that way.

Despite all the mental issues that cast a shadow on the end of this year, it ended with the hope that the positive results would come very soon. That's why, on December 30 2021, I posted a video of Paul working hard and exercising with weights, accompanied by AC/DC's 'Touch Too Much'. His therapist Matteo was a good companion on Paul's journey to mental and physical health and there was always great motivational music playing, usually Metallica, AC/DC or Pantera. With the end of the holiday season at the clinic which had greatly depressed him, he threw himself into strengthening his upper body muscles, which is as important to walking with the aid of crutches or a walking frame, as the legs. The day was coming when he would be moving from a small, cramped room to a larger exercise

room, where several people would be able to work with him at once. 2021 thus ended with high hopes and expectations.



Stjepan Juras

30. prosinca 2021. · 🌐



'Touch Too Much' - an ideal song for Paul Di'Anno's physiotherapy and foot treatment, which was followed by strengthening the upper musculature of the body. Paul is getting better every day, and that can be seen in the strength he gets and the positivity he shows. We go on bravely until victory, until Paul gets to his feet and walks on his own. All those who want to help Paul in his life battle, and who also want to get something nice, this is the right opportunity. Buy special, strictly limited hardcover books 'Killers' + 'Killers' shopping bag or a whole set of books on Iron Maiden albums and you will get an autograph of Paul Di'Anno with dedication. There are only a few left, so hurry up and go to www.maidencroatia.com/helpdianno



👍👍 Rasmus Stavnsborg, Nathan Waters i 61 drugih

4 komentara 15 dijeljenja



PORTSKO - DIALAGISTIČKI C

THE ABORIGINAL
MAIDEN AVENUE
1964-1999

HARD WORK PAYS OFF

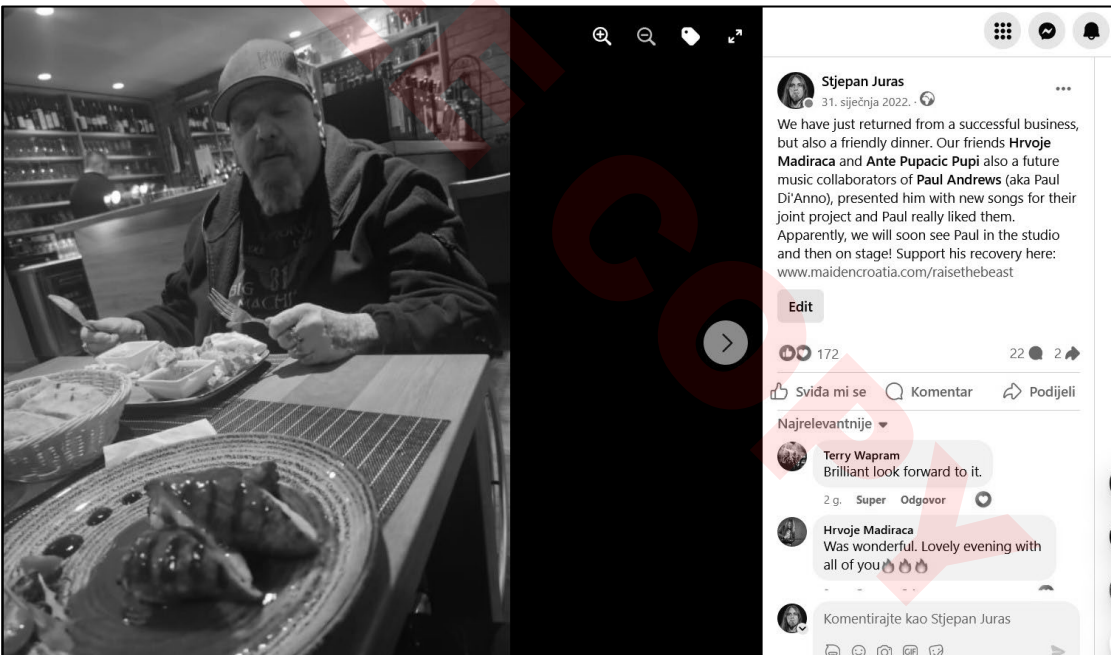
When I show anyone the photo on the previous page, where Paul Di'Anno is posing with 'Maiden Avenue' (a book by author Ricardo Lira, which I published a few months earlier), they can't get over how much things had changed since Paul arrived in Zagreb in late November 2021. This was taken some five months later. It's not just about the smaller girth of his legs, the colour and texture of his skin but also about Paul's posture, facial expression, the decisiveness in his eyes, his gym surroundings, and the fact that he was finally able to fit both feet into trainers, as opposed to the heavy bandages he'd been forced to wear before. To better see the difference, have a look at both photos side by side.



This was without a doubt the result of the dedicated work by the doctors, therapists and all the care home staff, but the most credit for it has to go to

Paul himself and the amount of effort he put in. Hard work brings visible results. From the start of 2022 to early April when the second photo was taken, with all the setbacks he faced (and there were always setbacks) Paul made very good progress. Several projects were also progressing in parallel during this period.

The Warhorse boys were working on new material and we met up early in the year, at a Zagreb restaurant called Kapuciner, to see what Paul thought of the new songs. As the demos had been sung by a female vocalist, their sound itself made Paul say they were a bit soft, but he liked the guitars and the rhythm and it would be a pity not to give them a try. The decision was made that they would start recording in April and make a few singles to start with, to test the waters.



The second, parallel project was the show in Zagreb. As the band was from Norway and Paul from the UK (both outside the EU), it would be necessary to obtain work permits for them, organise travel to Zagreb for the band,

accommodation, food as well as passes and a guestlist from all over the world. Additionally, we'd have to constantly be in touch with Iron Maiden themselves, as we'd planned to invite them to the event and show them a good time. A lot was riding on this and we made an effort to ensure it went flawlessly.

While Paul exercised, two surgeries were being planned the main one on his leg and also a complete reconstruction of Paul's teeth. The first dentist we went to examined Paul's teeth and was very critical of him, having a go at him for letting it get this bad. Not only that, he started quoting sky-high prices, possibly knowing the fans were fundraising and hoping to make a profit by charging us more than usual. Luckily, I suspected this and we looked elsewhere. Alf the co-owner of the Bikers Beer Factory, heard that we were looking for a dentist and suggested the excellent team at the Arena dental clinic, who gave us such a low quote for this complicated procedure that initially we wondered if they had miscalculated. In addition, unlike the previous dentist who had said that working on Paul's teeth would be a long process and incredibly complicated, they told us they could have it all done within a few days.

As Paul's leg was looking better and he was responding very well to his treatments, the time was approaching when he would need to go to several appointments at the hospital to examine his general health and see if he was ready for such a serious surgery. In order to get this done efficiently in one day, we had to dial a lot of numbers, adjust the times of the various appointments and coordinate with the drivers and the care home staff who would need to take blood and urine samples on an empty stomach.

Paul was also given the task of writing new lyrics for the Warhorse demos but try as he might, he felt unready and unable to concentrate. On his request, I bought him a writing pad and a set of markers and pens but sadly the pages remained empty. After a few weeks of waiting, the boys in the band realized there would be no lyrics forthcoming and started working on them by themselves.

Of course, there were plenty of other things going on in my life. On the family side, my wife was due to give birth to our first child soon and sometime in her eighth month of pregnancy she publicly showed her belly on social media.





Of course, there were more obstacles on Paul's journey this journey, like the fact that Paul ended up getting Covid 19 in spite of being vaccinated three times. When he tested positive, it wasn't easy for anyone knowing the state he was in we were very worried that the illness might escalate and result in serious consequences. His infection brought problems for the clinic too as he'd been there for one of his treatments coughing and sniffing before we knew he had the virus. Later, when it was found out he was infected with Covid, the whole clinic had to close and its staff isolate for a week, causing them some financial losses too. Of course, no one blamed Paul; these things happen, I merely

wanted to show that sometimes unexpected events will happen and slow us down for a week or two. It's simply a fact of life and it has to be taken into account.

Apart from a break while Paul had Covid 19 in late January 2022, the treatments continued every day and Paul's leg measurements were getting better. We were moving towards a point where we could seriously consider surgery. At the start of this book, I pointed out that it would be wrong and unprofessional to disclose any kind of medical files and information other than what was made public at the time on social media, by Paul himself or with his permission. Accordingly, I won't be giving a detailed explanation of the extremely complex situation with Paul's leg and his general health, but I'll give you a layman's version. First of all, surgery isn't a simple process. For a man to be ready to be put under heavy anaesthesia on a respirator, for

many hours, the body needs to be in excellent condition. Had Paul immediately gone into surgery when he arrived in Croatia, he would probably have died. But with all the treatments and exercises, he had finally reached a stage where surgery could go ahead. This is why you were shown all the exercises, the misery, the medicines and antibiotics he had to take before he went under the scalpel. The doctors wanted a strong and healthy 'Beast'.



As for Paul, not only was he lifting weights, stretching, working hard every day; he was literally up and walking. Of course, some days it was only a few steps, others up to ten metres but in most cases, he was lifting himself up with just the strength of his arms and really walking on legs as yet unoperated on. Yes, a miracle! In those moments, everyone believed that he'd get well again soon. Sometime in April, Paul even started losing weight and gaining muscle mass and the videos and photos of his improvements that we put on social media delighted his fans around the world.

As I have described before, when Paul arrived in Croatia, both his legs were in very bad shape but the right one was truly catastrophic. As I understood it and as it was presented to me, Paul had had a motorcycle accident in which he'd badly injured the leg but he finally shattered it in a skiing accident in the Alps. How true this story is I have no idea nor did I want to challenge Paul's claims but he's never given much information about this skiing accident in the Alps. The next thing I was told was that Paul had undergone knee replacement surgery at the time of the accident but that his body had rejected the new knee. The only solution had been to remove the knee and implant what's known as 'medical cement' which would glue together the two bones in a certain position: the femur and the tibia. This was done in the UK with a plan to perform another knee replacement once Paul's body recovered enough.

The problem with the medical cement, as I was told, is that it should only be in the body for up to a year, after which it becomes toxic and can do a lot of damage. According to Paul, he'd had it for several years because just after the original surgery, Covid 19 happened, and apart from Covid patients and emergencies, no one else was a priority. As Paul was marked as a 'non-priority patient', he was left in the wind, with his leg becoming more and more inflamed and his condition deteriorating significantly. This is the story Paul told both me and the doctors and repeated to the media several times. I can't confirm its veracity, only that those were his own words. This story was our starting point and this was what the original treatment plan was based on. First, it was necessary to save the leg from amputation, treat the open sores and infection, lessen the girth of the leg through lymphatic drainage, return circulation and a normal skin colour. The neglected toes and toenails had to be treated and only then could he start working on moving the foot, moving the leg, and using exercise and electrostimulation to get the muscles going and bring some life back into it. However, once Paul's overall condition improved and we were able to get more detailed test results, there were even more questions in our heads. The leg was so destroyed on the inside that no simple knee replacement surgery would help as we'd initially thought.

For this reason, Dr Milošević suggested several ideas and approaches, because in that moment it was truly a dilemma; what would be the best thing for Paul right now and the best long-term solution. At one point, we

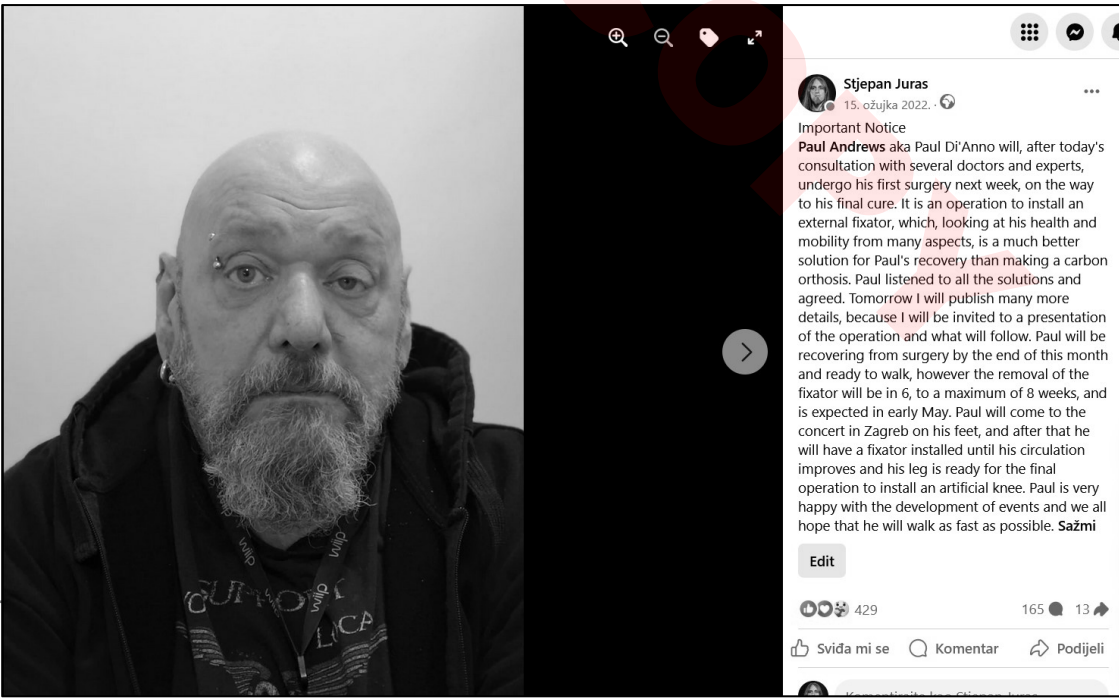
Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

even considered the option announced to the fans on March 15 2022, in the below text:

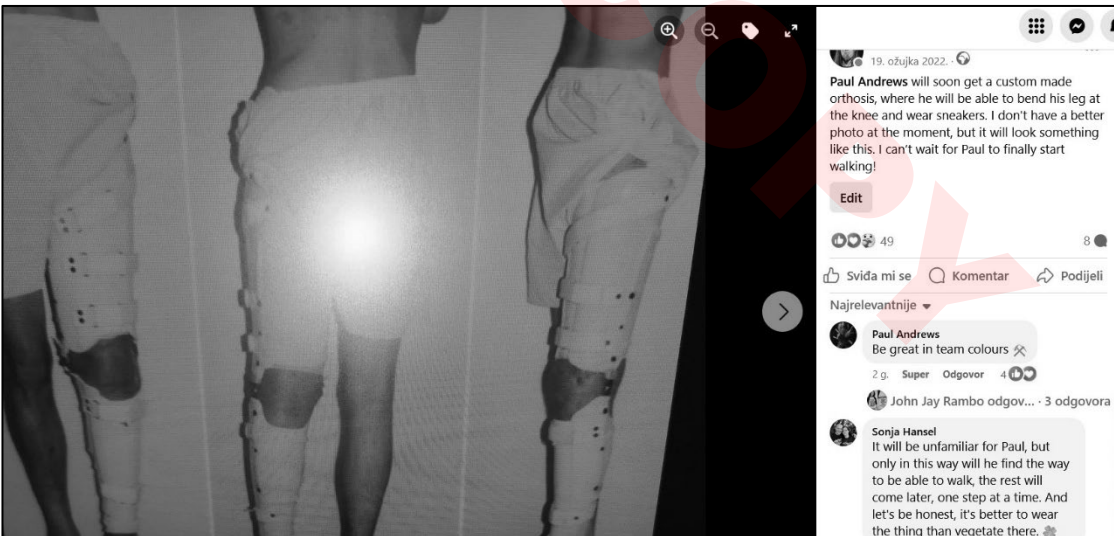
Important Notice

Paul Andrews aka Paul Di'Anno will, after today's consultation with several doctors and experts, undergo his first surgery next week, on the way to his final cure. It is an operation to install an external fixator, which, looking at his health and mobility from many aspects, is a much better solution for Paul's recovery than making a carbon orthosis. Paul listened to all the solutions and agreed. Tomorrow I will publish many more details, because I will be invited to a presentation of the operation and what will follow. Paul will be recovering from surgery by the end of this month and ready to walk, however the removal of the fixator will be in 6, to a maximum of 8 weeks, and is expected in early May. Paul will come to the concert in Zagreb on his feet, and after that he will have a fixator installed until his circulation improves and his leg is ready for the final operation to install an artificial knee. Paul is very happy with the development of events and we all hope that he will walk as fast as possible.

Stjepan



An external fixator, for those of you who don't know, is one of those awful sets of steel rods, inserted into the leg to hold the bones in place. Not only does it look terrible but the patient can't put on trousers over it, no shoes or anything. Although Paul initially agreed to the procedure, the next day he told us, "No, I don't want this. I don't know how I'd live with it or sleep with it, how I'll do anything. I'd like to find another option after all." So, although it had been announced as a done deal, ultimately it didn't happen. Another solution was a special orthosis, not like the classic ones you see but one worn over the entire leg, which would at least allow Paul to walk once the leg was better and continue the intensive work that might in the future result in surgery after all. The problem with these feverish attempts to find a quick solution was that the funds raised were depleting quite fast, and it became clear that Paul wouldn't have the financial means to undergo any sort of serious surgery. When we realised that what he needed wasn't a simple knee replacement as we'd been told, it became crystal clear to me that we were in big trouble. After all the effort, after all the big announcements, the motivating messages, the many donations and the expenditure of both strength and willpower, it looked like we were going to go down and surrender without so much as a shot fired. I was in despair, wondering what people would say about this disappointing result. I felt terrible, with constant stomach aches from the worry, but I never once considered giving up. No surrender!





When things start going wrong for Superman, he goes to replenish his strength in his icy home, the Fortress of Solitude. My place to heal my soul, apart from my island home, are the Canaries. In the midwinter, for my birthday, Violeta and I flew to Gran Canaria and Tenerife for a week. Since our 2017 wedding, when we spent our honeymoon there, I try to travel to that beautiful place at least once a year. Palm trees, waves, black sand beaches, volcanoes, fantastic weather and vegetation, far away from all my worries and cares. I needed this trip to recuperate and forget all the stress and... BLINK...

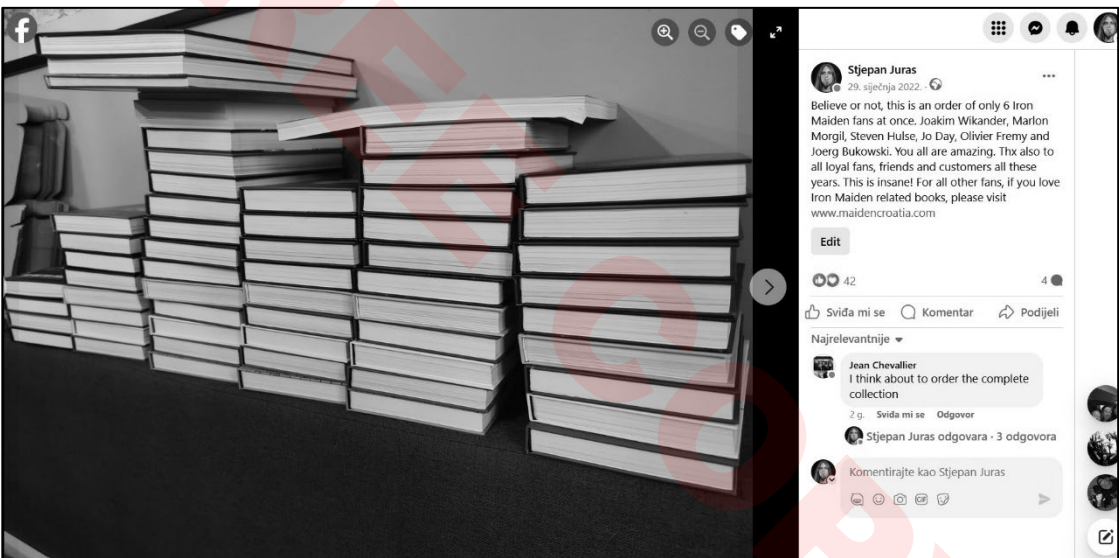
What now? I thought, checking my phone, only to see a message from Paul. "Hey mate, I'm starving, can you please order a big portion of čevapi for me?" And there we are. Not even on Tenerife in the middle of the Atlantic at the other end of the world, was I getting any peace. And of course, instead of switching off my phone like any normal person, I opened the Glovo delivery app and ordered food to a care home in Zagreb. I simply made peace with this now being my fate.

Just three weeks later on March 12 (Steve Harris's 66th birthday), a special event was brewing on another island. Kastro Pergjoni was hosting a grand re-opening of the Cart & Horses. How could I not be there? Having arrived back in Croatia from the Canaries, I booked a ticket for London. I knew this would be a big day and I wasn't wrong. Hundreds of fans came from all over the world to witness the event even though many of them hadn't managed to get a ticket. We had a fantastic time. I really needed something like this, as it was the first large post-pandemic gathering of Iron Maiden fans. I'm not someone who expects gratitude but I'll admit I was pleased by the attention and kind words I got from many people for what I was trying to do for Paul. Of course, the same went for Kastro himself. What truly made my night

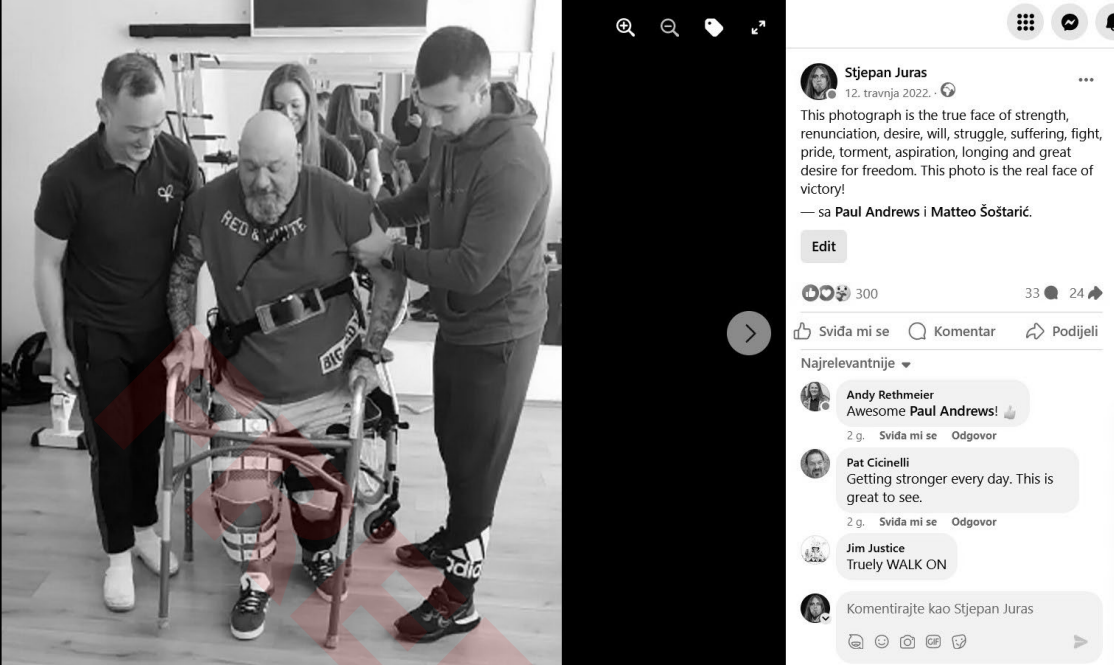
however, was meeting Steve Harris's sister, Linda. As soon as we were introduced, I liked her. She was full of understanding and asked a lot of questions about Paul's health.



If what I'm writing here sounds calculated I can confirm that it was. I had an idea when I met Linda. If anyone outside the music industry is Steve, it's Linda. And I had needed to find a simple way to invite Steve to attend Paul's gig in Croatia, to come and support his old friend and colleague. I'd had this idea in my mind since the very beginning, and had wondered what a photo of Paul and Steve together would look like after all these years. When the Cart & Horses event was over, I went back to my routine of looking after Paul but I stayed in touch with Linda.



Although I know I make myself sound like a martyr in this book, I was also living some of my best days in terms of business in that period. One example is the above photo; an order of sixty books ordered on the same day by just six people. Since the Paul story started, the sales of my books was constantly increasing and breaking records. Hard work pays off? Maybe, but the same was true for Paul. His health was getting visibly better and the money was dripping away. We had to react somehow. It didn't take me a long time to come up with a plan and get back into action again.



The first thing I did was publish a photo of Paul walking with the aid of a Zimmer frame, assisted by his therapists in Zagreb, with the caption, *'This Photograph is the true face of strength, renunciation, desire, will, struggle, suffering, fight, pride, torment, aspiration, longing and great desire for freedom. This photo is the real face of Victory.'*

The photo was taken on April 12, when the money had all but dried up. It's actually a screenshot from a video I made at the time, but I realised how fantastic this shot was and captured the frame. The captioned photo moved tectonic plates and the photo soon went viral, published by all the rock media and shared thousands of times. We had the world's attention now and it was just a matter of what I'd ask them to do.

But before we get to that, let's step back to the end of January 2022, when the time came for Paul to leave Croatia for the next six months, having spent 90 days in the EU. Obviously, that didn't happen, but how did it actually play out?



ACAB CRIME

As I said at the start of this book, Paul's trip to Croatia was a difficult mission from day one. This was not only because of his exceptionally poor health condition, but also because of the process of treating him required a lot of paperwork and this was still while Covid 19 restrictions were in place. At that point, none of us expected that Paul would remain in Croatia for long, so none of our plans were laid out for longer than a month. But very quickly after the preliminary medical examinations, it was quite clear that Paul would have to stay here for at least six or seven months, which then turned into more than a year. As a British citizen after Brexit, Paul could only stay in Croatia for just 90 days. This meant he would have to leave the European Union at the end of February and wouldn't be allowed to return for another 90 days. How the hell are we going to solve this?

Before we got the right information about the rules of entering the EU, we planned to solve it with a simple trick. The idea was to go to Bosnia and Herzegovina for a day out, enter a non-EU country for a couple of days and return to Croatia. However, we soon realised we were wrong. Not only was the maximum allowed stay 90 days but after that Paul wouldn't be able to simply leave and return immediately. Once he left another 90 days or three months would have to pass before he would be allowed back. What do we do now?

There was nothing for it, we had to start studying the complicated bureaucracy and find a way, perhaps by appealing to sentiment, polite words and pleasant cooperation with the Croatian police to come to an agreement that would allow Paul to remain in Croatia for his treatments. I searched and googled for days to find the right person to contact until I finally reached someone who could advise me. They explained what documents I'd need to download, the forms I'd need to fill in and how Paul would be able to get a permit to remain in the country. I explained in detail how serious his health situation was and that stopping treatment now could be fatal for him and a waste of the great deal of money the fans had so generously raised. I have to say, I found the Croatian Ministry of the Interior

very approachable and understanding, and they really did want to help. Paul on the other hand, found it all tedious and wasn't very cooperative because for him, it all amounted to 'stress'. In order to submit the application, I had to fill out details like the names of Paul's mother and father, his national insurance number and other information I couldn't know from my general knowledge of him, so I needed his help. Any time I asked him a question, the response was so reluctant that I sometimes felt as though I was doing him a disservice rather than trying to save him and get him approved for leave to remain in Croatia. When I'd filled in almost all the relevant information and sent it in to the police, the last thing I needed was a certificate that he hadn't been held criminally liable for anything over a certain period of time, I think it was about nine months.

To obtain the certificate, the person seeking it must go in person to an office in the UK and apply for it there. This meant that Paul would have to travel to the UK and that kind of trip wasn't possible right then. At the time, we were still unaware that Paul could in fact fly without any significant problems and paying for extortionate ground transport in an ambulance van was no longer an option.

I tried to get it all sorted out through the British embassy in Zagreb, to see if Paul and I could go there to sign the forms but every attempt seemed to be futile. I tried to convince Croatian police that Paul was a disabled person and the chances that he'd been capable of committing a crime in the past nine months were minimal and he could die if sent back to the UK. However, nothing helped. I was despairing, since the end of Paul's allowed stay in Croatia was fast approaching, and I was already calculating our options and the possibility of simply ignoring the law and having him stay in Croatia incognito until someone remembered he was there and forced him to leave by deportation. This would have been extremely difficult however, since Paul is a public person and appears in the media on a fairly regular basis. In despair, I asked the person responsible for these applications if there was anything else we could do and got a slightly unexpected response. "You know what, I'll classify your application as 'submitted' and add a note that a further document is required before a final decision can be made. In the meantime, you do your best to obtain the necessary certificate, you've got plenty of time now. While you're working towards it, your application will be

filed away and won't be considered. Technically, if the application has been submitted but not resolved Paul's stay in Croatia can be prolonged indefinitely. It's a grey area which can occasionally be exploited in situations like this one. Just make sure that Paul leads a normal life and most importantly doesn't do anything that would draw police attention. Pass on my greetings and wish him a quick recovery."

This was on January 21 2022, just a few days before Paul's stay in the EU would have run out. I couldn't have imagined a better solution to our predicament. Of course, I thanked them and promised I would try obtain the certificate, knowing full well it would never happen, since I couldn't do anything on my own and Paul had barely lifted a finger to help. Of course, I invited everyone in the office to Paul's show at the Bikers Beer Factory.

Just two days following the surprise solution to the problem, there was a panicked phone call from the Medisal care home, telling me that the police were in Paul's room and that I had to come urgently. What had happened was that in order to get as much coverage of Paul's upcoming show in Croatia and show his progress, we got one of the biggest and most widely read Croatian newspapers, Večernji List to do an exclusive interview with Paul. The paper put Paul's picture on the front cover and the centrefold. Photographer Željko Hladika, whose photo is at the beginning of this chapter, took a series of photos of Paul in which he wore his notorious 1312 cap, which translates to ACAB when applied to the alphabet, the acronym for 'All Cops Are Bastards'. The only thought in my head as I rushed to the care home was, "Great. Now we have a huge problem." I had catastrophic visions in my head of cancelling the show, potential deportation and the termination of Paul's treatment. How many times had I told him not to display this cap in public in Croatia because I knew how strict the rules are? The paper had only come out that morning and the police had found him by noon.

The police took Paul's personal details and started asking about his stay in the care home, demanding I provide them the accommodation contract, a residential permit which he didn't have and they started to investigate whether Paul even had permission to perform in Croatia. The friendly person who had helped us in the Ministry of the Interior sent me an email

asking, "Did he really have to do this to us?" It wasn't looking good at all. Paul however, seems have some unbelievable luck in his life often down to his reputation as the former singer of Iron Maiden. When I spoke to the police department that had sent officers to talk to Paul, it turned out that someone's children there were huge Iron Maiden fans and this saved Paul from all the trouble that was brewing. What a relief! The police officers were told to give him an informal talking to, telling him what the problem was and ordering him to either hand the cap over to them or throw it in the trash. This time, they'd turn a blind eye and wouldn't even fine him. For his part, Paul pretended he had no idea what the problem was. The old fox claimed he'd simply been given the cap as a gift by a fan and that it, "seemed cool".



Screenshot of the web portal article in Večernji list

In the end, Paul stayed in Croatia as a non-EU citizen for a year and two months, something that can only be ascribed to some clever avoidance of bureaucracy, and use of legal grey areas, allowing him the opportunity of staying here as long as he needed to.

However, this was one of the breaking moments that signalled the beginning of the end for Paul's stay at the Medisal care home. It wasn't immediate, the end came a couple of months later because of the signed accommodation contract but his summer 'deportation' to a different care home was inevitable. Paul, naturally, learned precisely nothing from this, because the situation with the police had been resolved in his favour and that was the only thing he cared about. But events like this one kept cropping up, as you'll read later. This time however, his lucky Iron Maiden star had cast its light on him again.

Let's get back now to the seemingly hopeless moment of despair when we became aware that the funds we'd raised had been depleted and something new would have to be done to get the campaign rolling again, to give Paul's story a happy ending after all. In early April, the doctor sat me down to explain what we could do to alleviate Paul's mobility issues with what was left of the money while we waited to fundraise more for the much more complicated operation he needed. At the same time, Paul and Hrvoje Madiraca set up another meeting in Zagreb. Hrvoje had rented a studio in Zagreb, as it had been decided in the meantime that the band would record a few songs and finally present themselves to the public. A thought started forming in my head, namely what if we self-produced a DVD single, a special release with two new songs by Paul and lots of the photos and videos taken so far showing his progress? Yes, that idea seemed quite okay, but simply selling a DVD single in a little cardboard sleeve wouldn't exactly raise much money to continue Paul's treatment, since its value isn't great. In order to increase demand, I had the idea that Paul could sign every numbered copy of the single which would give it exclusivity and collector's value. In addition to the DVD, I had the idea of adding an event t-shirt for the Zagreb gig in West Ham United colours. If I know one thing, I know Iron Maiden fans and their dedication, since I'm one myself. This was going to work!

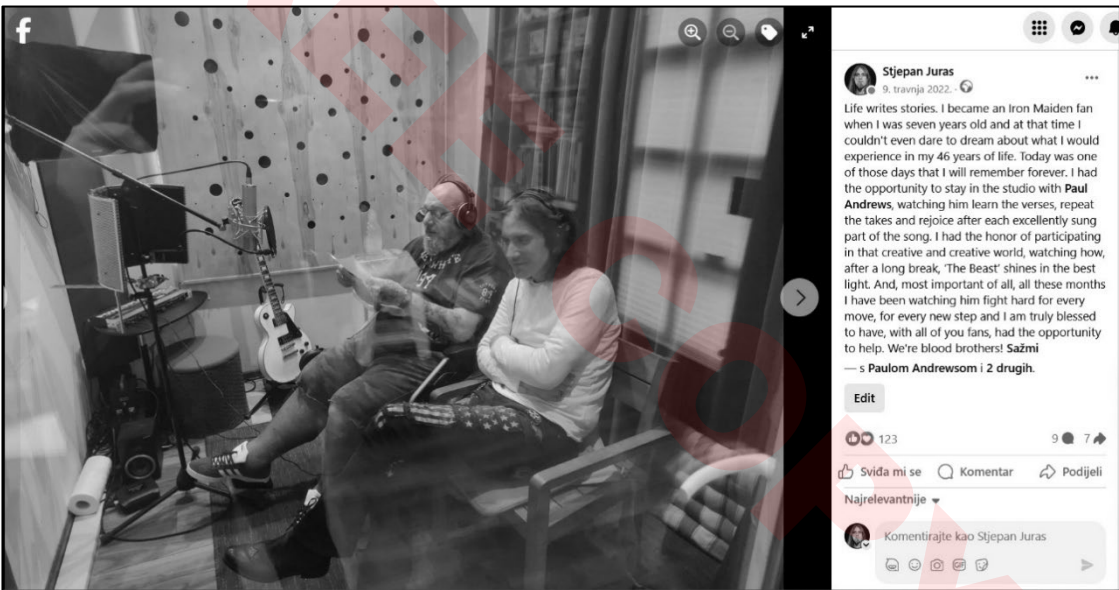


STOP THE WAR

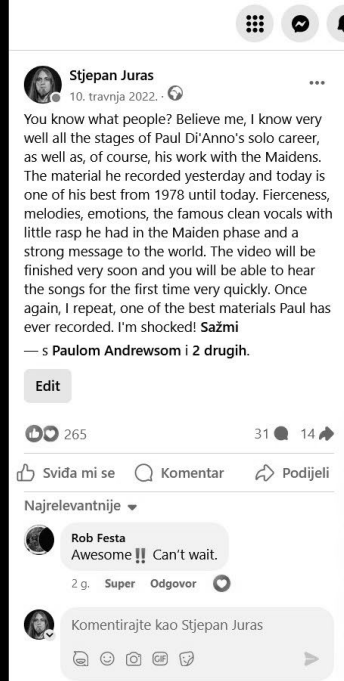
With the addition of a new t-shirt, the special signed and numbered DVD would now cost 66 Euros (with tracked shipping) and we were now dealing with something that could actually help. The DVD wasn't just going to fulfil the primary moneymaking goal, the material it contained would show people directly what had already been achieved and where fans' donations had been spent so far. It was a great move, resulting in even stronger support for what we were doing. And when we added that there would only be 666 copies made, the pre-sale could begin. All this happened after April 12, when I published the photo of Paul walking with the use of a walking frame.

The recording of the songs themselves happened just three days earlier. After several delays April 9 was agreed for Paul's first recording session with Warhorse. I remember the day was pretty grim. Everything was grey and a dull rain was falling. It was incredibly hard to get Paul into the cramped studio. Hrvoje and Ante (Pupi) had arrived at the studio early to set everything up. My wife was invited to take some promo photos and I tagged along with her to witness this historic moment and update the fans through social media. By the time I arrived, the gang was already a little tired from recording multiple takes and the boring rain in the yard didn't allow for Paul to go outside and smoke during breaks which made him very nervous. As you can see in the previous photo, Paul was wearing grey sweatpants with the fabric cut so his legs would fit through them; not the most photogenic look for a photo session, but it was what it was. Additionally, his teeth hadn't been fixed yet, so he understandably kept his mouth closed, giving him a sulky, dangerous look. Now I think about it, I can't really recall Paul smiling much at all with his mouth open in those months, not because he wasn't happy but because he was understandably afraid that people would see his teeth. Of course, as a journalist and chronicler I didn't waste any time but got my phone out and took many photos and videos during the recording session. History was being made in this small, cramped space, and it was an utterly surreal experience to witness it. No matter how well-acquainted Paul and I had become, in that

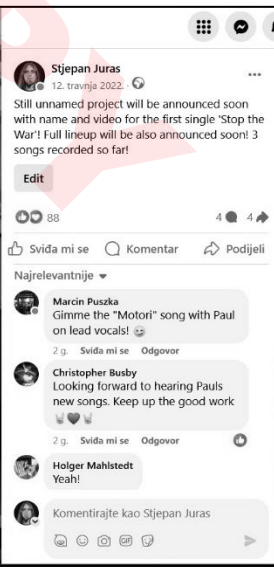
moment I felt like a little fanboy, soaking in every magical moment of watching the recording. Paul had arrived that morning feeling like crap. He was ill, exhausted and not in the best of moods, but what he did in the studio could be a lesson for all of today's vocalists. Sick and singing in a wheelchair, without a rehearsal or even having heard the song, Paul made a miracle happen. He growled, powerful, angry with so much melody in his voice and the energy was palpable. As he sang the infectious chorus of 'Stop the War', I could already see that it would be a hit for him. It was so clear to us. The atmosphere was electric, the walls shook and it was crystal clear that the Beast was awake. The same day, I posted the following photo and text on Facebook.

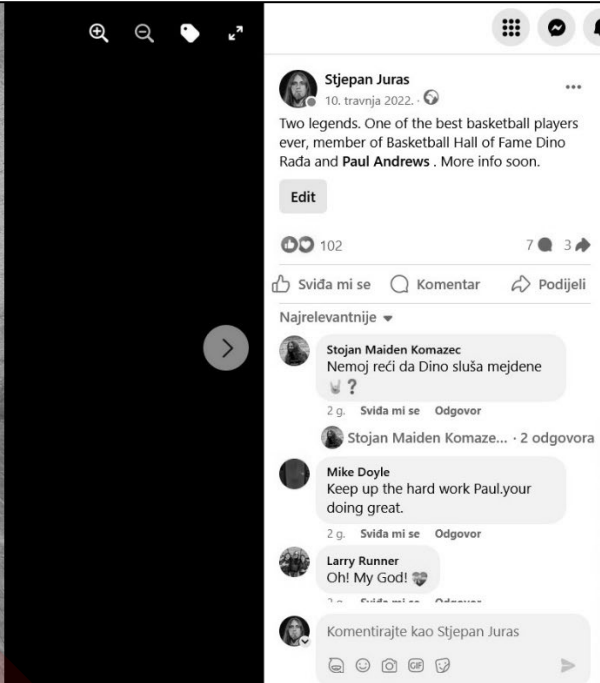


I shared my enthusiasm about the recorded material with the fans. Again a few days later in another Facebook post I didn't mince my words. It's a risky idea, making such claims in advance and potentially raising the bar of their expectations. But I didn't care, it was something I wholeheartedly felt...



Once the music part was finished and done well, it was my wife's turn with the photo session. The first photos went to the media, and as you can see, the announcement was made that the still untitled project would soon be unveiled with the name of the band, and the video for the first single, 'Stop the War', would soon see the light of day. All that was left was for Hrvoje and Pupi to do a heroic job of mixing, adding more instruments, and handling all the other issues of this demanding task. You must remember that because of his situation, working with Paul is not like working with anyone else. There are no repeats, no second takes. What was captured was what they had to work with.





Paul is fantastic like that. He's simply a natural talent, unparalleled. I can't think of any other singer who could come in sick, after almost ten years with no active singing practice, in a wheelchair, with ruined teeth, not having heard a single song or read the lyrics and perform flawlessly on their first attempt. Paul is an incomparable wonder of nature in that respect. For their parts, Pupi and Hrvoje made another miracle happen, organising this recording session and a later one in Split, where the rest of the album was recorded. As with the first time, Paul arrived unprepared for the session in Split without a single rehearsal, sang his part and left. They didn't have any second takes to fix or edit his voice. What you get on the album is what they got in the studio and is part of why people love Paul, for his strength and rawness, but also his warmth and honesty. What Hrvoje and Pupi went through is a long enough story for a whole other book; from the first meeting with Paul to the realisation of the album, ensuring everything would be perfect, from production to mastering, guest musicians, videos and everything we needed for the project to be a success.

For the Split recording session, we were joined for support by legendary basketball player Dino Rađa. He's one of the best basketball players of all time, a key Boston Celtics player and a member of the Basketball Hall of

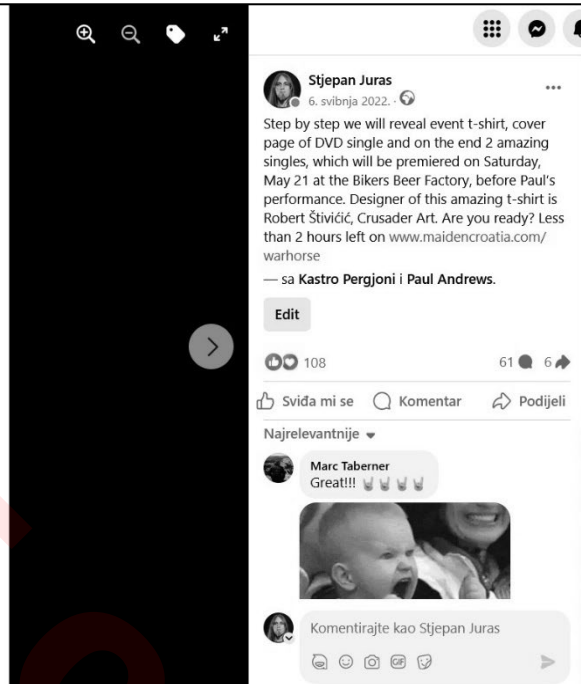
Fame. Him and Paul got on well, sharing jokes and just before he left Dino gave Paul a special and rare Hall of Fame gift, as well as a Croatian basketball team jersey. Everything was being done to make Paul happy, so he'd feel good and see that we all cared about him.

One thing absolutely has to be mentioned here. When I published a photo of Paul and Hrvoje in December 2021 and announced his first musical project after many years, only fans and friends commented. Not a single record company contacted me, via email or social media. This project wasn't talked about at all until the recording session. Even when I posted short videos from the recording session and the news went all around the world, no one called; not new record companies showing interest and not old ones who may have had claims to own Paul's rights and be able to prevent our release. I feel it's important to note this because I had the impression that certain people were merely waiting on the sidelines for the right time to step in and take all the glory, with easy profit as their trophy despite someone else's hard work and effort. However, it appears there was an unknown factor in the equation; whether there would even be interest in the band. On the other side of things, my own motives with Warhorse were different. Given that, at the time, it wasn't even remotely on my mind that I might become Paul's manager (and Warhorse's by default), I was simply happy to make his wish come true and help him form a new band, to be a little part of history, give my friends the chance of a lifetime and help them with the promotion. Not then, nor now do I profit in any way from Warhorse, nor will I in the future. All copyrights, royalties and merchandise are owned by the guys. The money made from the sales goes to the guys and the label, and as for live concerts; I've no idea if there will be any.

Of three songs recorded in Zagreb, the song 'Stop the War' was chosen to be the first single for simple reasons. A cruel war had just begun in Ukraine and somehow it felt natural to do it because Paul and the guys publicly supported Ukraine and the fight for peace. The plan was to create a suitable video and present it to people around the time of Paul's birthday. But the idea that I wrote about earlier kept bouncing around in my head and I called Hrvoje and said, "Dude, listen, we have to talk about something."

As our funds were running out, thinking about what we could do, I suggested to Hrvoje that Warhorse could release the aforementioned DVD single with two songs, photo and video documentation of Paul's treatment and progress and the special addition of an event t-shirt. I was convinced it was a great idea for several reasons. The first was that I was completely sure I could sell 666 copies through my Maiden Croatia website without any special advertising plus I believed that if the single was numbered and signed by Paul, it would become a highly sought after collector's item. The third reason was that I believed the rapid sales of the single would cause big interest from labels and would help in signing a good publishing deal. It was up to Hrvoje and Pupi, however, because in using these songs to fundraise for Paul, they'd be facing a potential financial loss having put their own time and money into the project. The discussion between us was very short. Like everyone else, both Hrvoje and Pupi wanted to help Paul and showed their big hearts by fully agreeing with no issues.

As the day of the big concert in Zagreb approached, the situation with Paul's depleting funds started to resemble some kind of thriller. I talked a lot on the phone with Kastro and our conversations about what to do and how to help were heated but very purposeful. It was after the conversation with Hrvoje and Pupi however, that everything fell into place. I quickly called Kastro and gave him the great news. Because my wife is a graphic designer, I'd planned to have her design the DVD cover and T-shirt but Kastro suggested his designer friend Robert, who is also from Croatia and is known to Maiden fans by the nickname of the Croatian Crusader. I have to admit that Robert and I had a good working relationship in the past as Maiden fans and that he had been a close acquaintance but with the passage of time, our paths diverged for various reasons and we weren't really friendly any more. However, when Paul needed help these disagreements were put aside and we worked together towards a common goal. Robert designed a great shirt, which got a lot of interest from fans and also made Paul very happy. We launched the new campaign and were very excited about its prospects.



When the DVD single went on sale on May 6 and we saw fantastic early sales (in the very first minutes we sold over a hundred copies), I went to Dr Milošević and asked him to try and find the optimal solution for Paul's leg, no matter the cost. It was clear by now that the simple knee replacement would not be enough but that his leg demanded a much more expensive and risky operation to implant a custom made endoprosthesis. Dr Milošević informed me that he would not be able to perform this surgery at his clinic but instead recommended me to his colleague from the Health Centre of Excellence Dr Robert Kolundžić. He is one of the few doctors in Europe capable of performing such a complicated procedure. In order to do this however, it was necessary to first surgically remove the existing medical cement from Paul's leg. Paul then had to go through a new full health check-up to see if he was ready for the surgery. In addition to showing that Paul was generally on the right track for an operation also showed up another potential danger. A few days later in late April 2022, before we launched the single, we put out a new statement to the fans.

Hello everyone

After more than five months of Paul's stay in Croatia, the Croatian medical team at Poliklinika Ribnjak - Orthopedic Center medicine and sports diagnosis came to final and definitive conclusions about Paul's overall condition and what his further recovery might look like. Paul's progress in treatments is really visible and he recently tried a new orthosis that allows him to walk better. Paul took his first steps with an orthosis and he is thrilled and very optimistic with progress, because every day he walks better and better. The orthosis is further adjusted, according to Paul's requirements, and he is now doing intense walking exercises with it, in order to walk completely on his own in May or during the summer of 2022.

As we all know, Paul's first knee surgery was planned in late April 2022. It was about removing the cement from the knee, so that his venous circulation would be good again, which is a prerequisite for a successful second operation, a revision operation to install an endoprosthesis or an artificial knee. For the purpose of the planned operation, in accordance with the rules of the profession, diagnostic processing was performed which showed serious hidden problems with circulation and that is why the cement removal operation is necessary, because it complicates plans for already complex surgery and encourages constant swelling of the leg. Figuratively speaking, the situation in Paul's knee resembles a 'war zone'. Paul has no joint, the spacer presses on the veins and the leg swells as a result. Staff in Poliklinika 'Ribnjak' has been making tremendous recovery efforts for over 4 months. Therefore, the removal of the spacer in the knee should be performed in order to reduce the pressure on the venous circulation and thus reduce the swelling of the leg. That is basic. In this way, healthy relationships are achieved for further recovery and possible second endoprosthesis implant surgery.

Dr Milošević said to us: "At the moment, we are of the opinion that we should wait with such an operation, because depending on the reaction and recovery of the body, it can occur in a few months or even years, and sometimes the conditions are not created at all. Paul's desire for recovery in just four months is very visible, so we all agree that this operation should be considered. The first of the steps is an orthosis, which Paul is now using and he is practicing walking intensively."

"The second step is the previously mentioned surgical procedure to remove spacer, ie cement in the knee, which would enable the connection of bones into a kind of so-called 'pseudarthrosis' Such a joint, in addition to Paul's specially designed orthosis, can allow it to move independently and much easier. That idea was suggested to Paul and he agreed. However, just before that operation, which was supposed to take place in a few days, a detailed treatment of his blood vessels was done, the so-called angiography, which showed good arterial circulation but also compressed leg veins. But the most important novelty in these preparations for surgery is that a rather large thrombus (blood clot) was found in his pelvic vein."

"A thrombus, as we all know, poses a great danger of embolism if surgery is performed, which can end in heart attack, stroke (...) or death. The existence of this thrombus is a new finding, which has not been discovered so far and drastically changes the whole treatment situation, however, fortunately, it is not an obstacle to further treatment if we make good preparations and prevent the danger."

"According to the rules of the profession, if a space removal operation is performed, it is necessary to insure Paul against possible embolism by installing a so-called special 'umbrella' in his body, specifically in the vena cava. This procedure is performed by vascular surgeons, practically at the same time as the spacer is removed, which means that this operation must be done with a whole team of coordinated operators of various disciplines and that it is an extremely difficult and demanding task. After that operation, it is necessary to stay in the hospital for about 14 days. Such surgeries carry some risk; however, this is the only correct way of surgical treatment if one wants to act properly and not put Paul in a life-threatening condition. The cost of installing an 'umbrella' in a vein costs several thousand Euros, plus the cost of the hospital, but we will, with our colleagues, try to find the best prices and conditions, so as not to burden your budget for the treatment. "

"Mr. Juras and Paul are informed about the whole situation at the meeting with the medical team and it was concluded that, given all the information, it is best to continue with Paul's verticalization until the conditions for the first operation are created. Paul will be in much better shape by rehearsing and walking after his concert on 21.05. depending on his desire and possibilities of operations can be in May or June 2022 or whenever he

chooses. Our recommendation is that it be shortly after the concert, because Paul will already be in much better shape with walking and moving. An orthosis made especially to his measurements can be worn for a long time, months or even years without any problems."

Also, Paul on Thursday, April 28th will begin a complete tooth reconstruction. Due to impaired health and accelerated decay, encouraged by long-term use of heavy medicine, Paul's teeth rotted, mostly fell out and in order to resume a normal life and be able to bite normally, dental reconstruction is necessary. He has been suffering from huge, constant pain in recent months, and now a top Arena Stomatološka Poliklinika team has been selected to take care of Paul and completely reconstruct his teeth with a very complex procedure. At the clinic, they came out to meet the prices that Paul says are at least four times lower than in the UK, for which we are grateful. By the end of April, Paul will have mostly new teeth, but the second part of the procedure (because the rules of the profession after the installation of 4 implants require it), will finally be finished in about six months. As early as the beginning of May 2022, we will be able to see Paul's new smile, which will greatly contribute to self-confidence, a better atmosphere and extra strength ahead of important knee surgery.

At the very beginning, none of us was aware of how severe Paul's condition really was, but his treatment showed that and that is why the treatments and recovery take longer. Precisely because of this, the initial estimate of the funds that should have been spent on recovery was lower, and this is precisely the reason why the campaign is being reactivated.

It will be conducted in the current way of raising funds at this website created by Kastro Pergjoni: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/pauldianno We strongly urge you to click and help as much as you can. Also, on www.maidencroatia.com a new signed book will be launched!

Also, special event t-shirts (strictly limited edition) and his new single 'Stop the War' on DVD together with 'Stop the War' Video will be presented at Paul's concert in Zagreb. DVD single will also be strictly limited and signed by Paul Di'Anno and his band mates from the new band Warhorse. We ask all those who can help in one way or another to get involved. This is the right time to save one life!

“What the hell now, a blood clot?” we all thought. Just as we all hoped the recovery was on track, they discovered that Paul had a thrombus and any operation could lead to a stroke, heart attack or death. Moreover, it doesn't have to be during surgery, a thrombus by itself can move and then it's, “Bye-bye, Paul Di'Anno”. We were all very worried although we played it cool but it was obvious that Paul wasn't happy with what he was being told. He later asked for another, even more comprehensive check-up to see whether there was really a blood clot or if it was misdiagnosed, since the angiography he'd had wasn't a 100% precise way to find out and so we couldn't be certain of it.

I also remember the moment when Dr Milošević called me into his office to explain to me who Dr Robert Kolundžić was, what his specialisations were, what a tumour endoprosthesis implant surgery is and why it was the only way for Paul to walk again. However, when he mentioned the price, I almost became ill. Even now, I remember how slowly and carefully he told me so as not to shock me too much, “You know, this prosthesis isn't cheap. It will cost you another twenty-something plus the doctor's rate, hospital bills and months of preparation for the surgery to even become an option.” I murmured, “Twenty thousand?” then continued, “Well, okay. We'll figure something out, that's not so bad. You're talking about Kunas, right?”

The Kuna was still the Croatian currency, as we hadn't joined the Eurozone yet and 20,000 Kunas was equal to a little under 3,000 Euros. My question about the currency was a moment of desperation because deep down I knew very well that he was talking about Euros. At the start of this book, I said I wouldn't make public the medical documentation and costs and mostly I'm sticking to that, but this is an exception I had to make, in order to illustrate to you the moment I almost threw up as the doctor confirmed that we were indeed talking about Euros. Of course, I immediately got to work googling everything I could about this endoprosthesis implant and how much it would cost elsewhere, and of course every other clinic I found in Europe cost several times more than the quote we'd been given. I swallowed hard and thought about how I'd break the news to Kastro. We didn't really say anything to Paul at this stage since we were trying to protect him as much as possible from the problems we were facing. He just had to focus on getting well. No difficulty that we encountered was allowed

to distract him because we hoped that in the end we'd overcome and resolve any problems that blindsided us. But this was a big one and seemingly insurmountable. What to do? We'd thought we'd just managed to raise the money we'd need with the projected sales of the single and this was now a massive slap to the face for us all.

Meanwhile, Paul's private life seemed to have become a little more colourful. Although nothing outwardly changed and he didn't say anything to us, reading between the lines of a few mysterious Facebook statuses suggested that Paul had met 'someone' in Croatia, specifically, his soulmate. Day by day, it became obvious that she was one of the nurses working at the care home but we decided not to say anything or pry until he told us himself.

Additionally, having learned he was in a Zagreb care home, a group of fans who lived nearby decided to visit him one day. In time they became what he affectionately called his 'Dubrava Crew', named after the part of Zagreb where his care home was located. Once a week, usually on Sundays, he'd go out with them and have a drink. Croatia is a small country and I knew most of these people, I'd even gone to Iron Maiden concerts with some of them all over Europe and I consider most of them to be exceptional people and great fans. However, the loudest of them is a man I truly dislike, Stjepan Ivančević, known to fans and Paul by the nickname Schebo. This person has hated me and everything I do for years, including the work I've done with Paul. I don't need to analyse the reasons for but in the last decade or so he's flung mud at both me and my wife on social media and online forums, even at the fact that we were helping Paul and at Paul himself. I couldn't help but see these hangouts as hypocritical of him and see malicious intent in his presence. It might sound incoherent, even paranoid but I had my own reasons for believing that this association would harm Paul, maybe even kill him.

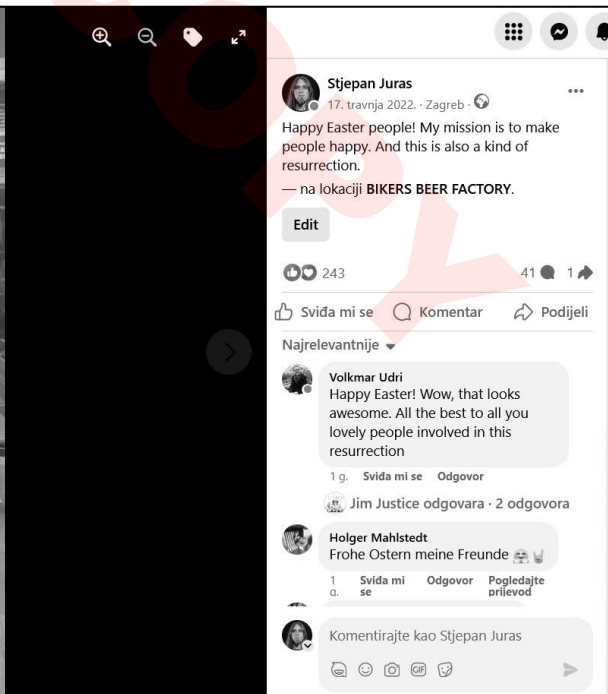
From what Paul told me about these visits, it was clear that in many instances I was the central topic of conversation and gossip. I'm not particularly bothered by it and it doesn't deserve more text in this book but what I found out two and a half years later made me wonder whether Kastro and I were ever aware of everything that was happening around us at the time. But more on that later, as I continue the story.



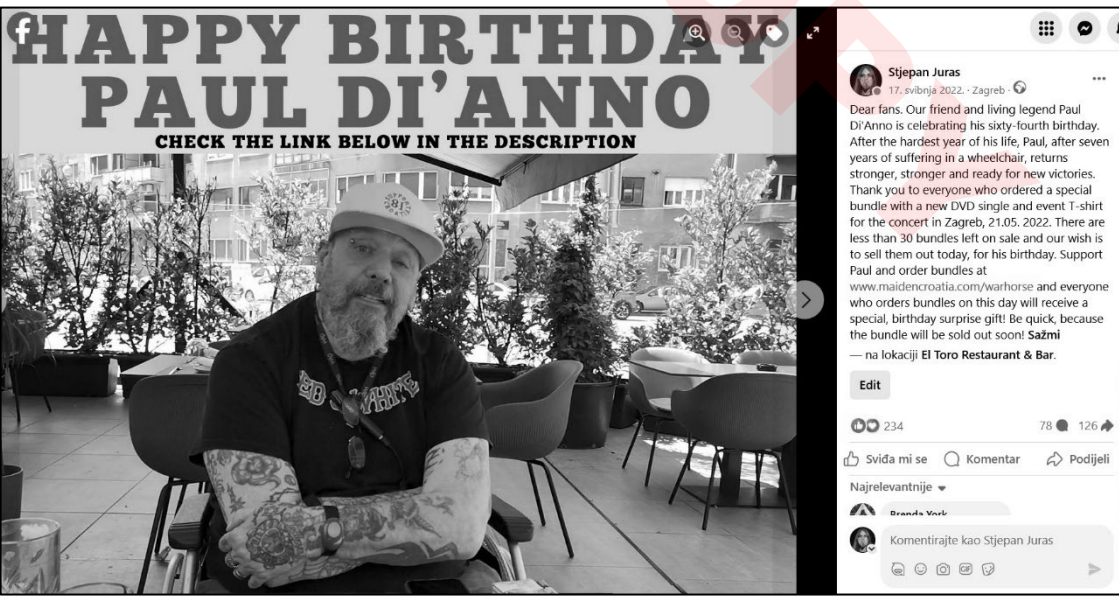
Paul soon after the procedure in the 'Arena' polyclinic

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

The promise I made to Paul – that his teeth would be fixed before the Zagreb gig – was fulfilled. Kastro and I had many discussions about this, as he reasoned rightly enough that maybe we should use the several thousand Euros for Paul's primary treatment, his legs, but my opinion was that it would be good for his teeth to be fully reconstructed after all. The facts were that we had enough money for the teeth, and this money wasn't enough to continue treatment of the legs, as the surgery would cost at least five times as much. On the other hand, the reconstruction of his teeth gave Paul some long-needed self-confidence and finally brought a smile to his face. Finally, we only had to partially pay for the teeth, since the reconstruction process was such, that he would first get implants and only temporary dentures, and only in September or October would the teeth be fully fixed and we'd need to pay the full price. We all remembered the photo from the Bikers Beer Factory, where we'd taken Paul for an Easter lunch. Just ten days before the dental work, Paul had trouble chewing the delicious food, and now he could do it without any issues. It was a huge milestone, and completely changed Paul as a person. From that day on, he was always smiling, posing for media photos with a wide grin or his traditional expression of snarling rage.



I still remember the day he got the new teeth. I was with him at the clinic the whole time and present for a great deal of the operation. I thought "Stipe, what are you doing? Watching the first frontman of Iron Maiden get all new teeth." It's not that the operation is really a once in a lifetime opportunity but simply the situation I found myself in. Paul is generally a grumpy man and this is a core part of his personality but this time, from the moment we signed in at the clinic to the end result, he had zero complaints. The staff were perfectly professional and polite, everyone spoke excellent English and explained every detail to Paul so he understood them perfectly. During the surgery itself, there was no pain and the first temporary plastic dentures fit perfectly in his mouth. Paul immediately showed off the results on social media and his future photos were no longer frowning with his mouth closed as they had been before. They were more like this one, which I posted for his 64th birthday, two weeks later. For this event, we took him to a restaurant named El Toro and took some photos there to promote his Zagreb show. In the meantime, Iron Maiden had arrived in Croatia for their rehearsals for their upcoming, the most wanted tour, and as the newspaper Slobodna Dalmacija (Free Dalmatia) is an institution there, I'm absolutely sure they would have seen saw Paul on its front page. They couldn't miss this news. There were now just four days left before the show and all the preparations were complete. Excitement was growing both in Paul and in the fans. Happy birthday message gained a very good reaction of fans on the social networks.



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May 14, 2022



At the same time, the news that the single was recorded and that the project was named Warhorse spread throughout the world like lightning, as expected. Some of the leading and most influential metal websites in the world, like Blabbermouth and Brave Worlds, followed up this news on their homepages and Paul was suddenly the hottest metal news these days. Both Borivoj Krgin and Tim Henderson indeed stepped up, almost competing to see who would give Paul more space. I was in direct contact with them both the entire time and I'd like to use this occasion to thank them both for everything they did for Paul. Interest in his music spread around the globe and everyone was waiting for our next move but we were drip-feeding them new information. The audience we were speaking to was certainly very interested but of course there are always a few sarcastic and extremely hateful comments too, which is to be expected.



Paul Di'Anno is definitely not a person anyone could love, but he has a faithful army of fans who have never abandoned him. On the other hand, he has 'old sins' that some people cannot get over and forgive and no matter what he does these people will always comment negatively. At the time, I didn't fully understand how it all worked but once I went on tour with him, the puzzle pieces fell into place. I'll write more on that later. My plan to bring Paul back to life was multidimensional. It wasn't only about the health aspect but also about returning Paul to his life as a singer, with freshly recorded material released by a respectable label and a sought-after live artist, a touring animal. Paul was now a newly resurrected musician in the eyes of the media who only recently dismissed him but now made him a headline story again. Every aspect of this goal was visibly coming to fruition, step by step.

While the news travelled lightning-fast all over the internet, thanks to Blabbermouth and Brave Words (whose news are often copied by many other websites); the Croatian media were no less active. Having given a big interview for the aforementioned Večernji List, it was time for another major newspaper, Jutarnji List (The Morning Paper), to publish a front-page feature and an interview. This came out right in time for Paul's birthday. The headline reads, "I should have died, but I'm starting a new career in Zagreb" and shows Paul posing with his new wide, toothy grin.



Now everyone in Croatia had read the story and many calls and emails reached me with people putting themselves at my disposal in order to help. Meanwhile in Split, Hrvoje and Ante were enjoying a new found status as minor metal gods, as they were the first metal band to be featured on the front page of Slobodna Dalmacija newspaper since Iron Maiden in 2008. It was a sweet reminder that they were on the right track.

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DEPORTACIJU SUMJESTANINA
MATE PERIČA

Ubojica iz Australije vraća se kući

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VEĆ SU KUPILI VIŠE
OD 1000 ULAZNICA

INVAZIJA TORCIDAŠA NA KOPRIVNICU

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SLOBODNA DALMACIJA

HRVATSKA

subota, 23.4.2022.

Danas prilog
SPEKTAR



PAUL DI'ANNO U STUDIJU S ANTOM PUPAČIĆEM
PUPIJEM I HRVOJEM MADIRACOM

LEGENDA 'IRON MAIDENA' sa Splitsćanima snima novi album

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SENZACIONALNO OTKRIĆE
RONILACA IZ SPLITSKE
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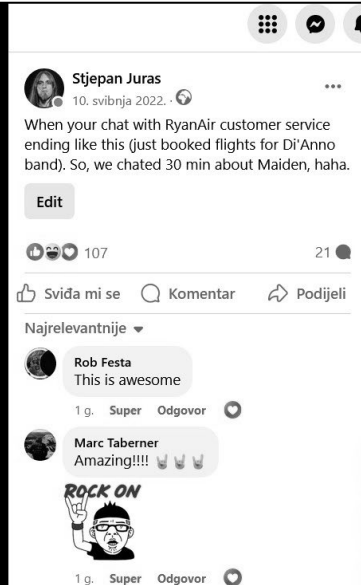


Our story also made it to the front pages of Rock Hard, Louder, Metal Injection, Classic Rock, Whiplash, Metal Voice and many other magazines, which gave us a lot of hope that the idea of selling DVD bundles would indeed succeed and bring the much-needed funds for Paul's recovery. A few days before the Zagreb show, the finished DVDs and cardboard sleeves were delivered. Every

last one had to be labelled with a sticker with a serial number and Paul was given the quite tiring task of signing all of the 666 sleeves. I have to note here that humanity overshadowed profit, as the printing company which printed the sleeves generously decided to give them to us free of charge. Everyone banded together to help Paul My home was quite crowded during this time with 666 DVDs, 666 sleeves, 666 stickers, 666 t-shirts and 666 envelopes, all of which we had to package and post (keeping some aside to sell at the gig). We worked hard. The adrenaline was constant and, in that moment, we could have done anything. We'd have moved mountains if necessary.

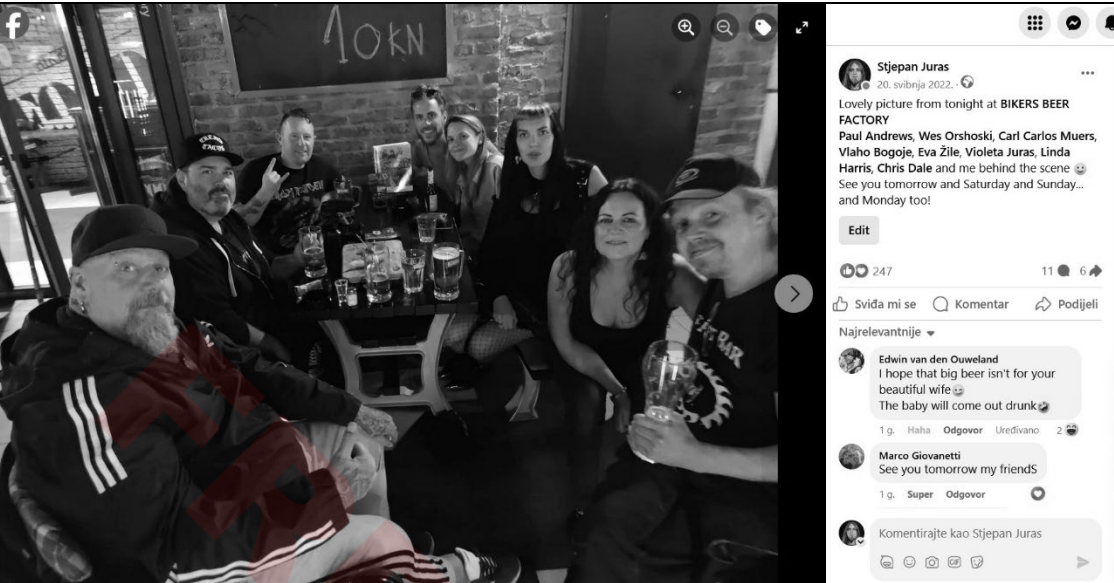






Meanwhile, Maiden Mania was breaking records everywhere and on all fronts. Let me to explin: One last minute problem did occur. Paul's backing band were unable to use the Ryanair flights I had booked for them. I had an unbelievable moment while corresponding with a RyanAir customer service rep, trying to get a refund for already booked flights for Paul's backing band because, their plans having changed. Although I knew that it was almost impossible to get a refund for Ryan Air tickets I tried to play the sentimental card, as we were essentially dealing with charity work. Yet even when the customer service operator enthusiastically told me he was also an Iron Maiden fan, the money could not be refunded. But we had a great chat!

The event at the club would consist of three days of parties. The first day would see the performance of a Maiden tribute band from Serbia. The second day was a battle of the bands, where local bands competed for a chance to play at Wacken Open Air Festival (whose representative I am for the region of the former Yugoslavia). Linda Harris was one of the judges, as well as former Bruce Dickinson Skunkworks bassist Chris Dale (who will crop up later in this story). Our documentary director Wes Orshoski was also there and many other prominent industry people. It was a wonderful evening spent with all the fans who were gathering in Zagreb for days prior to the concert. The evening wouldn't be quite perfect however, as Paul ended up hungry towards the end of the night, so I got to listen to the now familiar, "I'm starving!". As the Bikers' kitchen was already closed, there was nothing for it but to run to the nearby fast-food kiosk. I had to hurry as Paul was about to be picked up by Max in the adapted van very shortly.



As I ran as fast as possible, I caught my foot on a scaffolding beam on my way out of the club as there was some work going on at the time, and I went sprawling. My 110-kilogram body flew horizontally for at least two metres before I crashed to the ground. I scraped both knees and I was unsure if my arms were broken or not but both were immediately swollen and very painful. I was less than 15 hours from the event of a lifetime and here I was, bruised and broken. I returned to the people at the table in the above photograph and told them what had happened. In spite of everything, my pregnant wife who was due any day now got up and went to buy Paul's sandwich as he was still repeating, "What a catastrophe, I'm still starving!" I sat down in a chair and felt the pain. Luckily, it turned out I'd only badly bruised myself and nothing was broken. That was a silver lining at least but thanks to the nature of my job and this event, multiple people came to shake my hand over the next few days (including Steve Harris himself) and I didn't want to be rude, so I was seeing stars with every new handshake.

I took comfort in the knowledge that it could have been worse, that I could have ended up in the emergency room and missed out on some of the best days of my life. One of the previous best days of my life was August 10 2008, when my band Rising Dream opened for Iron Maiden at Poljud Stadium in Split. May 21 2022, the day of Paul's show at Bikers was even better but the following month, both would be eclipsed by the birth of my little daughter, Iris.

U SO MUCH!

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(BUNDLE WITH
VEN T-SHIRT)
S NEW BAND
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BUY PAUL D'ANNO'S NEW
DVD SINGLE WITH
SPECIAL
WITH
WAR



BITTERSWEET RESURRECTION AT THE BIKERS BEER FACTORY

About a week before the show, Paul was very excited about everything coming up in the next few days and called me to the care home to say, "Listen, Stjepan, this gig means a lot to me. It will completely change my life because friends from all over the world are coming and I can't let them down on my comeback performance. It will determine my future. And for that to happen, I need to have peace of mind this week and I can't get that in this care home. The Gulag is driving me crazy. There's always someone coming into my room. There are constant measurements, check-ups, meals, cleanings and everything. I have no privacy here and I want to leave. If you don't get me a hotel, I won't perform." To me, that sounded somewhat like blackmail, and I tried to dissuade him. "In this city, the type of accommodation you need is only available at the Westin hotel and maybe two or three other hotels of the same rank but they are far from Bikers, and one night costs at least 130 Euros." I tried to persuade him that a week's stay would cost at least 1000 Euros and that it made more sense to save that money for his recovery but he was not interested. He wanted his peace at a hotel and I wasn't the type of person who wanted to confront him at this point. I desperately wanted the show to happen and for Paul not to change his mind, so I told him I'd arrange a hotel for him. I believe that was my biggest mistake in the entire process of Paul's treatment and Kastro agreed. "Stipe, you shouldn't have done that," he said sternly. "Once Paul sees much better conditions in 5-star hotels, he will never want to go back to the care home." Of course, this didn't happen overnight, but it slowly began to unfold. Paul gradually became unruly, if not reckless, and nothing was the same afterwards. I got the impression during all this time that he was completely unaware of where the money was coming from. He had no idea who was fighting hard for it, who had donated or sacrificed their time and resources to generate that money nor how quickly it was all being spent.

I also felt that he thought he had money for almost everything he wanted; "I want this, I want that, buy this, buy that, I want a new

wheelchair, I want a new orthosis, I want hotel stays...". He seemed to believe that this money was inexhaustible and it would always be there. I might be wrong in my assessment but I truly thought that then and still think so today. However, it was what it was. When Paul moved into the Westin Hotel, it marked the beginning of a new chapter in his treatment and a new Paul.

At the same time, I also had a problem with Paul's backing band from Norway. I must say that since then, I have done at least 20 shows with that band, we travelled in a van on tour throughout the UK, got to know each other and became good friends. I know they are good guys. However, that doesn't mean that at the moment I organized that first show with them, I wasn't angry with them. I was.

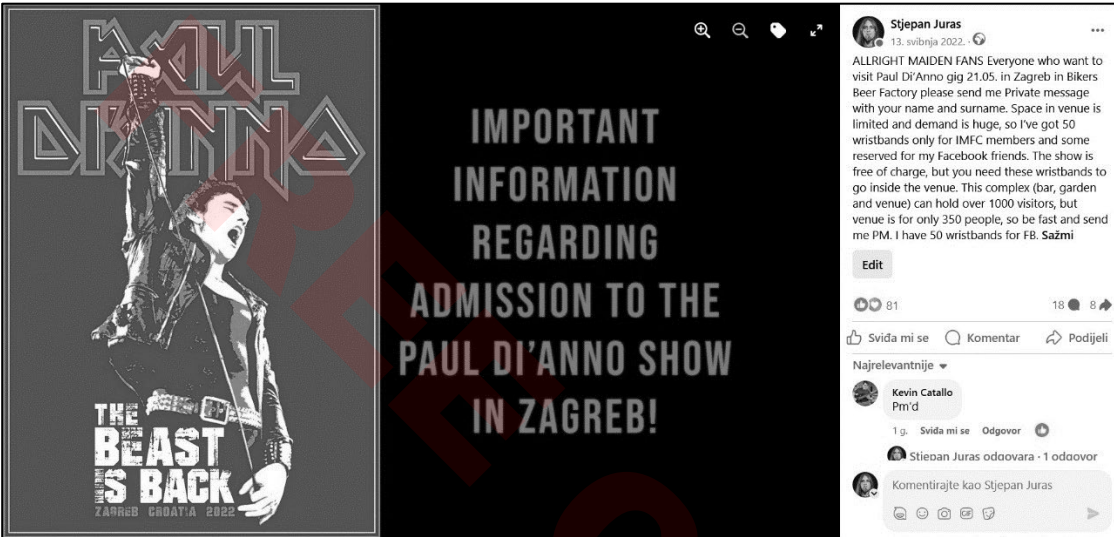
Firstly, for several weeks, we tussled over the technical rider. For those who don't know what that is; it's a document with a list of everything the band needs to perform a concert. They insisted on double amp stacks and everything else that is usually set up for an arena show, not for a club with around three hundred people. So everything that the club had and offered for free, we had to rent again and spend money on. This money should have been used for Paul's health. It made no sense especially because, just two days earlier, a Maiden tribute band played there and sounded fantastic with the club equipment. They did agree however, that we could rent the backline amps and drumkit in Croatia to reduce costs. Here I was helped by the owner of Maga Music (a music shop in Zagreb), the legendary drummer Adonis Dokuzović who provided much of the equipment free of charge, and I thank him for that. My friend Tomislav Rebak also lent me the drums without charge, and I thank him for that as well. However, there was also a lot of fuss about the drums since, according to the rider, there needed to be a large kit with a number of toms that couldn't even fit on the drum riser. For the sake of "standardizing their sound", their "better musical experience" and other 'blah-blah' reasons that were coming to me via email or messenger, the band was adamant about this. I tried multiple times to explain that lots of tribute bands play here and that everything with the club's equipment always sounds top-notch but that the size of the stage simply couldn't accommodate everything they wanted on it. Furthermore, as I mentioned, if we rented everything, we would lose money for Paul. It

seemed to me that they didn't care much about that; they just wanted to receive their specifications and perform the show in the best possible way. Professionally, I appreciate that, because Paul Di'Anno is not just any tribute band. On the other hand, I was angry because by renting amplifiers to their specifications, we were spending money when we could have gone with the club's equipment free.

Another thing that upset me was the flights. The show was already confirmed by the end of 2021, and an agreement had been made for the band to come to Zagreb a few days earlier to rehearse (even though Paul never rehearses with anyone). I then reserved flights that were relatively inexpensive. The band had enough time to coordinate their commitments and besides there were simply no other flights from Norway to Zagreb. However, right before the show, I was informed that the band could not come to Zagreb on those days but only on the day of the show which meant that the purchased tickets would go to waste and I had to book new ones. But there were no other flights to Zagreb, so I had to book flights to the nearest city, which was Vienna. Then to get the band from Vienna to Zagreb and back, I had to rent a van with a driver. Another unnecessary waste of money and not a small amount.

The last issue that arose was with the hotel. To reduce costs, Hrvoje the Warhorse guitarist, offered the band one of his apartments in the city centre, where I personally took them. It was a standard apartment, nothing special, but perfectly fine for an overnight stay. However, during the afternoon, the band contacted me via Messenger to say that they found some bugs in one of the mattresses and that they didn't want to stay there. I immediately called Hrvoje, who apologized said that if that was true, he could offer them another apartment. But the band had already left and found accommodation at the Hilton hotel, which was about two kilometres away, even though they could have found at least a dozen other options on their way there. Having the band stay at the Hilton was not what I wanted, considering it was a charity show, but I was expected to pay that bill too, which I ultimately did. I am quite sure that the band may have their own perspective on this story; however, as I wrote at the beginning of this book, I am presenting my opinion on everything without holding back, and there

will surely be moments when I will criticize myself for the mistakes that I made. From the very beginning, I have decided to be honest to the fullest extent.



I previously mentioned how the club decided to keep around 100 tickets for their regular guests and I received the remaining tickets to distribute to members of the official Iron Maiden Fan Club and some other Facebook friends from all over the world who had contributed to Paul's donations. Later, I asked the club if I could have more tickets and they limit their number of guests which they agreed to do. I tried to explain to them how important these fans were to both Paul and to me personally, because we are simply like family. When I go to Brazil, the USA, Chile, Japan, the UK, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Russia, Ukraine or Australia; the doors of their homes are always open to me. So how could I not let them into this club while letting some locals in who don't even like Iron Maiden or know who Paul Di'Anno is? I couldn't allow something like that in my life. It was already clear early on that the demand would be at least five times greater than the capacity and I was ready to take some heat from the Croatians that evening. From my point of view, those Croatians who had helped were inside anyway.

There were also a few media representatives and my good friends Maja and Daniel from Sweden (Abyss Festival), who were guests in my home during those days and came to Zagreb to help us with everything.

I am not exactly a popular person due among some here in Croatia due to some past mistakes. More than a decade earlier, I was the co-promoter of event that flopped causing some of the headliners to cancel their performances. Naturally, that is always a dreadful situation, especially when fans seek refunds and cannot get them. I completely understand that not everyone in the world can love me. But that's exactly why, on social media, some people watched this show under a microscope, publicly commenting that they would love to see it fail. The same people who did this showed up at the door that evening looking for passes (thinking I wouldn't know what they were writing) and later physically threatened me because I wouldn't let them in. One of them was even personally told to, "Fuck off!" by Paul. I know that not letting some local people in was a very unpopular move but I simply had to do it. My Maiden family was more important to me. That day, from morning till evening, there were huge lines and crowds at the entrance to Bikers. The spectacle could begin.





My wife in her fortieth week of pregnancy, Maja and Daniel from Sweden, Tina from Croatia and Kastro from the UK, were all helping with the sale of merchandise, bundles and books, as well as the distribution of wristbands for VIP guests. The club's beer garden was packed both during the day and at night when the sliding roof was closed.





The atmosphere inside the club where the stage is located was electric. The tables and chairs were removed and the club was packed with a sea of people, most of whom were shirtless because it was impossible to breathe in the humidity and heat. The outdoor beer garden of the club was filled with large screens on either side broadcasting Paul's show from inside, and people were cheering and headbanging while watching as if they were inside themselves. It was a true celebration of fans from all continents. Although, the members of Maiden were not in the club as they were understandably preparing for their own show the next day, a delegation from the band did come, including Alexander Milas, the president of the Iron Maiden Fan Club and John McMurtrie, the official Maiden photographer.

It's hard to describe to someone outside the Iron Maiden fan community but after two consecutive cancelled tours during the pandemic and one album released in the meantime, the show in Zagreb was one of the first major gathering of fans. They had come to see their favourite band again and meet old friends. The anticipation was much greater than for any previous tour and fans poured in from literally all over the world. Just to give an example,

at the Bikers Beer Factory the day before the Maiden show, we had the opportunity to see flags from Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, Colombia, the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and meet fans from almost every country in Europe. For an Iron Maiden fan, it is an honour and a privilege to attend the first show of a tour, and these shows have long been more than just musical holidays. All these people have been friends over the years, whether through social media or traveling to visit each other. But when Maiden is on tour, we all come together again and spend time together, making up for all those years of online friendship. These moments between friends are wonderful and it's worth traveling to the ends of the earth just for them even if there wasn't a show. However, now we had two shows, Paul's and Iron Maiden's. Iron Maiden had never started a tour in Croatia before, so for me as the host, it was a chance to showcase the famous Croatian hospitality and offer everyone who came to Paul's show the unique experience of witnessing a very special moment.



In the afternoon, Paul entered the club for soundcheck and to stand behind the microphone for the first time in many years. Only a handful of us witnessed the magical moment as the band played 'Remember Tomorrow' with Paul singing while wheeling himself around the club and checking the

sound. It was as if time had stood still. I was composed enough to pull out my phone and start recording. Within a few minutes, that video went viral on Facebook with people commenting that they were watching and crying. It might sound pretentious but since leaving Maiden, this gig was literally the gig of a lifetime for Paul. Not only did he return to show that he could still be counted on but he also introduced everyone to his new single, 'Stop the War'. This performance wasn't in front of just anyone. He was singing for some of the most loyal fans who had donated significant amounts of money and who didn't have a problem traveling thousands of kilometres to be there that day. Paul's friends from the Hells Angels were there, the guys from Warhorse, the staff from the clinic and care home, the Dubrava crew and many more. The Norwegian band shone. They played so excellently that many later commented on it on social media. But perhaps most importantly, this show gave Paul faith in himself as a singer and performer once again.



It was a night of smiles and no one who left Bikers that evening was disappointed nor did anyone want to leave until the early morning hours. Everyone's heart was in the right place and we all shed many tears of joy. As people began to disperse, Violeta, Castro and a few friends who helped us



stayed behind to wrap up everything, and count the number of bundles sold, we all felt a great fatigue and weight in our legs. Paul's usual driver Dino, was not working for him this time due to other obligations but another driver Max was tasked with driving him throughout these days. Max was also a biker and him and Paul quickly became friends. He drove Paul to the Wacken battle of the bands, to soundcheck, to appointments, back to the hotel and wherever else he needed to go. After dropping Paul back at the hotel, exhausted, he got on his motorcycle to go home and get some sleep himself. Unfortunately, he fell asleep from sheer fatigue and woke up in the hospital with a broken shoulder. I tell you this just to illustrate how tirelessly we all worked in those days to make this show happen. Violeta was nearing the end of her pregnancy, Max ended up in the

hospital, I was left exhausted, and Castro, who deserved to just be enjoying himself here, had to work the entire day and night in the end.

Although we were all satisfied that the task was completed very well, I was not entirely happy. When I had first dreamed about this show at the end of 2021, I imagined Paul entering the stage in his wheelchair and then, before the astonished eyes of the crowd, rising from it and standing on his own two

feet. Perhaps my dreams were too ambitious but I never doubted for a moment that it could really happen in the near future. Paul was on the brink of his greatest success and we didn't want to give up now. Because of this, the show left a bittersweet taste in my mouth but gave me even greater strength to move forward. An even stronger motivation came from Linda Harris who told me that someone from the Maiden team would soon contact me regarding Paul and I attending their show, which was something I had also dreamed about for months. I had only a few hours of sleep ahead of me but I couldn't close my eyes for sheer excitement.

I woke up early the following morning, feeling tired but energised by the excitement. First, I headed to Bikers to check with the owners Martina and Alf, if everything was all right. I was greeted by Alf, who excitedly told me that by all parameters it had been a record night for them and that the reactions everywhere were fantastic. While I was collecting some boxes of T-shirts with Violeta, Alf returned with an envelope in his hand containing quite a respectable sum of cash. "What's this?" I asked him, thinking it might be leftover money from merchandise sales. I continued we sold a lot of stuff and that Paul will hopefully make enough to finally bring his surgery to a close. Alf replied, "But no, Stipe, this isn't for Paul. This is my personal gift for you!". "Excuse me? What for me? I'm fine, I don't need anything. We did this for Paul and I didn't expect to receive anything for it. If you want to donate anything, donate it to Paul," I said, to which he replied, "Stipe, I respect you, your work, and your desire to help Paul as a friend and a fan. However, we all helped. Paul has received from all of us and will continue to receive more for months and this amount won't change anything. But you mustn't forget that your wife is pregnant and that in a week or two, a child will come into your life. Take this. It's my personal reward to you for everything you do and use it all for your family and little Iris, who is coming soon. If you use it for anything else, I'll be angry."

I had no choice. I accepted and thanked him, although I felt very bad because entering into this whole story, the last thing I thought about was my own money. I was living quite well from my books and I couldn't have been more grateful and happier that by writing about Iron Maiden, I was able to earn a living...



A LONG-AWAITED MEETING (22.05. 2022.)

It's difficult to describe this day and night in a way that would convey everything that happened that day. For an Iron Maiden fan, every new tour kick-off is always a celebration but what happened that day was so much more. Those moments I witnessed will forever be etched in my memory, and no matter what I do in life and no matter where I live, I will always proudly say, "I was there when THAT happened."

After I went to Bikers, picked up all the remaining merchandise and returned the instruments and backline, around early afternoon, Violeta and I headed to the Westin Hotel where Paul was, along with the crew members of Iron Maiden's Killer Krew. Soon, Castro, Linda and Wes arrived, as did the van driver Dino. It was a beautiful Sunday and we were sitting on the terrace of the hotel bar, enjoying drinks. At one point, Paul started to touch his pockets in a panic, yelling, "Where's my wallet? Where the hell is my wallet?!" We lifted him up, searched his wheelchair, his bag and everything around him but the wallet was nowhere to be found. We asked him if he left it in his hotel room but he said no, that he had it with him earlier. I was instantly hit with a knot in my stomach. If Paul lost his money now, it wouldn't be such a big deal financially, as we had mostly covered everything, but losing his credit card would surely trigger panic attacks in Paul. Such things had happened before and although everything would be quickly found, that whole day would be ruined. This made me pale because if the wallet was lost, we could forget about going to the Maiden show together. Paul would storm off to his room, would not let anyone to contact him and there would be dozens of statuses on his Facebook page the next minute saying he was fed up with everything and wanted to go back to the UK. Just as the situation was about to escalate, the receptionist came to the terrace and said, "Mr. Andrews, is this your wallet?" Paul was incredibly lucky because while he was smoking in the hotel parking lot, a guest had found the wallet he dropped there and was fair enough to return it to

the reception. We never found out who that person was to reward them but after this, the atmosphere significantly improved and nothing could stop us from soon going to the Maiden show. A few minutes later, I received a phone call from Tyson. Tyson is Alf's friend and associate, the person who worked as the head of security at Paul's show at Bikers, but today he was calling as someone involved in the production of the Maiden show. Tyson is someone you don't want to mess with but he does top-notch work for many world-class bands and today Iron Maiden had entrusted him with the envelope containing our backstage passes for the Iron Maiden family room.

Finally, the time had come for us to head to the show. As we approached the outlines of the Zagreb Arena, increasingly large waves of fans were heading in the same direction. I turned around and looked at the wistful expression on Paul's face as he observed the rivers of fans with flags from all



corners of the world, the large tour trucks and the hurried roadies. He had once been part of that massive Maiden machine and only God knows what was crossing his mind at that moment as chants of, "Maiden! Maiden!" surrounded him. We entered the backstage of the arena through a gate and as we got Paul out of the van, one of the fans noticed Paul and chaos ensued. Thousands of fans began chanting, "Paul! Paul!" and some ran up to the

railing in tears just to wave at him. The documentary director Wes signalled to security to let two fans through so he could capture that emotional moment. Someone even took this photo with me pushing Paul, which then went on to circle the globe online. The show hadn't even started yet and people around the world were already expecting the most anticipated moment to happen. When we entered the Iron Maiden Family Room, Linda

and a few other people were already there. One of whom was my good friend and loyal customer of all my books, Francois Farmine. For those who are not aware, Francois is one of the most well-known Maiden fans and collectors is also a top lawyer in France, whose services are even used by Iron Maiden. It was a great honour for me to meet him and his girlfriend and finally chat face to face.....

After about twenty minutes, Iron Maiden's manager, Rod Smallwood entered the room. My hands were trembling and the screen of my camera was fogging up from the sweat on my palms (which you can see if you watch the video that later went viral online). My hands shook so much that I called for Violeta to film Rod and later Steve because I was incapable of doing so. Then I spotted Peter Lokrantz, Steve Harris's distinctive



bodyguard. The old saying among fans goes, "Where there is Peter; there is Steve," and it proved to be completely accurate. Right next to him, Steve Harris appeared in the room. I first met Steve back in 1995, and since then, I had the opportunity to meet and talk to him over twenty times. I'm really not a starstruck fan or a person obsessed with celebrities who screams when they see them but the moment Steve looked at Paul, leaned down toward the wheelchair and

hugged him with all his strength would be permanently etched in my memory. I stood directly behind Paul, witnessing Steve's broad smile as he approached and the embrace that left no one unmoved. I was fully aware in real time that what was happening before me was a scene that would enter rock and roll history. In slow motion, I remember calling Violeta to film this from the other side while Rod Smallwood asked the official photographer John McMurtrie to come and capture the moment for history. I was right behind them, hearing word for word what they said to

each other and close enough to see both of their eyes glistening with tears. Everything that happened later I remember only in flashes. One of those moments was when I recorded a video of my wife and Steve, where I was telling my unborn daughter, "Look, Iris, your mom is with the legend of heavy metal, Steve Harris, and now we're all going to watch the show together with you in her belly. You aren't born yet, so you can't meet Steve but I believe it will happen very soon..." And it did, exactly a year later at the Wacken Open Air festival, but that's another story.

Steve then called me aside and said he would like to see me the next day at the Esplanade Hotel and asked me to bring all my books and those of my friends, that I had published about Iron Maiden. He mentioned that he wanted to talk to me about something else too. Knowing that Steve was considering the possibility of writing a biography, I was absolutely thrilled. He told Peter to arrange the time and place with me, which we later did. Of course, I also invited Kastro and Francois to the meeting, as I secretly hoped we wouldn't just be discussing the books.



The show-time had arrived. Kastro was pushing Paul inside the venue, I was filming, and Violeta in her late pregnancy, had to sit down. Iris was moving around a lot and Violeta said to me, "Look how she's dancing to 'Run to the Hills!'" Paul was watching the concert with great interest, while I stood off to the side observing his expressions. However, every beautiful moment comes to an end and when Bruce yelled, "Scream for me Zagreb!" and the song 'Iron Maiden' (which Paul originally recorded) began, Paul couldn't take it anymore and said to Kastro, "Please take me out." At that moment, I felt a bit sad for him.



On the day I posted this photo, which I shared just a few hours after the show, almost the entire Internet came crashing down. Although it was late at night, the photo received a record 247 shares and ended up in all the major music media outlets. Considering that I'm not an influencer and had maybe 3,000 friends on Facebook at the time, that number was enormous. People commented through tears, expressing their joy that this moment had finally happened and that two heroes had come full circle again. Thousands of people clicked on the link and saw the photo, for which I cleverly thought to write in the description, "See more at www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse," which many did. On that link, instead of more photos and videos from this event that they might have expected, there was a link to purchase the Warhorse bundle. By then, we had sold about 200 bundles in a week, and just that night we sold almost another three hundred. Good job.

I am extremely sorry that Kastro was not included in this photo (you can see him cropped out on the left) and he more than deserved to be in it, but I must explain the background of it. In the photo beside Kastro, is Francois Farmine's girlfriend. In front of us were Steve, Paul, Rod, Wes, Peter, John, and many others, socializing and talking with each other, while my wife and I stood aside simply admiring the moment. At one point, Wes asked Steve for an additional photo with Paul and I noticed it out of the corner of my eye and raised my hands with the 'horns' gesture. The rest is history.

That evening, following a big after-show party at Vintage Industrial club, we came home exhausted. My wife fell asleep immediately and I knew that I

faced another sleepless night or at best, just a few hours of sleep. While both Violeta and my guests Maja and Daniel were sleeping, I sat in the dark of my living room with my face illuminated by the bluish glow of my phone screen, reading the messages and comments. The whole time, I imagined what my meeting with Steve would be like and what I could tell him about Paul that he didn't already know. I wasn't sure if it would be smart to use this opportunity to ask for any help since Iron Maiden had been accused by some fans over the past months of leaving Paul alone and abandoned when they had previously financially helped their late drummer, Clive Burr, during his battle with multiple sclerosis. I knew that if the subject of Paul came up, I wouldn't be able to avoid it. To calm my thoughts, I went to the official Iron Maiden Fan Club forum to see what people were saying about the show and the meeting between Paul and Steve. Among the hundreds of enthusiastic comments, I came across a sad post from Rory McGuckin, an Irish fan, well known to the entire Maiden community by the forum nickname 'Cork Iron'. Rory happened to have the misfortune of traveling from Cork to Zagreb with a ticket purchased online that he didn't print out because he had received information that scanning it via mobile phone would work at the entrance, which turned out not to be true. Since Rory tried to enter the venue just before the show started (and keep in mind it was a Sunday evening and he couldn't find a place to quickly print the ticket), he was denied entry to the venue and missed several opening songs. Eventually, in a panic, he sought assistance from the president of the official Iron Maiden Fan Club, Alex Milas, who did manage to get Rory inside. Yet he was sad all night at having missed the beginning and I couldn't stand the thought that someone would travel such a distance to my city and leave unhappy. Knowing that Steve invited me for a meeting in the morning, I left Rory a message asking him to contact me as soon as he saw it, promising that I would make him happy. He replied that same evening and when I told him I wanted to wash away the bitter taste by arranging a meeting with Steve, Rory couldn't believe what I was telling him.

A few times he asked me if I was joking but he was also aware that such things shouldn't be joked about. I told him to be at the Esplanade hotel at the arranged time and then I fell asleep with a smile on my face, knowing that I had brightened someone else's day.

I awoke in my bed in the morning with a wonderful feeling. Violeta got up earlier because she had to go for a pre-natal check-up at the hospital and I had the meeting of a lifetime ahead of me. After all, it doesn't happen every day that Steve Harris invites you to his hotel and tells you to bring all your books because he wants them for his collection. When I looked at my Facebook and PayPal notifications that morning, I almost fainted. What happened overnight was insane. Around 200 Warhorse bundles had sold and there were countless comments and private messages were coming in from all over the world. I will share with you two Facebook posts that I wrote during those days.

I just received this very emotional message from my dear friend Shawn Patrick. These words best describe what Maiden fans are and how seemingly small and unimportant things for others completely change our lives and help us even in the most difficult days.

Hey Stjepan,

I just wanted to let you know, the past few days have been terrible for me. I have lost my dad on Sunday afternoon. He was sick for a long time, but he went peacefully in a hospital. The reason I am writing this is because I was flipping through Facebook and found the video of Paul Dianno practicing with his band.... and THEN I saw the video of Rod meeting with Paul and then Steve and Paul hugging... Man, it warmed my heart. You are doing so many wonderful things and capturing MAGIC.. Paul is such an inspiration as well It gave me some warmth in my heart. Thank you my friend. I absolutely loved this. I can't say enough... Even for a little bit to take me away from my emptiness... Wishing you and Violeta all the best with soon to be Baby Iris...

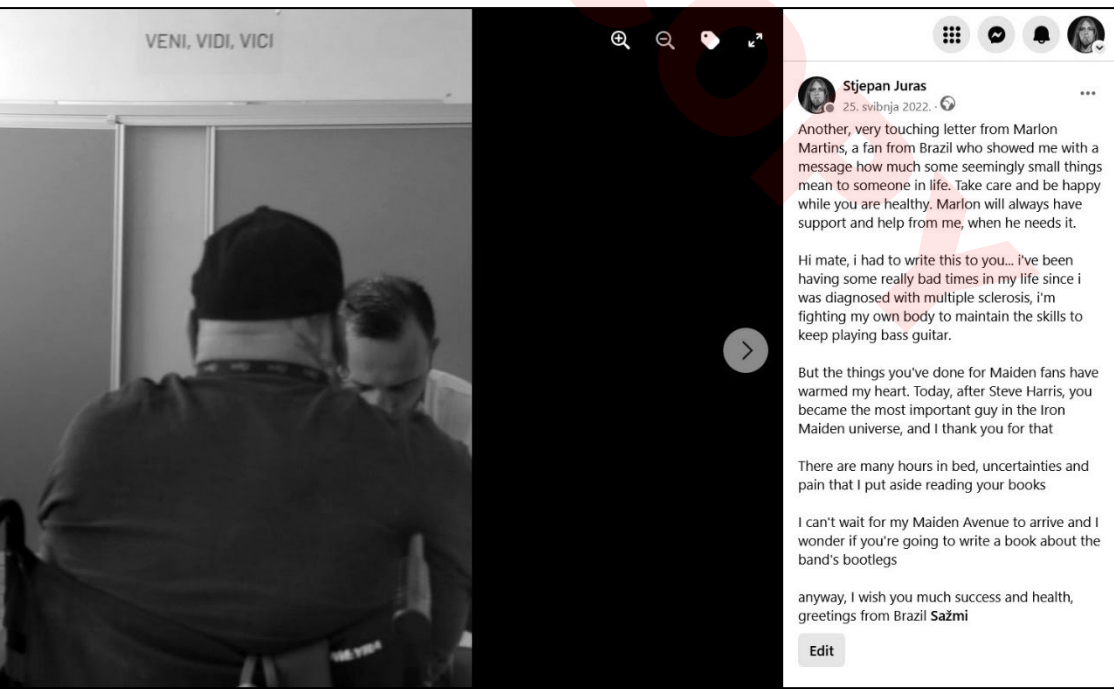
And I answered: Oh man, I don't know what to say after these words. So sad to hear about your dad. If I somehow helped you to bring back smile on your face I will be really happy.

And he said: You did.. It's all good my blood brother... Just keep doing what you are doing man...

And so... we kept talking and we both realized how much this photo meant to fans around the world. Everyone's heart is now in place, and the fantastic story of Iron Maiden continues

From the other side of the world, came another very deep motivational message and only then did I begin to realise that this entire initiative to aid Paul was not only changing him but also changing all of us who were helping him and even affecting countless people we didn't even know in this world. Without me even noticing, this whole story had slowly become about much more than just saving Paul. It had become an inspiration for all those who are struggling with difficult problems in their lives. At that moment, I became aware of the significance of my mission, for which I was clearly destined because when a fan named Marlon Martins from Brazil, wrote me the following message, such words cannot be ignored.

Hi mate, i had to write this to you... I've been having some really bad times in my life since I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis; I'm fighting my own body to maintain the skills to keep playing bass guitar. But the things you've done for Maiden fans have warmed my heart. Today, after Steve Harris, you became the most important guy in the Iron Maiden universe, and I thank you for that. There are many hours in bed, uncertainties and pain that I put aside reading your books. I can't wait for my Maiden Avenue to arrive and I wonder if you're going to write a book about the band's bootlegs. Anyway, I wish you much success and health, greetings from Brazil.



Numerous similar messages began to arrive. There were fans suffering from severe depression, PTSD, those who had suicidal thoughts, those grieving the loss of loved ones and those going through difficult periods with divorces or chemotherapy. Many of them wrote how our struggle inspired them and gave them strength for a new life. I felt grateful for the opportunity that we could help people in any way. It gave us all the strength to keep going.

So full of energy, I got up, gathered my books and took a taxi to the Esplanade hotel. Even at that early hour, there was a whole line of fans waiting outside the hotel for some of the band members to come out. One of them approached me to ask something but I was so focused on what was coming up that I couldn't hear him; it just felt like he was echoing from a distance. Rory was waiting for me in front of the hotel as agreed, and Kastro and Francois were there too. Then Peter showed up and took us to the bar in the hotel lobby, where Steve Harris was waiting for us.

A year earlier, in an interview for my book about Steve, his roadie from British Lion band, Wout van Loon, told me the following, "No, Steve Harris is not present on social media but you would be surprised how up-to-date he is with everything and how much he knows about what everyone is doing, saying, and writing." He may not have said it exactly like that but something along those lines and it turned out to be completely accurate.



Not only was Steve very informed about everything that was happening but he even knew some things I had forgotten. It was a real pleasure to sit with him at the same table, not as a fan but as a potential collaborator and talk about various interesting topics. Of course, Steve asked Kastro about the Cart & Horses and inquired how it was going, just as he asked me about my books and those of my friends that I had published. He joked, saying that out of all the unofficial books that had come out, at least I was fair and contacted management to ask if I could write them, while others hadn't even done that. He signed some of my and Kastro's copies, flipped through all the ones I had given him and of course I took the opportunity to tell him that if he ever wanted a biography, I would gladly be his writer.

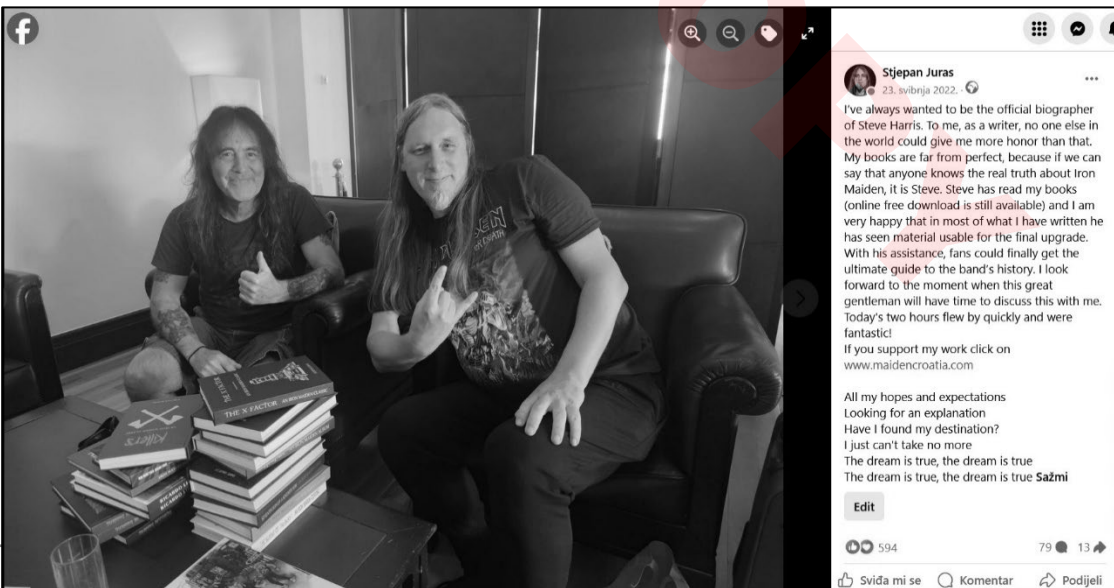
But even though we primarily met to discuss the books (or at least so I thought), something was still 'in the air.' Steve broached the topic and said, "I see you're doing well with Paul, that he's recovering nicely and is finally in good hands." I wouldn't want to quote him directly because our conversation was private and not recorded but the subsequent discussion about Paul flowed in a way where Steve inquired about how Paul was doing, whether he was listening to the advice given to him, whether he was cooperating, how truly difficult his health condition was and how much it had all cost us. His follow-up question was whether we had managed to fund everything and if not, to let him know how much we needed for the surgery to be completed successful. At that moment, Kastro and I exchanged glances and our hearts raced because even though Steve hadn't offered anything yet, we already knew what was coming. I felt compelled to speak up at that moment, looking him straight in the eyes, "Steve, I'm going to be very honest with you and please don't take this the wrong way. Over the past year on the Iron Maiden Fan Club forum and other social media, many fans have commented that everyone who could help has helped Paul except for Iron Maiden. They have criticized you for neglecting him after you helped Clive. Some justified this by saying that Paul has made some foolish statements in recent years that didn't benefit either the band or you personally when he compared you to Hitler. Others argued that it doesn't matter what Paul's behaviour was because when a friend or former friend is sick, they should be helped, especially by a band of your size. As a fan, I found myself in the crossfire and didn't know how to respond when messages poured in asking why Maiden wasn't helping. I just don't know what to tell them, Steve." At that moment, Violeta joined our meeting.

Steve looked at me and gave a slight smile during that moment of silence that felt like an eternity. Then he responded, "Never, ever believe the stories on social media. They don't know anything, especially when they say that Paul has never been helped. To be honest with you, the biggest problem has been that it was never clear where any donation given to Paul was going and how it would be spent, which has made it difficult to direct those donations lately. But now, everything is clear. The whole world sees that you two, along with all your friends and the fans, are doing good work. It's clear where the money is going and that better results are visible every day. And you know what? I think it's time for us to jump into this story too. Tell us how much more money you need to wrap up this whole situation and we will cover those costs. We are ready to pay them right away but the only condition is that the money does not go to Paul's account, your account or anyone else's. We want to pay directly into the doctor's or clinic's account once they've sent an invoice."

I felt very relieved, "Well, that condition is not only achievable, but desirable to us too." I was already fed up with receiving all the money from the DVD bundles into my account. Although there is a trace for nearly every expense payment incurred so far, I was concerned that if someone at the tax office questioned where all that cash flow on my account came from, I could find myself in serious trouble until I show them all the screenshots of invoices and agreements. That burden terrified me and I could hardly wait for someone to pay money directly to someone else rather than going through me. What do I gain from it other than worry and obligation? Of course, a smile spread across Kastro's and my faces when we heard what Steve said. The problem was that at that moment, we still didn't know what the final figure would be as the whole situation with the new doctor and much more expensive surgery had just begun to unfold. So far, we only knew how much the endoprosthesis and the doctor's personal fees would be and that was a lot! We still didn't know the accompanying and pre- and post-operative costs but we thought we would somehow manage those. Kastro and I looked at each other as if we both wanted to say the sum at the same time but we weren't sure how much it would shock Steve. To us, it seemed large and unattainable but to them it might be a trivial amount or maybe not. It was indeed hard for us to tell him a full sum.

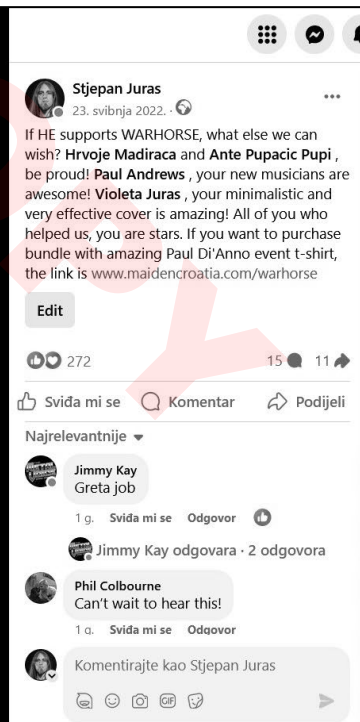
At the very beginning of the book, I said that I would not publish any medical documentation unless it had already been made public, nor any figures for treatments, surgeries, loans and donations. Instead, regardless of the exact amount I will just say that it involved several tens of thousands of Euros. I had a feeling that we were maybe asking for too much but Steve immediately responded with, "Yes, no problem. Just send the invoice to Phantom management and it will be in the doctor's account that same day". However, what we were asking for was only for the surgery, the endoprosthesis, hospital costs and the doctor's fee. We were unable to accurately assess the pre-operative costs, further care home rentals, post-operative treatments, all the transportation and other expenses that would arise. Steve agreed to our requested amount with a smile and without blinking. In this, he demonstrated a generosity that I will remember for the rest of my life. Steve is a good man, and I was proud that as a little kid I became his fan and that now I had the opportunity to sit at the same table with him.

We ended the meeting with a group photo and chatted more about the books and some details of Maiden trivia. However, as soon as we left the hotel, we rushed straight to the clinic to share the fantastic news with Paul. Wes was with him, and like a true professional captured the moment when Paul heard the wonderful news and simply began to cry. At that moment, we all broke down and I believe that each of us shed a tear.



Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

On the drive back from the clinic Wes started asking me how the meeting with Steve had gone. While recounting it, I wasn't even aware that he was filming me for his documentary from the back seat. I truly don't remember what I said but I know I was still euphoric at that time, so I apologize in advance if I said something wrong or revealed some secret once the documentary comes out. That was not my intention. As for Maiden, they are a very private band. They are in the position they are in for good reason. We really have no idea how many people and institutions they have helped over the years, they do it incognito. On the other hand, we needed this to be public for several reasons. First, as the story about it is in the documentary there was no reason not to reveal it ourselves. Secondly, we were genuinely tired of those people on social media claiming that Maiden was terrible and didn't want to help. Those stories disgusted us and we wanted to tell the truth about our beloved band. Also, the news that Maiden were helping would only give us further media coverage to promote our main initiative. Kastro and I decided that he and I would simultaneously announce the news when the time was right. However, before that we published this photo and message:



The fans went wild again, giving an extra boost to the bundle sales. However, we chose to hold off on announcing the news that Maiden had decided to help Paul and not rush it. In the meantime, two days later 24 Sata (the most widely circulated newspaper in Croatia) published a headline story about the legendary meeting between Paul and Steve.



After the Večernji List, Jutarnji List, Slobodna Dalmacija and now 24 Sata, the story was all across Croatia. The Paul's article in the online version of the 24 Sata was definitely the most clicked during the next few days. But I was busy with many other things as that day marked a pivotal moment that would change my life forever.

Paul called me for a meeting on May 24 2022 and said he had spoken with his manager Cliff Evans, and concluded that it would be best if I became his booking agent. "BAM!" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. First of all, where did this guy Cliff come from? I never knew about him from before. Yes, I knew of the band Tank, of which he is a member but I hadn't followed

them. I also didn't know that Cliff had played with Paul earlier in the Killers band, as I had only barely followed Paul's early solo career. But most shocking was that up until that moment I had no idea that Paul had a current manager. He had never mentioned it. Cliff had actually been in Croatia, at Bikers for Paul's show. We even met and chatted, but at that time, I didn't know that he was Paul's manager.



Cliff Evans and his girlfriend Lauren Lamb at Paul's show in the Bikers Beer Factory.

The day after my meeting with Paul, I reached out to Cliff via email. I am sharing the email correspondence here because it does not compromise Cliff's privacy and will not harm any future business relationships between us.

Hello from Zagreb Vanjski 02. Paul Di'Anno

✕ 📧 📧

Full Metal Service <info@fullmetalservice.com>
prima cliff

25. svi 2022. 12:47

☆ ↶ ⋮

Hello **Cliff**

Greetings from Zagreb. We met and talked a few days ago in Zagreb and I am very glad to meet you. Paul told me yesterday that you are his manager and that it would be nice if you and I could agree on everything related to booking his concerts in the future. I have already received several serious offers from Europe and Brazil. I added you on Facebook, so we could be in constant contact there as well. Paul told me yesterday that he has a contract with you, so it would be great to discuss how we can work together. When you find the time, add me to Facebook so we can chat about it.

Greetings
Stjepan Juras

That same day, I received a positive response with the blessing to take on the job of Paul's booking agent, along with certain conditions of course. Paul was known for having a large back catalogue of releases including many collaborations on albums and live releases. Naturally Cliff wanted to protect the recording rights to some extent. However, he already knew in advance that Paul had started the Warhorse project and that the story had gone public. He replied with the following:

Hi Stjepan,

We've spoken with Paul and we are ok for you to go ahead and book Paul's shows/tours/festivals. The fees are to be agreed between you and Paul and you will be fully responsible for Paul.

You will need to keep us up to date with any planned bookings so we can coordinate album releases and help with promotion. We must have full control of any live/studio recordings at all times and Paul must not enter into any recording contract without our permission.

I hope this is ok for you Stjepan. Let me know if there's any info you need from us. I look forward to returning to Croatia very soon.

All the Best!



Stjepan Juras

25. svibnja 2022. · 🌐

...

I've received an offer to be the official booking agent for all future Paul Di'Anno and Warhorse concerts. I am very proud of that. After Christmas 2022, Paul will be ready for concerts and tours that he will do completely on his feet. Until then, he will hold several special events. You can contact me at info@fullmetalservice.com

Edit

👍👍 362

60 💬 1 ➡

👍 Svida mi se 💬 Komentar ➡ Podijeli

Najrelevantnije ▼



Rasmus Stavnsborg

Best man for the job 🤔👍

1 g. Super Odgovor 2 👍👍

I then announced the significant news to the world, which was commented on by sixty fans within just a few minutes. Many of them were actually thrilled with the development of the situation and somehow everyone saw it coming (even though I hadn't seen my collaboration with Paul going that way at all). I knew how to do the job, as I had done it before for smaller, mostly underground bands but I had always thought the level that Paul was at was still out of reach for me as an agent. I assumed that once he finally recovered, he would call his old booking agents and crew, and continue his life just as he had before. However, when this

happened there was no turning back. I bit into a hot potato and had to hold it in my mouth. But fate decided that I didn't even have to search for the job, as the job found me. That same afternoon, I received a call from my old business associate Eliel Vieira.

Eliel had actually been the publisher of my Iron Maiden books in Brazil for the past few years. Although I received several publishing offers from Brazil, his was the most businesslike and made the most sense, as it involved the successive publication of not just one, but almost all of my books. If these editions were in demand in Brazil and managed to sell out, it would mean a lot of money for both me and him, which ultimately happened. In the past few years, Eliel and I had released about a dozen books in Brazil, and they were all bestsellers. In a way, I became a writing star in Brazil. Many Iron Maiden fans there added me as a friend and bought literally everything I published. I thought Eliel was exaggerating when he first spoke about it, but he decided to invite me to Brazil that year as a guest to attend the Rock in Rio festival and the Iron Maiden show at the stadium in São Paulo. "Who do you need me to kill?" I thought, but Eliel laughed and said, "Listen, Stipe, you've brought me a lot of money over the years. Because of your books, I got out of bankruptcy into which I had fallen a few years ago. It's because you believed in me back then that I'm now a successful businessman again. To express my gratitude for that without any obligations on your part, I'm inviting you to Brazil for a week in September. Give me your details and I will buy you flights and book your accommodation. Everything you spend in Brazil during your stay here will be on my tab!" Could I have received a better offer than this? It turned out that I could. Just a few seconds later, Eliel proposed a big Brazilian tour for Paul, which would go on through much of South America. With the tour, Paul would set a new record for the longest tour ever done by a foreign artist in Brazil. He'd play Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Asuncion, Santiago, Mexico City and more. It all seemed like a dream to me, a great comeback after Paul got back on his feet and something that would resonate heavily in the media. Having known Eliel for a long time and regularly received payments from him for my books sold in Brazil, I had no doubt in trusting him and accepting the offer. I did this even though I knew that before working with me in publishing, he had been a

promoter for major bands like Megadeth and had at one point fallen into financial trouble, having to cancel concerts, which later resulted in his bankruptcy. After that no one in Brazil wanted to work with him, so I was probably the last chance for his business resurrection. Still, knowing some rules in this game, I took the risk. It actually wasn't a big risk because if payment was guaranteed before every show, along with flights, hotels, tour bus and crew paid up front then the greater risk was on the promoter to sell the tickets as his end rather than on me or Paul. Our only risk was that the tour wouldn't materialise as planned and that we would miss out on other good offers during that time. But as of yet there were no other offers.

I had sent out some preliminarily emails to various promoters in the EU and UK inquiring about booking shows for Paul. The problem was that they mostly had a collective memory from ten years ago and replied to the emails with claims that Paul was a "joke" and that they had no interest in booking him. "I'm sure we'll see each other soon, very soon," I thought and busied myself with the preparations for the South American tour. Eliel and I agreed to first announce São Paulo to the public as a teaser and only later reveal the rest of the dates.

The only promoter in Europe who genuinely wanted Paul at that moment was Oliver Weinsheimer, the owner of the 'Keep It True' festival in Germany. This year the event had a NWOBHM theme that was the perfect opportunity for Paul to showcase himself. I wasn't originally planning to book any shows in 2022, thinking it was too early for Paul (assuming the surgery would be in July, which was becoming increasingly likely). I truly hesitated on whether to agree to come to Germany or not, as it meant that Paul would be performing just two months before the surgery and would have to fly and interrupt his treatments. I thanked Oliver and asked him for a few days to think it over as before me was a significant decision, along with a responsibility to Paul and to everyone who had helped in his recovery. However, the lineup for that festival was genuinely appealing and if Paul could manage to engage the audience and put on a good show there, this festival could serve as a springboard for future European shows and promoters could finally see that Paul wasn't really a joke after all.



Not three days had passed since the meeting with Steve Harris when fans from Brazil alerted me to a podcast where a popular local YouTuber, Régis Tadeu, gave his views on why Steve met Paul in Zagreb. His theory was as follows:

So, I watched this Brazilian podcast with debate yesterday. It is huge, over 1000 live streams and for now over 13 000 views. In only one week number will rise over 500 000 views. They talked about many topics and among them about my books, but especially about reasons of meeting Paul with Rod and Steve. One of them holds the thesis that everything was done only for marketing and that Iron Maiden could not be in Zagreb without meeting Paul who is in treatment, because it would disappoint the fans, so they had to do it by force. The truth is completely different, but it is not yet ready for public release. Iron Maiden have always been and remain a band of gentlemen, people who have built friendship and trust over the years and people who do not leave friends stranded. Whenever you talk and think about Iron Maiden keep that in mind. And about everything else that is coming ... soon.

After my Facebook post, dozens of angry fans from Brazil and all other corners of the world reached out stating that this YouTuber did not represent them as fans and friends of the band and that this video was nothing more than a ruthless attempt at click bait. People sent numerous links as evidence and shared their personal experiences with him. Chris Dale also commented and, in the end, Paul himself confirmed everything the fans were saying.



Paul Andrews

This guy don't know what happened and it's very sad that the only thing he has to say is totally wrong and untrue !!!

1 g.

Sviđa mi se

Odgovor

49

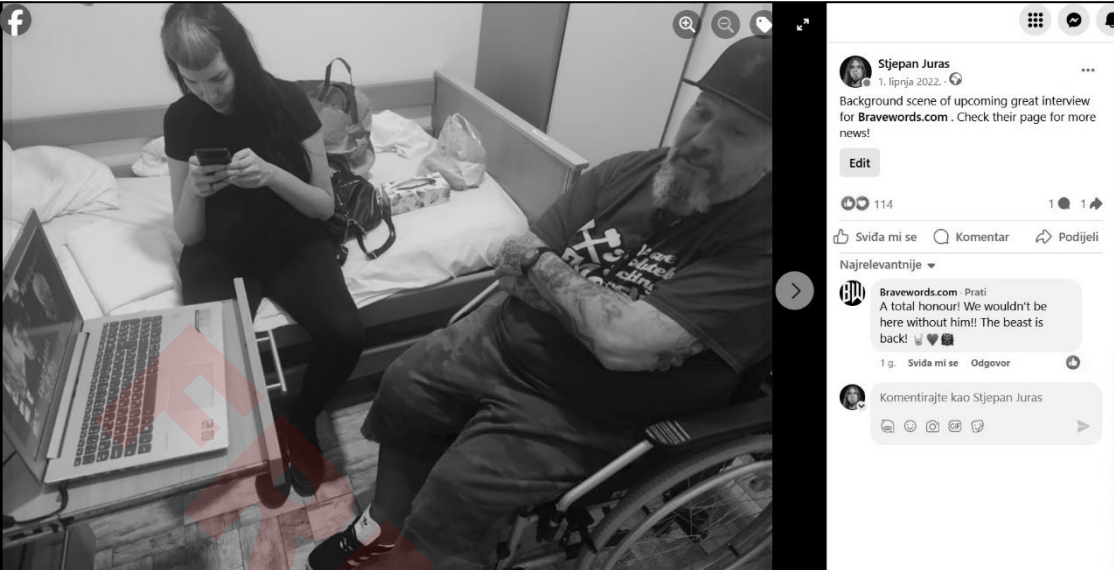


Paul Di'Anno was never abandoned by Iron Maiden, although that's what people on the outside said. As Steve mentioned during our meeting, Paul has received help multiple times. Iron Maiden is a band of true gentlemen. They have helped Clive, Paul, sick children in a number of charity initiatives like the famous 'Truants' and numerous other causes which fans might not even know exist. I personally know a story from Argentina, where Steve Harris literally saved the life of a fan who had a heart attack on a soccer pitch and no one knows anything about it (nor should they). There are hundreds of such stories but Maiden is not a band that craves that kind of publicity. Even the offer they made for Paul at the Esplanade Hotel; they actually didn't want anything said about it. They wanted to donate money and as much as we needed to help him. But they would be happy to help without anyone knowing anything or having it discussed in the media. Their arrival in Zagreb and the meeting with Paul had nothing to do with marketing. They don't need that kind of publicity. However, for us campaigning for Paul, every kind of marketing was necessary and we seized every opportunity that came our way.

In a 2022 interview for the Greek edition of Rock Hard magazine (which I attended in person) Paul was asked if he received adequate compensation for his work on the first two Iron Maiden albums. His reply was, "I have nothing to comment on that at all, because, to be honest with you, it's nobody's damn business. I got paid very well. I'm very happy with that. See, if I try to say, 'Oh, Iron Maiden didn't pay me enough money,' it's a bad reflection on Iron Maiden. And I'm not taking that. I got paid very well. They looked after me. End of story."

At the end of May, we encountered yet another problem. However, this time it wasn't about Paul, his health, donations or everything else that usually troubled us back then. It was about the new doctor. Dr Robert Kolundžić is first of all, a remarkable surgeon with vast knowledge, but he was not like Dr Milošević, who is flexible, communicative and understood us. At our first meeting, I perceived the new doctor as very rigid and someone who presented himself as a kind of superman in front of us 'little people' with his expertise. Perhaps this was just my impression at the beginning, but that's how he struck me. In the first weeks, we could not find common ground and I had the impression that he didn't take me seriously when I arrived for the consultation with long hair and an Iron Maiden T-shirt. "Which Di'Anno? Who is Iron Maiden?" all of that seemed abstract to him and I didn't blame him because he was a doctor from the old school and it was not within his realm of expertise. At one point due to the very complex surgery, Paul even signed a contract accepting the risk of a fatal outcome.

The biggest thing that got on my nerves was that we received the first price estimate for the surgical procedure sometime in May, before Dr Kolundžić knew Paul's exact condition and only going on conversations he had with Dr Milošević. Based on that estimate, we told Steve Harris how much we thought we needed. Then, when the true state of Paul's leg was revealed after new examinations, we received a significantly higher estimate. Dr Kolundžić is an excellent surgeon but I had some real confrontations with him in WhatsApp exchanges and phone conversations, and we reached a point where I almost told him to get lost. That would of course have risked the entire operation for Paul, but that's how it was. In Croatia, for such a complex operation, no one has better facilities than a few of the largest hospitals. We weighed up the offers provided to us by the Clinical Hospital Center Dubrava and the Trauma Clinic at the Clinical Hospital Center Sestre Milosrdnice. Unbelievably, at the same time in that at the Trauma Clinic, my father also had a complicated bowel surgery scheduled, so I had to be at the hospital every day with my wife and little Iris, looking after two people.

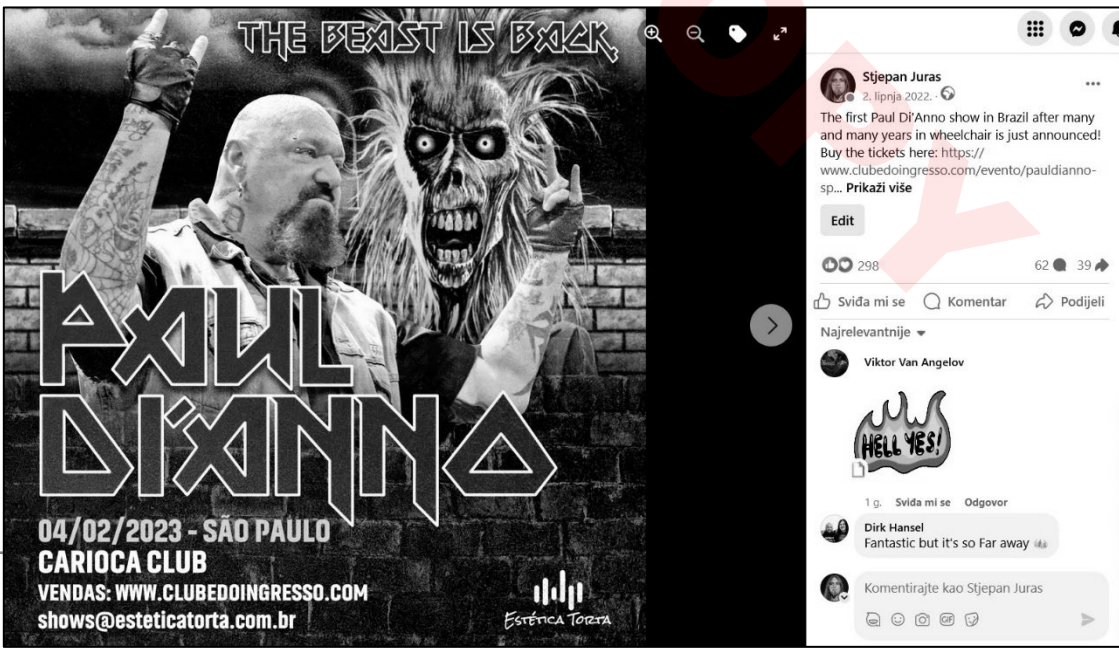


Throughout all these months since Paul had arrived in Croatia, I had been working well with many metal media outlets but one stood out. Brave Words not only published everything shared by other media but openly told us that if we ever needed anything, we should just write a PR announcement and they would publish it just to help Paul. Tim Henderson had been a big fan of his for many years and simply felt happy to have the opportunity to help his musical hero. I cannot describe how happy he was when we finally managed to arrange a Zoom interview for him with Paul at the beginning of June. Violeta and I went to Paul's room at the clinic to set up the video call for them. What I didn't know at the time was that Tim was secretly preparing his new project, launching Brave Words Records and what he didn't know was that I was looking for a record label for the upcoming Warhorse album. That day we touched on those topics for the first time and our following conversations would later result in signing a contract to release the album through Brave Words Records.

Meanwhile, the sale of the DVD bundles was going at an excellent pace. In just three weeks, we had managed to sell 500 bundles and we happily announced this news the day after Paul had the interview with Tim. In a way, my goal was not only to boast to the fans and generate faster sales of the remaining singles but also to impress Tim with this news to push for a deal.



However, that day was not reserved solely for this surprise. Just a few hours later, I dropped a bomb. I announced Paul Di'Anno's first major show after nearly a decade, and that it was in Brazil. There was chaos. There were 62 comments on my website and even 39 shares. Many considered the news fantastic but some were sceptical and thought that it wouldn't happen. No one could understand the rationale behind bringing Paul to such a faraway gig, so many fans were messaging me asking if this news was real and whether Paul would even be ready to fly to Brazil by then.



However, none of them knew that we were actually booking not one but thirty-one shows in Brazil, with at least as many other shows in Paraguay, Argentina, Chile and Mexico. Eliel the promoter, only announced São Paulo to gauge the initial reaction and demand. Selling out that first show would generate greater demand for the others. At the time this show was booked, we all believed that Paul would be on his feet by then based on the doctors' predictions. Perhaps with a cane or crutches, but no one doubted he would be out of the wheelchair. In fact, it was believed that he would be on his feet by September 2022.

If anyone is wondering why we started booking concerts so early, the answer is simple. Even after the surgery, Paul's recovery would not be easy. It required a lot of work and sacrifice on Paul's part, to rebuild his muscles and learn to walk again. Additionally, by then Paul would have run out of money in his personal savings. Someone needed to pay for his rent, bills and other living costs. Once the surgeries were done, no one expected that fans, Iron Maiden or anyone else would endlessly finance Paul. He would again be left to fend for himself, so he needed to secure himself financially and he would do it with the thing he knows how to do best—singing and performing live to entertain the fans. Also, Paul is a sociable person. He was not meant to be alone in his home. Whenever that happened, he would quickly feel abandoned and neglected. Then, very soon depression and helplessness would bring him to an even worse state. This Facebook post from Paul in 2024, despite all the typos, reflects his thoughts accurately.



Paul Andrews

2 min · 

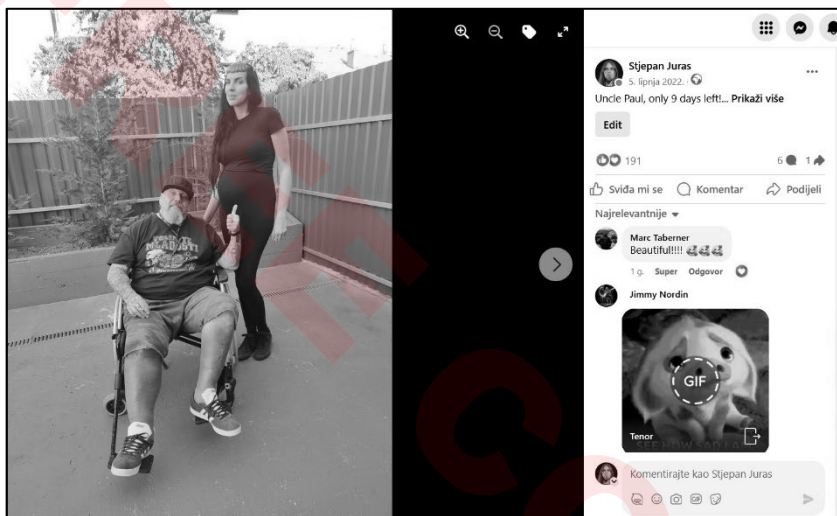


Isolation is not good for mental health saw mates yesterday then alone again I wasn't made for this that's why despite the pain and the faffing around on planes etc it's good for me I'm a social animal this loneliness is killing mind and soul if you have this in your life ffs reach out 🙏



2

None of us actually knew what we were getting ourselves into. Just a week ago, I had received the offer to become a booking agent and within that week, I managed to book a major South American tour and arrange all the conditions (fees, riders, hotels, tour bus, planes, per diem money and tour merch), even though I knew my wife was pregnant and that we would be having a child in just a few days. We weren't clear on how we would manage it all. In this photo, as you can see, Violeta was just nine days away from giving birth.

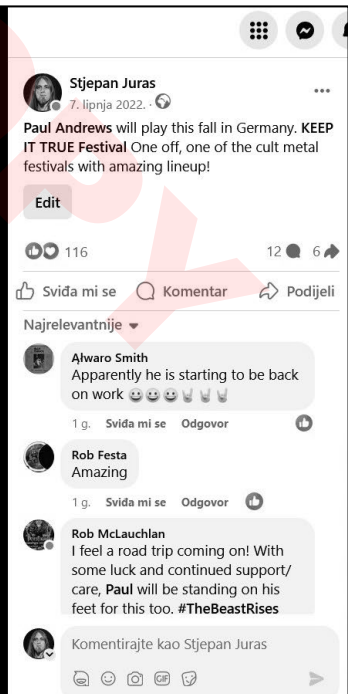


On this day at the Medisal care home, Paul mentioned that it would be cool to give little Iris the nickname 'Mini Beast' and that he would be her 'Uncle Paul'. Meanwhile, I was constantly on the line with doctors and had numerous meetings with them. Day by day, we monitored Paul's condition, accompanied him to various check-ups and worked hard to ensure he was in the best possible shape for the surgeries. During those days, Paul was working hard and very motivated. The romantic relationship he began with Jasmina (a nurse from Bosnia who worked at the clinic), was taking on a more serious form. Paul would occasionally hint towards it in his Facebook posts but no one actually had any idea what was going on. I had seen this nurse several times, had met her and spoken to her about business but I truly didn't know anything about what happened during her visits to Paul's room.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

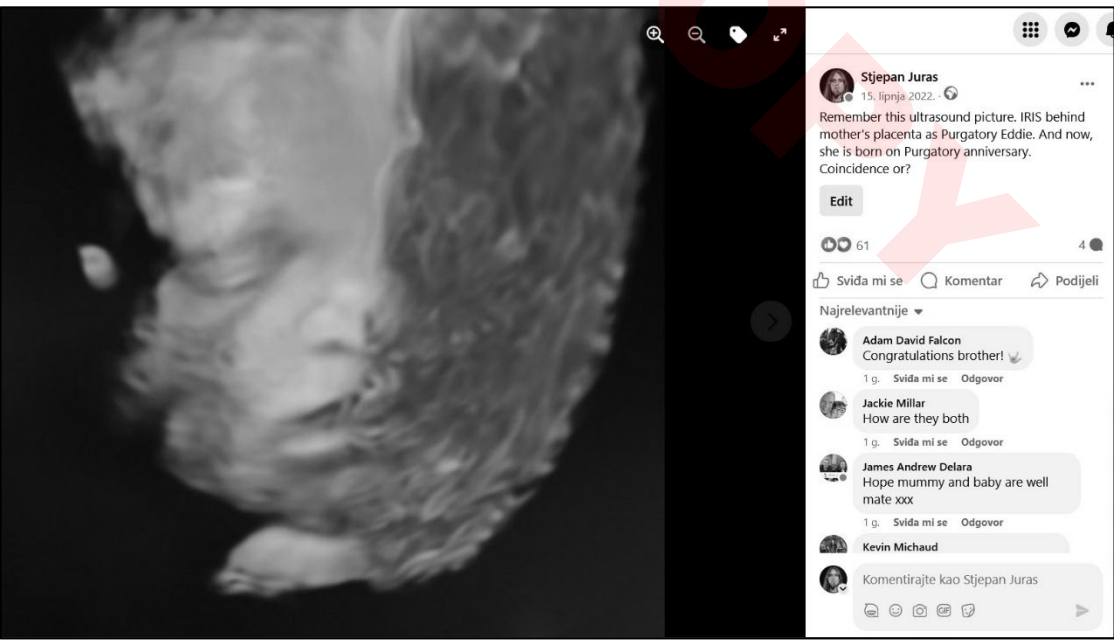
It was only later that Paul told me that his relationship with her and their attempts to find a way to be alone and private, resulted in his insistence on temporarily moving to the Westin hotel. Only then did I (silly me) slowly start to understand some things. The fact is that Jasmina was much younger than him and Paul previously told everyone that he had a wife from Venezuela who lived in the US, so none of us were really sure what kind of relationship Paul was in or what the hell was actually going on. But that's a story for another time.

Paul's excitement about going there, I held off confirming his appearance at the Keep It True Festival in Germany for a few days. This was because the show would take place just two months after Paul's surgery, the exact date of which we still didn't know so we were not sure whether he could perform or not. When the surgery was scheduled for July 2022, the doctors also said there was no danger if Paul went ahead and did the concert. They did however recommend that we keep a close watch on him, to have a nurse present just in case and not to push him to try to perform on his feet but rather to use his wheelchair. When we finally got the green light from them that Paul could indeed perform, we announced the festival:

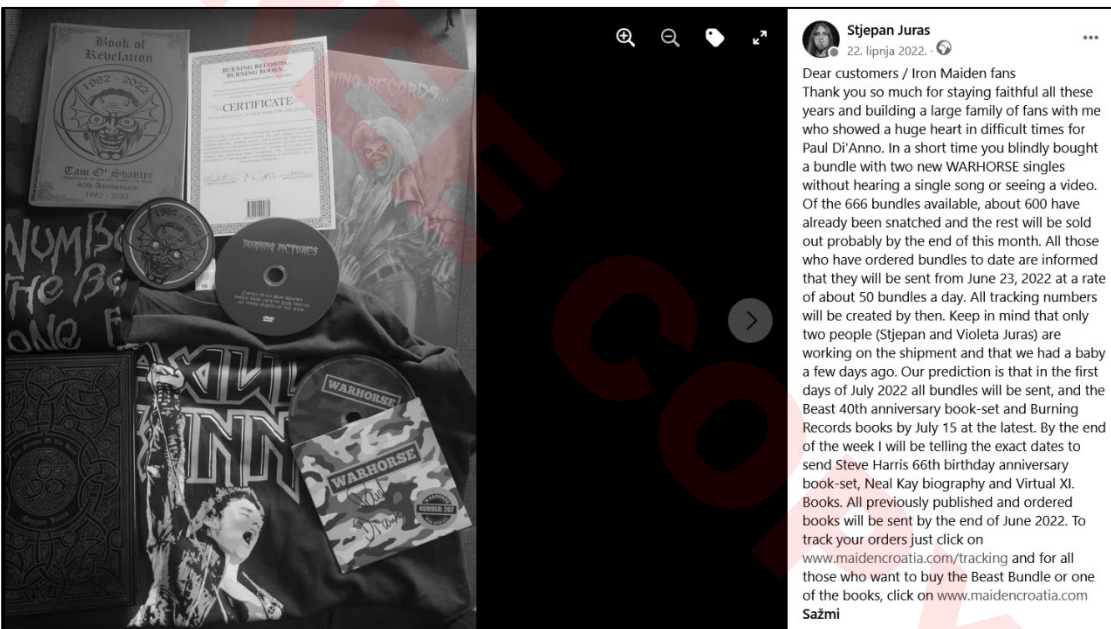


As expected, the news sparked enthusiastic comments but there were also warnings from some people that everything might be happening too soon. However, my thinking at the time was that Paul would have his surgery in July and by September, he would be able to stand on his feet, if only for a moment. Performing at a festival dedicated to the NWOBHM, with a large audience and worldwide live streaming, would allow tens of thousands of fans to witness the moment of his standing up and that powerful scene would once again motivate fans for one last round of donations. If you want to motivate someone to spend money again on the same thing, they need to see some results.

I announced the news about the performance at the Keep It True festival exactly one week before my daughter Iris was due to be born. I spent the remaining week going from hospital to hospital, whether it was the hospital where Violeta would soon give birth or the hospital where Paul would have his surgery. Only now, as I write this book, am I starting to realize how much stress I was under back then and I actually ask myself how we managed to pull it all off. When Iris, aka Mini Beast, finally arrived a day after her due date, someone noted that she was born on the anniversary of Iron Maiden's single 'Purgatory', which immediately reminded me of an old Facebook post featuring a red and black ultrasound image that reminded fans of the cover of that famous single, the last one Paul did with Maiden.



During all this waiting for Paul's surgery, we were in constant email communication with Iron Maiden's management, Phantom Music. From the day we met Steve Harris to the day of their payment to the clinic's account, which took about a month for the paperwork to be completed, the costs visibly increased. Eventually, we had to play the unpopular card of asking Maiden for more than we had previously agreed upon. I am sure that if we had asked for that amount in the first place, Steve would have said, "Sure," without blinking an eye but we didn't because we didn't anticipate such a significant jump in price. In the end, Maiden fulfilled our new request but we didn't feel very good about it.



In the meantime, I posted a thank you on Facebook to the people who had waited patiently for their bundles to be sent. I believe everyone had some patience with us, as they knew that as well as caring for Paul and my own father in hospital, Violeta and I had just welcomed a baby into the world. Nevertheless, we somehow managed to send out the hundreds of packages around the world but we had reached a point where we were simply

burning out and longed for an escape from Croatia again. Festival season was at its peak, and Violeta and I had our favorite festival...

Each new day that followed was a new challenge, as we had to fight various temptations, and keeping Paul motivated was the biggest challenge. A sword hung over our heads, as with each passing day we realized that all our cost projections were quite wrong. Iron Maiden did their job well, and it wasn't easy to motivate the fans again. Nothing lasts forever. I was terribly afraid of a fiasco now that we were this close and it was my nightmare. However, constant communication from fans and their mostly motivating messages gave me hope that we are on the right track and that we will somehow find a solution.

My working relationship with Dr Kolundžić was somewhat stabilized after many meetings and negotiations, although some aspects frightened me quite a bit. I had to be a co-signatory on the contract alongside Paul and in the event that anything unexpected happened, I had to guarantee everything with all my assets. Yes, I had been helping Paul all this time and doing it with a happy heart but something like this began to create discomfort for me. I started to feel that everything was heading in the wrong direction. However, I didn't back down and told myself, "If you've come this far, there's no turning back now. Let's see this through to the end!"

In the meantime, Paul was slowly discovering the joys of life in a relationship. Although he hadn't mentioned much about it, his daily Facebook statuses revealed that he was enjoying himself and living his sweet days. When I started doing booking work for him, my first idea was to organize Paul's official Facebook page. Violeta is also a web designer, so we came up with a simple yet effective concept that would be modern and refresh Paul's media presence. We talked to Cliff about the idea and we agreed it was a good idea. Cliff bought the domain, and we bought the hosting package.

Eliel the Brazilian promoter, was also busy. He was planning to announce the complete South American tour soon, so he hired Brazilian illustrator Cristiano Suarez to come up with an artwork concept. Suarez soon presented a fantastic illustration of a sort of mascot depicting a zombie version of Paul.

A few days after Iris was born, on June 18 the news about the surgery that everyone had been waiting for so patiently finally went public through my Facebook page. Iron Maiden had made the payment and the surgery would now definitely take place. However, we were not entirely certain what would happen afterwards. The main surgery was just one part of the recovery process. Yes, it was the most important and also the most expensive but the surgery alone wouldn't solve anything without months of hard exercise and training to follow it. Therefore, even though we announced the news with a triumphant tone, there was still a knot in our stomachs and a question mark about what else awaited us. The problem with all the previous predictions about the surgery date was that the first surgery was originally scheduled way back for December 2021 (when we still thought he just needed knee replacement surgery). When everything became much clearer, the first estimates predicted April, then May, then June but new aggravating circumstances kept arising that tested both ours and Paul's patience. However, this time everything pointed to the fact that the operation would finally take place in July 2022. I posted the following news.

Dear fans

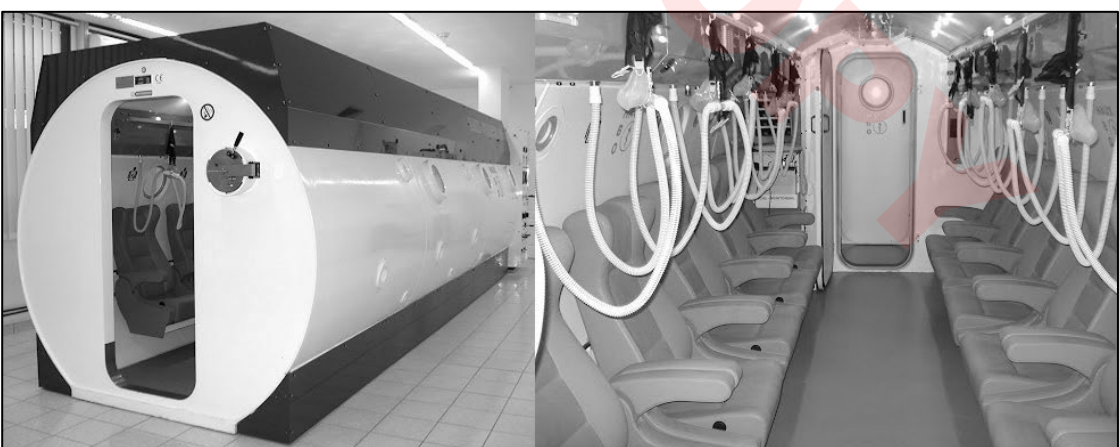
After a long and intensive recovery of Paul Di'Anno in Croatia, and a series of treatments he underwent, the moment of great announcement has finally come. You already knew that Paul was facing three major operations, but now we finally know the dates. Paul Di'Anno will be admitted to the hospital on July 5, 2022, and all three surgeries will be performed on him for two consecutive days, after which the hospital recovery will take about two to three weeks. Hospital recovery and intensive care are followed by the second part of recovery, which is rehabilitation and re-learning of walking, which will be significantly improved in the first days of October, and by the end of 2022 Paul should be able to walk fully. The first operation, or installation of the so-called umbrella in the vein cava will make a team of specialists and vascular surgeons and thus will prevent the movement of a large thrombus (blood-clot) in the abdomen and potential stroke or embolism. Operations of removing cement (spacer between bones) and installing so-called tumor prostheses or custom made bone and knee will be performed by an expert from the 'Health Center of Excellence'; prof.dr.sc. Robert Kolundžić, orthopedic specialist, subspec traumatologist of the locomotor system. The operation will be performed at

the Clinic for Traumatology of the KBC Sestre milosrdnice or (possibly) at the KBC Dubrava. Paul is very motivated and can't wait for the big and currently most important change in his life to happen. The doctor who will operate on him is one of the authorities not only in Croatia, but also in Europe, when we talk about surgery of this kind, and the operation that Paul will undergo is the most complicated and difficult of all orthopaedic surgeries. Although Paul will be cared for by a number of experts and the operations will be performed perfectly, Paul's biggest 'opponent' in everything is his own body or his circulation. Namely, the circulation in his leg is not at an enviable level and with all the efforts that have been made so far, it cannot be much better, but they will try hard. This is the biggest danger that threatens Paul and he is aware of it. An almost identical thing happened to him before, when his body rejected the endoprosthesis, but in this case it is much worse. If poor circulation suspends wound healing from surgery and if custom-made bone rejection occurs, this will be the end of treatment labeled Plan A. Plan B would then be a leg amputation, but that doesn't mean Paul wouldn't walk. Moreover, the recovery would be shorter, and Paul's movement better and more reliable. The only difference is that he would not have his own leg. Paul is aware of all the consequences and is ready for anything. He told us that he had thought about that option seven years earlier, but due to a double infection with MRSA, it was impossible to perform. Paul is ready for option A and option B, but we all hope that after the barochamber and additional lymphatic drainage at the Ribnjak Polyclinic, the circulation will be better and that Paul's leg will last and heal and that he will walk this year. Paul has important days of psychological preparations for the operation ahead of him and now he needs the understanding of all the fans and only peace. In a few days my colleague and friend Kastro Pergjoni will also announce great and fantastic news to you. Please follow Cart & Horses FB site. We will inform you in detail about each course of operations in a timely manner. Everyone who has the opportunity please help us on this journey and buy the popular 'The Beast is Back! - special bundle with 'Warhorse' DVD single + Paul Di'Anno special event t-shirt. You can order the bundle at: www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse

Thank you all
Up the Irons

The complexity of the preparation for surgery once again raised the expected costs. Dr Kolundžić insisted that Paul end his previously successful manual lymphatic drainage and transfer to his clinic for machine drainage, which was more expensive (and as it turned out, of questionable effectiveness). I was now tasked with finding a sufficiently large hyperbaric chamber into which Paul could be transferred for his weekly therapies to improve circulation in his leg. An additional problem was that Paul claimed to be claustrophobic and did not want to lie down in any standard-sized hyperbaric chamber. He simply refused, even if it meant not going for the surgery in the end. After much stress and searching, I finally found a solution. The Poliklinika Oxy clinic was the only one in Croatia that offered a large chamber where a dozen or more people could enter at once and sit, instead of lying down. Although it still isn't exactly comfortable for claustrophobic people, the doctors explained that they constantly monitored through windows and could react to any sign of a panic attack and open the doors. Paul was sceptical about it but he eventually agreed to be taken inside. He entered with several other people, making it easier for him to stay there and not panic. The hyperbaric chamber, followed by lymphatic drainage on the same day and exercises, really tired Paul out, but at least he was occupied which kept him positive, which was great. He definitely needed to be kept super busy to face the surgery fresh and full of energy.

Everyone was certainly boosted by the announcement that Iron Maiden had finally gotten involved in this story and that their donation to Paul had become a game changer that would finally help him get back on his feet. I wrote this:



Good deeds are done with the heart, always and without exception. I have participated many times anonymously without pomp and I will take part in various actions like this one, because there is no greater happiness than giving someone a better life and a new chance. In all these seven months that Paul Andrews (aka Paul Di'Anno) has been in Croatia, although I take care of him almost every day, I have not found an opportunity to take a photo together, except this one with Steve, where I stand far in the background with my pregnant wife and watch his back. There needs to be someone behind the scenes as well. The same thing is with my friend Kastro Pergjoni who sacrificed both time and money to unreservedly help Paul and encourage many fans to do the same. Also, although the paths of designer Robert Štivičić and I diverged, a few years earlier, the joint cooperation on this project was not questionable for a second when it comes to helping Paul. In such situations we are all unique and act together! There are many nameless heroes, fans around the world who have given their all to help the man whose music has marked their lives. I promised myself that I would take the first real photo with Paul when he is on his feet, when he finally walks away after 7 years of hell. The announcement that Iron Maiden will pay all remaining treatment costs is just the icing on the cake. One will wonder where they have been so far, however the Maidens have always been with us and when they finally saw that Paul's recovery was approached seriously, transparently and studiously, they did not hesitate for a second to help their old friend. That is why they are the biggest band in the universe. To all fans of Iron Maiden heart is now in place. However, I would like to mention that in the shadow of all these events, self-effacing and modest people from Paul's new band WARHORSE remained. People sacrificed both time and money; they paid the studio, the producers, the video producer and all the other expenses to record new, fantastic songs, and then they just gave them to us for free. In this way, with money from DVD singles in bundles with a T-shirt they helped us with a large amount to pay many costs of Paul's treatment. Hrvoje Madiraca and Ante Pupacic Pupi, you are already stars and thank you. A newly formed band, and such a big heart! In my upcoming book, in which I will describe in detail all these days, from the very beginning to the triumphant return, I will list all the people who helped us, by name and surname. Anyone who can still help can do so by purchasing a bundle at www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse and let them hurry, as there are few left.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

While Iron Maiden will help pay for surgery costs, Paul will still need some recovery from surgery and buying a bundle will help him a lot.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart

Stjepan Juras

www.maidencroatia.com

I don't even need to mention how fans and the media went crazy when first Kastro and then I announced the news that Iron Maiden had joined our mission. The whole world was once again turned upside down and finally, everyone's heart was in the right place. I felt very proud and spent hours reading the enthusiastic comments from people. These were some of the most beautiful moments of my life.

Just a few days later, Iron Maiden released one of their last printed fan club magazines, and inside we were greeted with a nice surprise. A photo of Steve Harris and Paul Di'Anno smiling with their thumbs up. This was one more touch that added a nice flavour to our summer. June had ended, July had begun and it was soon time for the surgery.

In the meantime, my little daughter Iris had just turned two weeks old and I had no idea how my wife and I would manage it all. To this day, I wonder what kind of energy it was that kept us going through those days.



BLOOD BROTHERS

With so much emotional charge to proceedings in Zagreb already, Maiden took it one step further with an event backstage that captured hearts around the world. Through the tremendous efforts of supportive fans including Kastro Pergjoni from the Cart & Horses and Stjepan Juras in the FC, Paul Di'Anno had been receiving much needed treatment for ill health in Croatia in the weeks running up to Maiden's Zagreb show. It culminated

in the live debut of Paul's new band, Warhorse, at the Biker Beer Factory the night before, and by all accounts it was a tremendous run through of early Maiden classics and his own material. Understandably, Maiden were unable to attend in the interest of being match-fit for their own return to the stage, but they invited Paul and his crew over and met him backstage for a heartwarming and unforgettable moment for all concerned. The picture really says it all.

**Stjepan Juras**
1. srpnja 2022. · 🌐

What I feel at this moment is indescribable happiness and pride. In the latest issue of the Iron Maiden official FC magazine (out today), there was a story about the joint action of all Iron Maiden fans around the world to help the legendary Paul Di'Anno. The crown of that whole action was the Iron Maiden concert in Croatia, where Steve Harris and Paul Di'Anno met after 30 years. Iron Maiden joined our action and thanks to everyone, Paul is going to the long-awaited surgery a... **Prikaži više**

Edit

👍👍 145 21 💬 7 ➦

 Svida mi se  Komentar  Podijeli

Najrelevantnije ▾

**Mark Richardson**
Well done Kastro Pergjoni, Stjepan Juras and everyone else involved in this!! So proud of all the people who have helped, donated and bought items to make this

 Komentirajte kao Stjepan Juras

🗨️ 😄 📷 📺 📄 ➦

Although I continuously pushed for the launch of the first Warhorse video to coincide with the day of Paul's concert at Bikers, it was not possible. However, finally, on July 26, the announcement of the premiere of the 'Stop the War' video appeared.



PAUL DI'ANNO WITH HIS NEW BAND / PROJECT WARHORSE RELEASE THE FIRST SINGLE 'STOP THE WAR' AFTER SEVEN YEARS!

On Tuesday, June 28 at 7pm (CEST), Paul Di'Anno with his new band Warhorse premieres a video for their first single 'Stop The War'. The video 'Stop The War', which will be preceded by video announcement and an interview of the whole band, will be premiered on the Ukrainian YouTube channel 'Metal Pilgrim' (<https://youtu.be/XSR64TBXQxg>) hosted by Vladyslav Stadnyk, and you will be able to find it later on to all official Warhorse sites and channels.

This video / single is Paul Di'Anno's first music release after a seven-year hiatus due to severe health issues. Warhorse is his new project originated in Croatia, where Paul is still in treatment. The band was formed by Paul Di'Anno and two guitarists / authors; Hrvoje Madiraca and Ante Pupačić 'Pupi'. Just days before three important surgeries, after which Paul should get back on his feet and eventually walk, the Warhorse issues a video / single 'Stop The War' with universal and very clear message. This fierce, direct and brutally honest song was created as a direct consequence of the tragic

events in Ukraine, but its message refers to all wars, the meaninglessness of the suffering and suffering of the innocent. "I can't stand up (YET) on my feet, but I can stand up against the wars, deaths, tears, suffering... We all need to stand up against the war and say 'enough' to tyrants and lunatics once and for all.", says Paul Di'Anno. The release date of this video is significant, because it marks Constitution Day in Ukraine, and Warhorse wants to say that there will always be support for the helpless and those who are suffering, in their loud and fierce way so that the whole world can hear the message well.

Behind the suggestive video, which is a combination of lyrics videos and Warhorse studio recordings, stands the Warhorse team and fantastic video producer Andy Pilkington, who has made great lyric videos, among others for Judas Priest and Smith & Kotzen. The Warhorse have recorded three songs in Croatia and plan to record the entire album in a very short period of time, so that they can announce their first performances in the summer of 2023. The specificity of the huge demand for the new Paul Di'Anno project is the fantastic pre-sale of the bundle (Warhorse DVD single + event t-shirt from Paul's comeback concert in Zagreb on May 21, 2022). Namely, the Warhorse released 666 bundles (blind sale) in pre-sale and in less than two months almost all of them were sold out. If you also want to get the last signed copies, click on www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse and hurry up! With your purchase you'll directly help recovery of Paul Di'Anno. For all those who have already ordered bundles, they will be sent to all customers by July 7, 2022 at the latest. Track your shipment at www.maidencroatia.com/warhorsetracking

We invite you to watch and share this video, so that all together we can send a clear and important message of peace!

WARHORSE

The timing for the video launch was perfectly executed. In less than a day from its launch, the Warhorse YouTube channel attracted over a thousand subscribers, and the video was viewed fifty thousand of times without any advertising beyond social media shares including the Metal Pilgrim page. The song launch was nothing short of a total success and the people were waiting for more.

About two weeks later, I posted a little secret on our Facebook page that I had kept for the first three hundred buyers of the DVD bundles, to whom I promised a special gift. My post was as follows.

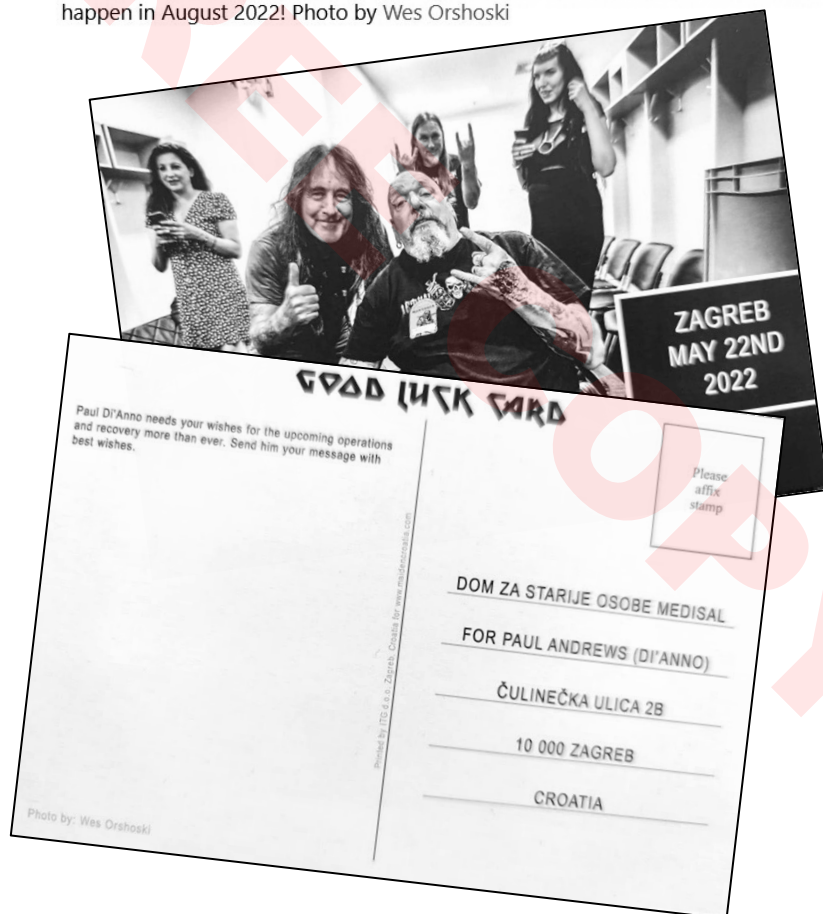


Stjepan Juras

14. srpnja 2022. · 🌐

...

I never mentioned what is actually a very special gift for the first 300 customers of the Beast Bundle! It's time to reveal it to you. We have created 300 special and pre-addressed 'good luck postcards' which, when you receive them, you will send back directly to Paul Andrews' address. Wish him all the best for the surgeries that will happen in August 2022! Photo by Wes Orshoski



HARD COUNTDOWN IN STALAG

After Maiden, the next show at the Arena was the farewell tour of KISS. They decided to perform in Zagreb for the first and last time on July 9. Chris Dale and his son Archie are big KISS fans so were in town as was the director Wes, who had returned to Zagreb to film an interview with Dr Kolundžić. Thinking that it would be cool to connect Paul and KISS again, I mentioned the idea to Wes. He realized that the meeting would be a fantastic story for his film and tried to reach out to people from the band's management through his contacts but initially had no response. On the afternoon of the concert, Paul, Jasmina, Wes, Chris and Archie were sitting at a bar having drinks when Wes suddenly received an unexpected message saying that KISS would be very happy to host an old friend but to come to the venue as soon as possible as it was now or never. Wes and the others didn't have any time to waste; they immediately headed to the venue. Since I was at home at that moment, they didn't call me because the urgency of the situation didn't allow for it nor did they think of me in all that rush. This admittedly made me angry at them that day, although I later understood and calmed down. I definitely wanted to witness the meeting event. According to everyone who was there, KISS was very warm and Paul's time with them went wonderfully. They all wished him luck for the surgery that was ahead of him.



The photo on the previous page was taken by the KISS team and provided to us so we could show it to fans and the media. The news story about the meeting with KISS was another fantastic media bomb that allowed us to draw attention to Paul and the donations once again. It was posted on my Facebook on July 11 and later spread everywhere in the media.

Some things happen for a reason, even if it takes 42 long years for them to happen. At the very beginning of their career, more specifically after the release of their first album in 1980, Iron Maiden got the opportunity to be the hottest upcoming band of the NWOBHM scene to be special guests of KISS on their European 'Unmasked Tour'. On that tour, Iron Maiden played 27 of the 31 planned concerts and for the first time they visited some countries such as Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands, and they returned to Belgium once more. Even then, KISS claimed for Iron Maiden that they were a great band and that they had a lot of fun moments on tour. There is no doubt that this tour opened the European doors wide for Maiden and helped them become one of the biggest bands of all time today. Forty-two years later, on their last tour 'End of the Road', KISS visited Croatia for the first time in their rich career. More than enough for (after the meeting of Paul Andrews aka Paul Di'Anno and Steve Harris), another interesting story happens, which in a way closes the full circle. Knowing that Paul is in Zagreb and that he will soon have to undergo several major operations, KISS invited Paul to be a special guest at their concert, in order to wish him a successful recovery. Thanks to the director Wes Orshoski, who contributed a lot to make this meeting happen, and of course KISS band and management, Chris Dale (Bruce Dickinson's bass player in Skunkworks) and his son Archie Dale were with Paul. Paul will very soon have three surgeries, after which he should have a speedy recovery. Already in September 2022, Paul should stand on his own two feet and walk with the help of crutches, and a few months later he will be walking quite normally. Many fans around the world supported Paul and donated money for treatments and operations, and were joined by Iron Maiden, who paid the costs for the operations. After surgeries, Paul will still need several months of recovery, so we invite you all to help us raise additional funds. On the link www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse you can buy a bundle containing his first music releases after seven years and a special event t-shirt from the concert in Zagreb in 2022. The bundle is limited to 666 copies, of which over 600 have already been sold. You can watch the video of

his first song from his new band/project WARHORSE 'Stop The War' at the link <https://youtu.be/cCjmPTsdnao>

After the sales following this announcement, the Warhorse bundle had sold around 600 copies by mid-July. The first 500 copies had sold pretty quickly but the last 166 eventually stretched out until the beginning of August. This indicated to us that we had gradually exhausted all the tricks from our magic hat and that this was actually it in terms of donations and selling various other things to help Paul. This was terrifying us as the cash reserves were again running low. However, we had to act as if everything was fine to both the doctors and the public, hoping for some additional miracle. If Dr Kolundžić had suspected that we might not have enough funds, I'm not sure how far he would have proceeded with the surgery. We were in a desperate situation but we didn't mention it to Paul as he was now in romantic heaven and we wanted to avoid him falling into a depression. Three days after the news about the KISS was announced, I wrote a new post on my Facebook pages.

The time has come to make a small update related to the treatment of Paul Di'Anno in Croatia and everything that has been done so far. Considering the condition in which he came to Croatia, Paul is in excellent condition, as far as his current situation allows. Three major operations were scheduled for July 2022, and at the medical examinations before the operation, the anaesthesiologist concluded that, according to the obtained results, Paul is ready for operations, because all the results were within or on the edge of the permissible limits. However, as Paul himself stated on his Facebook profile, the only thing that prevents the start of operations is a urinary infection, which is associated with long-term wearing of a catheter. Therefore, Paul is finally removing the catheter from this week and starting an antibiotic course that should result in sterile urine and the disappearance of the infection. When this happens (and according to expectations it could happen in approx. 2 weeks), Paul will be ready for the procedure. The only thing left for him is to do a certain number of lymphatic drainages, which will prepare his leg as best as possible for the operation, and wearing a compression stocking. Paul spoke yesterday with the doctor who will operate on him. He is already familiar with the possible negative consequences, which I wrote about earlier, such as amputation (plan B), but also other

possible dangers such as anaphylactic shock and other dangers. Although he is quite risky as a patient, the doctor is very optimistic and predicts the following: The last urine test will be around August 16, and the operations will take place between August 22 and 26, 2022. Three days in intensive care are planned (if there are no complications, so it will take longer), followed by another 13 days of hospital stay. On the first day, after intensive care, Paul will be able to sit on his own, and on the third day he will start walking with a frame. After a week Paul will already be able to stand and walk with the help of crutches, and by the end of September Paul will be able to move much more comfortably. From the beginning of October until the end of the year and possibly January 2023, Paul will be able to walk completely freely and may have to use a cane for a while. If all goes well in the first half of 2023, Paul will walk without a cane as a completely new man. Already in October 2022, after the final repair of his teeth, Paul will be able to return home on his own two feet. Let's wish him luck!

Although the Iron Maiden band generously decided to help cover the costs of the surgery, Paul will have to be in Croatia for about 3 more months for rehabilitation and learning to walk again. If you want to join the thousands of fans who have helped make all this happen, I invite you to click on www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse and buy a bundle (signed and limited DVD single of Paul's new band Warhorse + event t-shirt from Zagreb). Of the 666 produced, there are exactly 50 left, so hurry before this special bundle sells out!

"Oh shit," I thought as I sat down to write that message to the fans. Not only was the execution of the surgery being postponed almost every week, first due to the additional machine lymphatic drainage at the Health Centre of Excellence and later the visits to the hyperbaric chamber but now a new urinary infection had also emerged. If it wasn't cured, it would not be possible to proceed with the surgery. Paul was receiving treatment with various antibiotics but the more he took, the worse the infection seemed to get and no one knew what was happening. Paul, who had had a catheter until then, was ordered by Dr Kolundžić to have it removed because he couldn't proceed with the surgery with it in place. The catheter had to be removed professionally, little by little every day, so his body could adjust to the new situation and to prevent Paul from becoming permanently incontinent. However, the doctor's request to remove the catheter faced disapproval at

the care home, which called me to say that due to the changed conditions of the contract, they were promptly and finally terminating the agreement with us and that Paul had to leave the care home within a week. Jasmina, who was still an employee of the home, didn't agree with that decision in a private conversation with us. The home's claims were that they didn't have the resources to monitor such a condition and that removing the catheter would require new personnel to take care of Paul. Jasmina argued that this was a lie and just their pretence (since every care home works with such people who potentially might wet themselves and wear special adult diapers), but that they simply didn't want Paul there anymore. In the last two months, Paul had truly become unruly. He had taken too many liberties, argued with the staff, sometimes insulted them, referred to the care home in his Facebook statuses as a 'Gulag' and called the food disgusting. It was clear to me that they were looking for an opportunity to gently say, "Get lost, we don't want to see you here anymore." I tried to pull off any manoeuvre that I could but even though we offered to pay them more, their decision was final and irreversible. This new turn of events weighed heavily on both us and Paul, but we could do nothing about it except act quickly to find a new care home. Meanwhile, due to the whole situation there and with the postponed surgery, Paul had gradually fallen into a severely depressed state and no longer regularly attended the hyperbaric chamber, lymphatic drainage or anything else, which quickly reflected on his overall condition. He had simply stopped exercising, and it was urgent that he be lifted and motivated.

To take a little break from all the stresses of the past few months, my wife and I decided to go with little Iris to the Wacken Open Air festival to represent the Croatian winner of the Wacken battle of the bands, Kryn. It was the first Wacken after the exhausting pandemic years and we really needed this after a very stressful summer. There was much debate about whether we could or couldn't go to the festival with little Iris, who was then less than two months old but knowing that traveling to shows would be part of her future life with us, we decided to take her straight to what many consider the biggest and most iconic metal festival in the world. And when we arrived, there was no rock star who didn't want to take a picture with her, including the promoter, Thomas Jensen. After all, a 50-day-old baby doesn't go to such a festival every day. Those few days were enough to recharge our batteries so that we could finally face the big finale of Paul's surgery.



Iris, the youngest visitor to Wacken ever, confirmed by Thomas Jensen.

I spent the first days of August in Zagreb. Until then, I had never spent the summer anywhere except at my home by the sea. I always returned to the coast every year for the fantastic climate, beautiful nature, my parents and family, old friends, the places of my youth and the seaside. Relaxing there always recharged my body, soul, and heart. However, this summer I decided to stay in Zagreb with Paul when he needed it the most because the surgery had been unexpectedly re-scheduled for the end of August. This time not because the infection was so severe or for any other medically justified reason. Dr Kolundžić simply informed us that he could not wait another week because he had a prepaid family vacation and would be leaving Zagreb. To try to justify his decision, he told us that in August the hot weather would not be suitable for Paul's rehabilitation and the limited number of medical staff on duty due to annual leave was also not ideal. He was, in fact, right about all of that; the heat was exhausting and Zagreb during those days truly looked like a ghost town with many people being on

their summer vacations. However, I was still furious with him and didn't understand him as I do now. A person has the right to their vacation but I was worried about Paul, about his confidence and motivation, which were falling day by day, and the depression that was constantly growing. The surgery that was supposed to be in June, then July, was now moved to the end of August. I didn't like it. But at least I had the opportunity to finally go to the coast, unfortunately leaving Paul alone, but at least with Jasmina to somehow ride out August, heal the urinary infection and eventually proceed with the surgery.

I will spare you the details of the week of calls to all the possible care homes in Zagreb and the surrounding area. It seemed like an impossible mission. You will remember that Paul wanted a single room, with cable TV, internet and the best possible living conditions with wheelchair access and a smoking area. Who could possibly find something like that in just a week, the time we were given notice to move out of Medisal. Rooms like that are normally reserved months in advance, sometimes even years. However, this time luck was on our side because Jasmina brought a relatively new care home called Meditera to our attention. It was much closer to the city centre and seemed orderly and quite fancy at first glance. It was much smaller but the owners sold the idea that they had created it solely for the elite, wealthy elderly ladies and gentlemen they cared for individually. They offered many other similar stories when trying to sell themselves. What they wrote on their website certainly sounded ideal:

The Meditera Care Home for the elderly and disabled provides personalized services for those with limited mobility and immobile persons, as well as those in need of rehabilitation. Our social care facility is designed to meet all the medical needs of our service users in a fully adapted and equipped space. Highly trained medical staff, doctors, and physiotherapists ensure monitoring and care 24 hours a day.

Every user is unique, which is why we offer personalized care that takes into account specific demands and rehabilitation needs—regardless of their level of mobility. With 25 years of experience, we have honed our skills and expertise in caring for the elderly and disabled.

At Dom Meditera, we believe that location is just as important as the care we provide. That's why we chose a location accessible by traffic, suitable for users and their families. The location of Dom Meditera offers an excellent tram connection to the city center, and all important Zagreb clinical hospital centers are located in the immediate vicinity. Regardless of whether you are looking for a place for recovery, long-term medical or palliative care, Dom Meditera can adapt its services to the needs of users in an extremely short period of time.

Of course, this new care home charged nearly double the previous monthly fee. This was not because they had better facilities or were more attentive to each individual person but because they knew exactly who we were. They knew what our situation was and that they were our only option. Although they pretended during the first meeting that they didn't know who Paul was or the whole story surrounding him, they were in fact very familiar with every detail. As Jasmina had been a nurse in that system, she eventually realized and informed me that Medisal and Meditera were actually founded by the same family. Although Paul was cared for very well there, his room was too small for him and the entrance to the care home was not suitable at all. Although they state on their website that their, "Accommodation is conceptually defined to meet the needs of immobile and severely ill users, with special attention paid to their comfort, safety and well-being", in reality, it was very different. The semi-floor of the care home, where Paul was, was accessed by several steps, which was almost an insurmountable obstacle considering Paul's immobility and weight. Paul's driver, Dino, struggled every day to get Paul up and down the steps to attend his therapies. During one attempt, Paul's wheelchair was irreparably damaged. Although the care home had said to us in our first informational meeting that their staff would always assist Paul with the transfer, it quickly became evident that Dino was left to manage on his own. This situation was unsustainable in the long run. Paul didn't wait long to name his new home 'Stalag', continuing his tradition of naming each care facility after an ominous prison. Unfortunately, the postcards that eventually arrived at the old address at the 'Gulag' were unfortunately never delivered to Paul.

To get a sense of what Paul was experiencing during his stay in the 'Stalag', take a look at a few of his Facebook posts.

 **Paul Andrews** 30. kolovoza 2022. · 🌐 ...

Sooooooo bored can't get out fed up waiting around i have no control over my life it's all down to others ? I want to go home so badly 🙏🙏🙏

 **Paul Andrews** 4. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...

Thanks for all the stay strong words how strong do I have to be ? The surgeries don't bother me but being left all alone for days on end would make anyone pissed off and depressed it's too much day after days !!!

 **Paul Andrews** se osjeća iscrpljeno. 4. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...

OMG I can't do this anymore i'm totally trapped in here can't get out as no one here to get me down the stairs no one speaks English in here my mental health is really going downhill fast it's fkn torture I just don't know what to do ????

 **Paul Andrews** 5. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...

Another ground hog day where nothing fkn happens trapped inside again I just can't take this anymore I have hardly any human contact day and night it's like solitary confinement which is being paid for ? Well I've done solitary in jail and I'm not doing it here it's cruel to have no access to go out without help and that ain't there I just want to come home and fuck the surgery I'll play in a wheelchair ??? Fkn suicidal 😞😞😞😞

 **Paul Andrews** 6. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...

Feeling a little better today that because Jasmina is coming later so I'm happy about that need a few days in a hotel away from the stalag to regain mental strength for the surgeries thank you all for the kind words ❤️

 **Paul Andrews** 7. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...

Finally leaving the stalag for the westin hotel my mood is going to be much better as will my mental health just got to work out how to pack my stuff up in wheelchair and the smallest room ever ???

 **Paul Andrews** 7. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...
It's been another trying day here I'm so sick of it all let's get this Fkn surgery done so I can go home I've made my decision it's England for me ❤️

 **Paul Andrews** 🤔 se osjeća iscrpljeno. 8. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...
Morning folks another bad night for me waiting for a lab tech to come at 6:30 to take yet another sample ffs? Life started looking good and then Boom all turned to shit again ?

In these days of depression, Paul again recalled Iron Maiden and decided to write another thank-you status to them. However, around that time, Queen Elizabeth II passed away, which further deepened his depression.

 **Paul Andrews** 9. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...
Thank you Iron Maiden for helping me get to the finish line bless you all and much love and respect always you are the greatest ❤️❤️❤️❤️+

 **Paul Andrews** 9. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...
I can't motivate myself I feel so numb and shocked it had to come we know but it's hit hard and if I get anything bad said about my Queen you will be deleted immediately and you can look forward to a spectacular and life changing gift from me 🇩🇪+

 **Paul Andrews** 10. rujna 2022. · 🌐 ...
Wow this hotel the Westin is just awesome just had the best scrambled eggs and Kosher links you'll ever have in Zagreb ? The Turkish Prime Minister is here as well the hammers stayed as well it's just a great place and the staff are just outstanding I highly recommend it you visit Zagreb treat yourself and book a few nights here you won't be sorry good gym fitness room too 🍷

Paul actually hated that we had gone on a short vacation and weren't with him because if we weren't there, very few other people took care of him. Everyone else had their own lives and didn't want to dance to his tune, and many of them were also on vacation. The saga of the urinary infection continued, which further postponed Paul's surgery. That's why he mentions the lab tech's arrival early in the morning here. Half-alive, he could barely wait to be moved to Westin a few days before the surgery.

OPERATION 'AXES HIGH'

The initial hope that the money already raised for Paul sufficient to resolve all his health issues lasted just a few months. As the days went by, the anticipated costs piled up and we found ourselves in a significant dilemma as to how we could fun Paul's costs of staying in Croatia for his recovery and re-learning to walk. This was giving all of us headaches every day thinking about what we could do to see this through to the end. During those days, we somehow thought optimistically; we believed that everything would work out in the end. We subconsciously always forgot that we actually needed to prepare for everything going contrary to our idealistic hopes.

I don't remember the exact date when the meeting I'm about to describe took place, but I believe it was in July, around the time of the KISS concert in Zagreb. The meeting included Kastro, Wes, Chris Dale and me. We were sitting at one of the tables in Bikers Beer Factory, feeling a bit desperate. All the funds we had received by then were quickly being spent on unforeseen price rises and additional costs. The big question was how to proceed. I remember we were all trying to come up with a strategy to quickly raise money, but it felt like we had exhausted all our options and that nothing could be raised in such a short time before the surgery. We sat there in silence, occasionally trying to brainstorm some ideas when suddenly an idea struck me like lightning - Derek Riggs! I quickly shared it with everyone. In fact, Kastro had also had the idea of getting Derek Riggs involved for a while. We were sure that a shirt bearing new Derek Riggs artwork would raise money for Paul's treatments but none of us knew how to actually make it happen. While it was easy to contact him to license an illustration, it wouldn't be worth much without a story behind it. We might sell fifty or even a hundred shirts but that wouldn't be enough for what Paul needed. We needed a really good story, a story that sells. At that moment, just such a story was born in my mind. I remembered the cover of the 'Maiden Japan' EP but the Venezuelan edition where Eddie confronts Paul after he left the band. In that illustration Eddie is holding a severed head in his hand, having thrown his axe on the ground. My instant idea was a story about death and

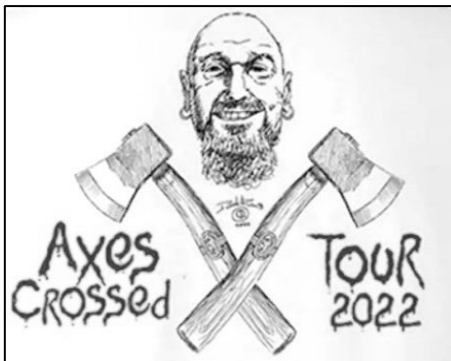
resurrection. Death and resurrection always works, whether it's about Jesus or Eddie on the cover of 'Live After Death'. Why wouldn't it work for Paul now? Derek killed him, now Derek will resurrect him. We just had to figure out how exactly. The first idea was for Derek to draw Paul as some kind of comic book hero, rising from his wheelchair and throwing away his crutches.



The idea for the back of the shirt was truly unique and I knew it would succeed. The plan was to invent the name of some imaginary tour and write the name of each buyer underneath it in the style of writing the name of the city on a tour.

For the smaller illustration on the back, my idea was for Derek to draw Paul's face with crossed crutches beneath it. This was a cool idea but had one flaw in that it resembled the logo of the famous

MTV series Jackass, so we discarded it. The idea was slightly altered to be cooler for Maiden fans and to connect Paul with his time in the band. Based on this concept, Derek painted a smiling Paul as a comic book hero, underneath which



were crossed axes, alluding to the cover of Maiden's 'Killers' album. This also gave us the name of the imaginary tour, the 'Axes Crossed Tour 2022', which also alluded to the phrase 'fingers crossed', expressing the hope that Paul's surgery would go successfully. Everything about this story had to be conceptualized in a way that could tell a good tale. A few days after that meeting, I contacted

Derek's wife Kim, via email. She manages his business affairs and after a few days of negotiation, they agreed to come on board with this project. Derek was

often in the unfortunate position of being asked to create a piece of art free for some charity event or other, while some people don't understand that he and his wife have their own living expenses and that Derek lives solely off his illustrations. I understood this completely and didn't want to ask any favours from someone who was also dealing with health issues. Instead, I suggested that when the production and shipping costs were deducted, the earnings from the sales be split so that both Paul and Derek would make money for their medical expenses. This ultimately became the framework of our agreement.

However, the first idea for the front illustration was discarded. Although Derek painted it, he quickly rejected the idea because he and Kim concluded that it was much better for Eddie to be on the front. The fans love Eddie and



he would likely be a better sales magnet. The first thing Kim suggested was the so-called 'Medicine Intervention Eddie'. This wasn't a very apt solution, as it depicted Eddie from the 'Seventh Son of a Seventh Son' period, when Paul had long since left the band. I instantly thought of another illustration, which was actually some fan art that I thought maybe Derek had painted. In that illustration, several Eddies loom over a patient, looking like monstrous doctors reaching out to the patient with one of them holding a surgical knife. It was painted from the perspective of the patient on the table in the operating room and I thought it would be a brilliant idea to have that on a shirt because Eddie once killed Paul, and now he's bringing him back to life. Kim got back to me and said

that she and Derek had talked and concluded that this wasn't a good idea but that they had a better Eddie which had not been used before and that

had an axe in hand, being a direct connection to Paul and the 'Killers' album. In the end, we all agreed that this illustration was the best choice and that we would write a slogan that is again a play on words and an allusion to a Maiden song (though not from Paul's era). In this case, it would be 'Axes High' rather than 'Aces High'. Once all the remaining details were sorted out, I announced it on all social media and waited for the results.

**Stjepan Juras**
15. srpnja 2022. · 🌐

As you know, the entire community of Iron Maiden fans rose to their feet and gave a helping hand to the legendary singer Paul Di'Anno. Iron Maiden & Phantom Music also joined this grand action. This story would not be complete without the legendary monster EDDIE and his creator Derek Riggs. Derek offered his special artwork that we will print on a t-shirt, along with a special certificate. The shirt will be unique and you have never seen anything like it before. Let's remember; Eddie 'killed' Paul on the Venezuelan edition of the live EP 'Maiden Japan', and now he will raise him again and give him a chance for a new life on his own two feet. This shirt will go on pre-sale on August 1, 2022. [Page www.maidencroatia.com/riggs](http://www.maidencroatia.com/riggs) will start to work from August 1st. You can order the last 40 bundles with previous t-shirt and signed WARHORSE DVD single at www.maidencroatia.com/warhorse



 Rasmus Stavnsborg, Chris Dale i 356 drugih

53 komentara 24 dijeljenja

None of us doubted that with such an announcement and the help of the metal media, this shirt would sell. Literally, everyone jumped in to support. In addition to my post, Derek posted it on his Facebook page and the Cart &

Horses did as well. As you can see in the screenshot, my news was quickly shared 24 times. We made the shirt in three colours: black, white and grey, as we knew that some collectors would want to buy all three. The idea of having each buyer's name on the back appealed to the fans and caused a real frenzy. Sales started very promisingly. Over 450 shirts were sold in the first few days. But then, as the sales began to taper off with around 500 sold. Brave Words jumped in with an additional post and the floodgates opened. I'm not sure what happened, how or why (probably good timing and the stars needing to align), but suddenly everyone shared the news and sales skyrocketed. All day and night, payment notifications came in to my email account. In just a few days, we went from 500 to a total of 1,064, when suddenly the sales stopped again. Here we concluded, somewhat in fear, that we should close the sales in case we wouldn't be able to handle all the shipments on time. You have to keep in mind that it was just myself and Violeta (who had just given birth) working on this. "Oh my God, what is happening?" I thought. This was truly a surprise bombshell and exactly what we needed to finish the treatment once and for all.



Axes High shirt, white version.

With this sale, we actually concluded the story of fundraising for Paul, although we didn't know it at the time. All the subsequent funds that Paul received were solely from gig earnings. However, this story has a continuation that I will share in one of the later chapters. If I haven't mentioned enough so far in this book, I will do it once more. A big thank you to Linda Harris for doing everything in her power to help us and for facilitating Paul's meeting with Steve Harris, as well as to Derek and Kim, who selflessly did everything they could to ensure Paul received the funds for his treatment...

As the delays around the surgery extended, I ended up spending the end of summer on island of Ugljan in the village of Kali and in my birth town - Zadar. My summer gained a sense of purpose and provided the much-desired relaxation and recharge I needed. With Paul's immediate financial problems solved, we could get back to worrying about the problem of the delays to his surgery. One day Pauls, driver, Dino, Violeta and myself were sitting at a bar by the tram terminus next to Paul's care home and we were all scratching our heads over how it was possible that Paul consistently had poor urine test results day after day, despite all kinds of antibiotics. The doctors tried prescribing one antibiotic, then another, then a third and the urine test results were not improving. In fact, they seemed to be getting worse with Paul having different bacterial colonies each time. Something was definitely off and looking back I wonder how it was suspicious to us unqualified people and yet completely normal to all the doctors, regardless of whether they were from the microbiological laboratory or Dr Kolundžić's clinic? It's possible that the staff at the microbiological lab only cared about the result and nothing more. They would read the report and write up the results, not noticing what happened with the same patient in the previous week or month. Thus, they failed to spot anything suspicious even though they should have. To put it colloquially, they couldn't care less. Dr Kolundžić, who was supposed to operate on Paul would then just see that the result was positive and probably didn't bother to think too much about it either, merely prescribing new antibiotics and pushing surgery back to a later date, which also suited the schedule of his vacation better. All us non-scientists could do was to play conspiracy theorists. The only logical conclusion that all three of us came with was that maybe Paul's urine sample was not being collected correctly and was becoming contaminated somehow. We suspected that someone had made a dangerous and crucial mistake but proving it would be very difficult. Nevertheless, we decided to take action and look into our conspiracy theory.

ESCAPE FROM HOSPITAL

From mid-June to September, Paul increasingly sank into a spiral of procrastination and avoidance of exercise. Fortunately, Jasmina was his driving force and wouldn't let him give up. She pushed him beyond his limits and helped ensure that Paul didn't completely lose his way. Paul had understandably lost some motivation because just when he was most pumped up for the surgery all these delays started piling up. When we also considered the cost of the additional two months in the care home, it felt like money was being wasted, especially when we discovered the real reason for the delays caused by the urine sample results.

Our conspiracy theory was that the staff at the care home didn't want to have too much close contact with Paul primarily because many of them were afraid of him. For someone to take a midstream urine sample from him during his first release of the day (as urine samples are normally properly collected), they would have to wake him up (God forbid the reaction!), undress him, hold his penis and make him urinate. With a standard patient, that might be an easy task, but with Paul I wasn't so sure. A simpler and safer option might be to collect urine from the basin he had already used and hope that the sample would be OK. Of course, this was the basin he had been using for weeks and had probably never been cleaned since. Could anyone expect anything more than a positive result and another delay for the surgery?

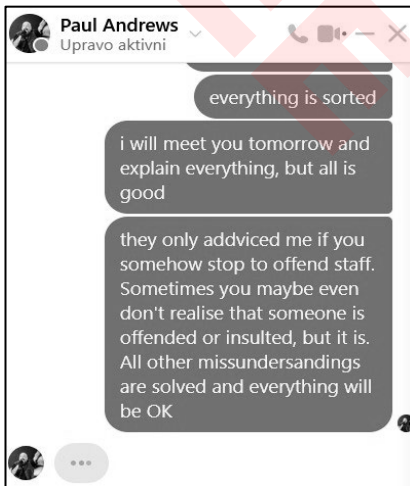
The idea that was spinning around my head was to find out who the doctor was that verified and validated the microbiological test results. So, I opened the PDF from the Labplus clinic on my laptop and learned that his name was Dr Nenad Andrić and that he specialized in clinical microbiology. I called the clinic and asked to speak to him personally. When I finally managed to reach him, I presented him with all the issues that had been troubling me and I could sense that the doctor began to take my theory seriously. He promised that he would bypass the protocol and personally visit the care home early in the morning to take a urine sample himself. Of course, I promised him that I would privately reward him for his efforts, as this was outside of his

normal work and he was not obligated help. And guess what? The results that we received the next day were perfectly negative, confirming that all our suspicions had been correct. I was so furious with the Meditera care home that at one point I wanted to sue them and demand a refund for the unnecessary stay there in August and all the costs incurred that month. Finally, there were no more obstacles to Paul proceeding with the surgery.

However, the numerous delays created room for Paul to undergo new tests and re-examine the state of his possible clot, for which he would need additional surgery. Fortunately, the new detailed results showed that it was all indeed a false alarm and that there would be no need for a third surgery. Dr Kolundžić also confirmed that there was an option to perform both procedures (the removal of the spacer cement and the implantation of the prosthesis) on the same day. Paul would be admitted to the hospital about a week before the surgery, and then after the surgery, he would need to stay there for at least another two weeks for more tests and the further monitoring of his condition.



The photo on the previous page shows the Trauma hospital where Paul was now scheduled to have his surgery on September 12 2022. Since Paul was supposed to stay at the hospital for at least three weeks and after that we would soon depart for the Keep It True Festival, he would be absent from the care home for nearly a month. This made it pointless to pay for September at the care home. The stay there along with the additional costs associated with it would come to at least 2000 Euros and we didn't have money to burn. In fact, the most sensible option was to cancel the accommodation at the care home entirely. This was because the care home wouldn't let us off the payment for that one month and if we wanted Paul to return in October, we would have to pay for September, even though Paul wouldn't be there. They refused to even give us a small discount for his absence, which to me translated from their side as, "Go away and don't come back!"



In some ways, I understood them since I knew what they went through every day (and this didn't only apply to this care home but to all the ones Paul stayed in). The screenshot you see here is just one of many similar exchanges where I explained to him that his communication with the staff was not exactly what it was expected to be. In many cases, Paul didn't even realize that his words and actions could be offensive. The staff sometimes took his behaviour as a personal attack, leading them to not want to work him. He believed, at

least according to what he told me, that it was all a joke and that people shouldn't take it so seriously, but clearly, it was not a joke for them. If it had happened once or twice, his excuse might have sounded reasonable but the fact is that this behaviour was largely the reason for the abrupt termination of his accommodation at the previous Medisal care home, and such a pattern of behaviour constantly repeated itself later, whether it was with staff at the care home, doctors or crew on tour. Therefore, I concluded that this way of communicating was simply inherent to Paul and if I wanted to work with him, I

had only two options, 'take it or leave it'. And I clearly accepted to take it. Thus, the decision was ultimately made that Paul would move from the care home to the Westin Hotel at the beginning of September for a few days before his operation at the hospital. After the hospital, he'd go to Germany for the festival and we would figure the next step out along the way..

After the move, the problem was Paul's belongings. While he was in the care home, he accumulated many things over the months, and not everything could go with him to the hospital. Therefore, Dino took some larger items, like extra wheelchair, orthosis, etc., to his garage; his then-fiancée Jasmina took some things, and Violeta and I took some items to our house.

While he was in the care homes, Paul accumulated many things over the months and not everything could go with him to the hotel or the hospital. Therefore, Dino took some of the larger items, like an extra wheelchair to his garage. Paul's fiancée, Jasmina stored of his belongings and Violeta and I took the rest to our house.

I refer to Jasmina as Paul's fiancée for the first time here because just a few days before the move from the care home, Paul told me that he had decided to propose to her. I remember that day when he called me to share a secret, which I had already suspected. He seemed very happy and deeply convinced of what he was saying. The news of their engagement spread quickly online just a few days later when both Paul and Jasmina announced it on social media. Around the same time, I also posted all the remaining dates for the South American tour on social media, and Paul would jokingly (but partly seriously) tell me that I had ruined his wedding plans. The plan they announced on social media was to get married in February and then go on a honeymoon. They talked about Jasmina coming with us to South America for a week.

Although I have tried throughout the writing of this book to express only my opinion and avoid meddling in the private matters of others, I feel I must clarify a few things here. Paul's sudden love in Croatia, along with the public announcement of their engagement and upcoming marriage, resonated among his friends. Naturally, in the comments on Facebook, everyone congratulated him and left positive remarks, respecting his feelings and wishes. However, in private communication with me, almost everyone asked, "What's going on with

Paul?" They wondered if he was serious about this or if he had lost his mind. And, besides, what happened to his wife Maria, whom he had publicly mentioned non-stop until then? How it was that he suddenly decided to marry someone thirty years younger, who also had children? Up until that point, I hadn't known Jasmina too well, aside from in her official capacity as a nurse in the care home. But from mid-July, she became quite dominant in their relationship and quickly established herself as a key decision-maker. Almost nothing could happen without her approval and consent. Although I think that she began to hold her opinions a bit too highly, sometimes resembling a doctor's tone that was somewhat authoritative. However, that as an experienced nurse she was right about a lot of things. She kept Paul under control and made sure he wasn't slacking off from his exercise and that he remained focused on his upcoming surgery and the following recovery.

On the one hand, with Jasmina, Paul gained a free private nurse who had no trouble attending to his sometimes very complicated requests. However, on the other hand, Paul increasingly began to lose his independence in decision-making and the freedom to which he had been accustomed for years. He faced an important decision about which path to take; entering into a relationship would certainly bring him positive, but he would have to make sacrifices as well. Many of Paul's friends viewed Jasmina as a classic 'gold digger,' someone who was taking the opportunity to hop on the train and join the life of a rock star. But to be fair, she didn't really know who he was or even who Iron Maiden were. Plus, at that time, Paul wasn't exactly a lucky catch. His health was in a bad way and his financial and home situation was also far from great. Jasmina was a sweet woman and very smart. She spoke English and learned more quickly. It didn't take her long to catch on to Paul's twisted sense of humour and join him in it, which is where you could really win him over. I can easily see how their relationship developed and blossomed. But as Croatia is an EU country, and Jasmina was a citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina, she constantly struggled with how to remain in Croatia without being sent back. She had to frequently battle to retain her work permit and being a single mother, she also struggled financially. I am quite sure she would have accepted any reasonable compromise to get out of that situation. Many people currently living in Bosnia and Herzegovina, want to escape to open labour markets in the EU or to some more developed country in the West, as the economic situation there today is not particularly great. Marrying a fallen

rock star might have seemed like a good compromise, as there was hope that in a few years, everything would be much better for Paul and that she and her children could relocate to the UK and receive British citizenship. Thus, the idea of marrying a British citizen, regardless of his disability and his current financial situation, would be a useful solution for many. I'm not saying this had to be the case for Jasmina, although she did mention it several times without hesitation during our conversations. Perhaps her attachment to Paul might have been just a temporary act but to me, their affection seemed sincere. Even her older child, little Nirvana, easily accepted Paul as a father or head of the household and sincerely loved him.

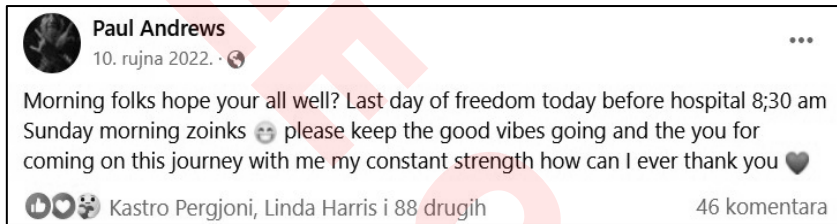
I personally thought Paul and Jasmina as a couple, seemed perfectly fine, and for a time, Paul appeared genuinely happy. Although in the opinion of myself and many of Paul's friends, everything around them was happening way too quickly and recklessly. Their relationship, engagement and planned wedding was all within a few months. Lots of people wanted to say something to Paul but remained silent out of respect for his decision. Jasmina became increasingly ubiquitous. All of Paul's friends and fans added her on social media. done deal. Paul's trust in the relationship was so much that very soon, Paul had no problem with giving Jasmina his credit card and telling her his PIN. Everything seemed to be heading towards marriage; it seemed like a done deal.



As I mentioned earlier, the short-term plan for Paul following his surgery was to spend another couple of weeks in hospital recovering and then head to the Keep It True Festival in Germany. This was to be immediately followed by more rehabilitation until the start of the tour. Although the festival was booked under different conditions (back when we thought Paul would have the surgery in July and easily be on crutches before the gig), after much consultation with the doctors, we concluded that with great caution, Paul could perform. Let me outline the entire issue. From the promoter's perspective, Paul not showing up would certainly pose a problem. No one likes cancellations and disappointed fans who bought tickets specifically because of him, not to mention the flights and hotels that had long been booked, which would all go to waste in the event of a cancellation. From Paul's side, the money he would earn from the gig would be his personal living expenses hopefully until the end of the year and most crucially, he could pay the rent on his apartment back in Salisbury. He was also extremely eager to perform. He had already felt a great thirst for gigs and constantly fantasized about new tours. He said that it was the only life he wanted to live and everything else was just torture and a path to death. Throughout the preparation for the surgery, he was focused on the thought that immediately after it, he would go to Keep it True. If we had to cancel the show before his operation, it would be a huge psychological blow for him. Who knows how it would affect his motivation of the final preparations for the surgery.

The Keep It True Festival has become very significant in the metal community over the years, and the theme of the festival that year (NWOBHM) was an ideal platform for Paul to showcase his renewed brilliance. There would be a worldwide live stream and the performance would further spread the story about Paul around the globe. And if the show went well, his booking future would be guaranteed. This was extremely important because, it was clear to everyone that the time for donations had passed and now Paul needed to take care of his own finances and earn money through his work. I am aware that there was some debate during those days about whether Paul should go on tour or not but ultimately, the doctor's word was always the decisive factor. Therefore, we decided not to rush into cancellation and we told Oliver, the festival promoter, we would wait for the results of the surgery and then we would get final confirmation from the doctor on whether Paul could perform or not. If the doctor prohibited him, it would mean we would have to cancel the performance literally few days before the festival.

When Paul moved out of the care home, the countdown could begin. The days at the Westin passed peacefully, and it was time for him to make a decision. All the tests he had undergone during this time indicated that Paul could withstand the surgery and the anaesthesiologist was positive about the outlook. Allow me to explain the plan. Paul was to be operated on by a private surgeon under the umbrella of a private clinic but that same surgeon was also affiliated with the Clinical Hospital Center, the public hospital where the surgery would be performed. Very few private practitioners have the equipment and facilities that a publicly funded hospital has. The other advantage of having the surgery there was that, their staff would assist during the surgery and be present in the days before and after for the care and monitoring of Paul's recovery. For that reason, the cost of the surgery included the hospital's charges for renting the operation room, use of their facilities, staff wages and Paul's accommodation and food.



A few days before the surgery itself, the day of the move to the hospital arrived. Social media was filled with Paul's Facebook posts, which typically numbered at least twenty different updates a day. His trip to the hospital resembled some kind of reality show. Naturally, before he even entered, he gave it a new nickname, continuing his string of derogatory names for the institutions he had stayed in, which he considered to be terrible prisons. This time it was 'Alcatraz'.

The trip to the hospital was filmed by my friend and top journalist Marino Grgurev. Wes hired him to film such important moments for his documentary. Marino had difficulty to persuade the hospital administration to allow him access to the operating room, even with Paul's consent for everything to be filmed. Arriving at a public hospital is not quite the same as checking into a hotel and it seemed Paul struggled to understand that. They managed to arrange for him to be alone in a room by moving other patients elsewhere but they couldn't fulfil his request for cable TV with a Premiership option as public hospitals simply don't have cable or smart TVs.

While Paul was getting frustrated over not having cable TV and insisting that he didn't want to stay in the hospital without it. Myself, Dino, Marino, Jasmina and the head nurse of the ward, were thinking about what we could do to solve the issue. I searched Google for where to buy or rent a smart TV for a few days but then Dino suggested we could get a device that converts a regular TV into a smart TV. With that we could buy a flat internet option for Paul and he could have cable TV. The head nurse, Dino and I were discussing how to do this most effectively, when Paul saw us and he started yelling, "Hey! Instead of trying to solve the problem with the TV, you're just chatting here!" I tried to explain to him that's exactly what we were doing; we were solving that problem, to which he replied, "Speak fucking English when you talk, so I can understand you!" I felt a wave of anger wash over me, and the words just flew out. "You selfish and ungrateful bastard!" I shouted at him in front of everyone. "For a whole year, we dedicated our lives to you, I care for you more than my own baby, I lose days trying to help you and then when I'm addressing the very issue you complain about the most, you still find a way to criticize. Shame on you! This is Croatia and I will speak Croatian with Croatians because it's easier for me. Learn fucking Croatian!" Marino, being a true journalist, filmed my outburst though he didn't want to tell me this until recently, so I guess it might even become part of the documentary.

Nevertheless, Paul realised he had gone wrong this time. In the end, we said our goodbyes and embraced, and I wished him all the best. On the day of the operation, I couldn't relax. While Paul was writing his farewell Facebook posts in case something happened to him, I nervously paced in front of the hospital for several hours, almost live-streaming the course of events. Once Paul was taken to the operating room, a good five hours passed with the preparations for the surgery and the surgery itself lasted nearly four hours. When the doctor finally called me in to inform me that everything had gone very well, I breathed a sigh of relief and hurriedly ran up the stairs to the intensive care unit to see Paul for a few minutes.

When we were informed that Paul was starting to wake up Marino and I went in to visit him. Upon entering that room, the whole situation felt surreal. If someone had told me just a year earlier that I would be hanging out with Paul, it would have been hard to believe. But the idea that I would be visiting him in the ICU and watching him helplessly trying to mumble a few words, I couldn't

have imagined it even in my wildest dreams. We stood over him, smiling and reporting to him that everything had gone great. Paul understood us and nodded his head tiredly and we quietly but happily left the room. The doctor invited both me and Marino for a drink of cognac to celebrate the successful surgery and to toast Paul's recovery, which was progressing quite rapidly. Later that day, Paul posted several videos thanking the fans for all their help.

Paul was never bored in his room, as he often wrote on Facebook, because people constantly came to visit him. I was with him daily. Jasmina and Nirvana came in. Dino and his son visited. Steve Kenton and Donna arrived from the UK and many more. However, the very second people left the room and the door closed, Paul would write a status saying, "Bored". This left those who followed him online to reasonably think that he was always alone and abandoned. An example of this was the visit from my friend and big fan Troy Schurer from the Netherlands, who was on vacation on the other side of Croatia at that time. I invited him to come and visit Paul as well as our home.



Troy Schurer

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

A post long overdue...

We want to thank Stjepan and Violeta for inviting us into their home and meet little Iris. We were on holiday in Croatia. A beautiful country which we visited for the third time. And Stjepan said "come on over to Zagreb, it's only 250km"

Yes it was...in perfect weather. Because of bad weather and road work it took us 5 hours. But worth it. Not only we got to meet Violeta and little Iris, but we visited Paul Andrews at the hospital. So excited to meet this legend in person for the first time. We talked about various things and it was quite pleasant.

So thank you all for this experience. And thank you Diana. Luv you.





My public announcement followed: *Today, Paul Di'Anno underwent difficult and very complex operations that lasted over three hours. The operations were performed by a large medical team headed by prof. Ph.D. Robert Kolundžić MD. specialist in orthopedics, subspec in traumatology. Robert Kolundžić, owner of the private clinic Health Center of Excellence, performed the operation at the Traumatology Clinic of the Sisters of Mercy, Clinical Hospital Center in Zagreb, Croatia. It was about the most complicated operations for such a vest, and given Paul's general state of health, it was also risky. Paul bravely took risks and was brave all the time before and after the operation, which was performed under full anesthesia. The medical cement that connected the two bones was successfully removed from his right leg and a completely new custom bone and artificial knee were implanted. Paul has successfully woken up from anesthesia and is doing well. I had the opportunity to talk to him briefly an hour after the operation and tell him how everything went well. Namely, the doctor, who, after the successful operation, treated me to cognac, in order to toast the future successful chapter of Paul's life, told me that he was completely satisfied with the operation, which exhausted him both physically and emotionally, but achieved a result that he aspired. Healing the*

wound and avoiding any further infection (as these are now the two biggest dangers) are now the most important part of Paul's recovery and, if all goes well, he will be back on his feet this week. Paul will be released to home care in 15 days and for him the seven-year episode in the wheelchair is over. Already after leaving the hospital, he will be able to walk with the help of crutches, and the doctor's recommendation is that Paul never again thinks of sitting in a wheelchair and moving in an easier way. It deserves a lot of practice and work.

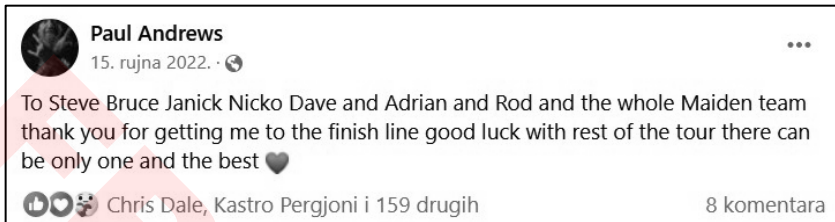
According to predictions, Paul should walk with two crutches for the next three months, then a month, up to two with one, and at the beginning of 2023 he could already walk independently, without crutches. Therefore, Paul will undergo walking exercises, physiotherapy and intensive recovery exercises, and later in October, the second part of the dental surgery, where he will get permanent teeth instead of temporary ones. The doctor has given Paul the green light to perform at the 'Keep it True' festival in Germany (provided there are no any further complications), so see you there soon.

So that this is not the only good news today, we solemnly announce the big tour of Paul Di'Anno in Brazil. Tonight you will find a list of cities and dates, as well as a pre-sale link, with a note that the tour will expand to many countries in Central and South America and that this will be one of the most massive tours of its kind, which will start in January and end at the end of March.

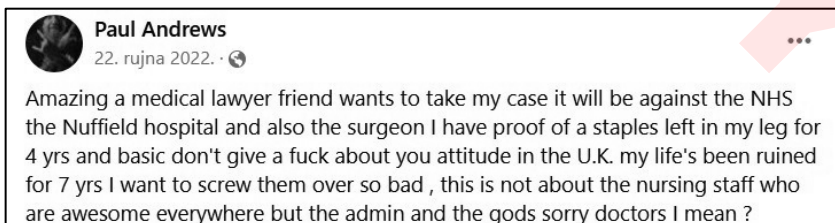
The entire path of Paul's suffering and recovery for the upcoming documentary film was filmed by the famous director Wes Orshoski, so Paul's operation (with his approval) was filmed down to the smallest close-up detail, as you can see in this picture. This is precisely why I do not want to reveal many details to you, which is to honestly and authentically show Paul's entire path through the nine circles of hell to the final victory. This is just one of more important battles, Paul has a lot of work ahead of him on this whole road to full recovery, but today we can all raise a glass to his health. Thanks to everyone involved and I will make sure to mention you all when I write a book about this experience. The 'Axes High' t-shirts, designed by Derek Riggs to help Paul's recovery, will finally be printed and sent to all customers soon.

Thanks to Marino Grgurev for nice photo from Operation hall.
Thanks again everyone and sorry for my not so good English.

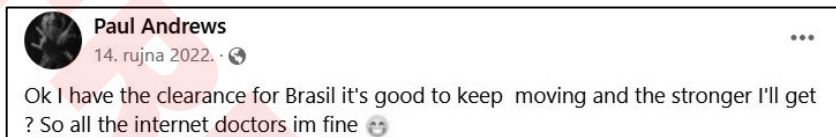
One of the first messages Paul wrote after the surgery was a thank you to his former bandmates in Iron Maiden.



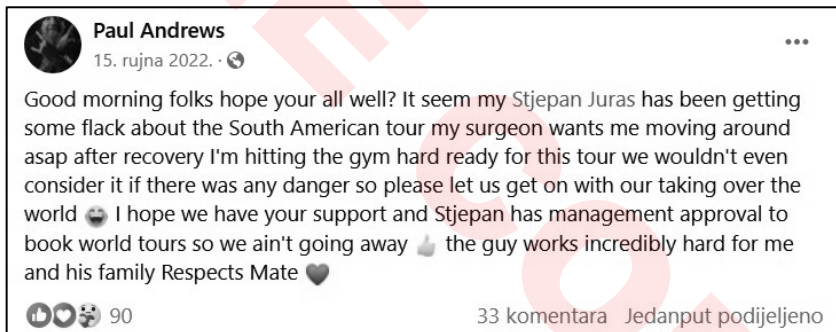
Immediately afterwards, with the lyrics of Depeche Mode, he expressed his gratitude to his fiancée Jasmina. In the photo he posted, you can truly see the happiness in his eyes. Not long after, he added, *"I guess, some of you think I've changed posting pics of us and sappy songs and yes, it's great to be in love, but make no mistake, I'm still a bad ass mother fucker who'd fuck you up in a second!! Hear endeth the rant."* I think by then, it was already clear to everyone. A few days later, he also wrote this:



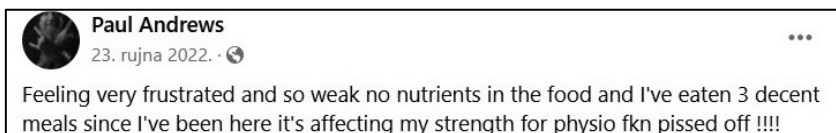
As Paul recovered from the operation and anaesthesia, I took the opportunity to meet with the surgeon to hear first-hand how the operation had gone, how quickly we could expect his recovery (assuming he did regular exercises) and whether Paul could go to Germany and on the tour in Brazil. The news from the doctor was fantastic and encouraging; everything had gone perfectly. However, on my post about the tour, many 'internet doctors' appeared spreading negativity. Therefore, Paul wrote:



In his comments, fan and friend Derek Szabo wrote to Paul, *"Bro, please comment on the Stjepan Juras post about the tour. There's a lot of 'doctors' annoying him on there."* He later did just that.



The doctor insisted that Paul should move around as much as possible, exercise and stay active. It was time for him to get up and walk. That first day, Paul was already ramping up the announcements. He wrote that we were working on a US and Canadian tour, shows in Asia and Australia. But just a day after the surgery, he started posting statuses like, "Bored" and complaining about the staff. One of his posts read: *"The ol girls in this hospital don't fuck about it's like a tornado hits the room at 6.45am, if you're awake or not. Feel like I've been sucker punched."*



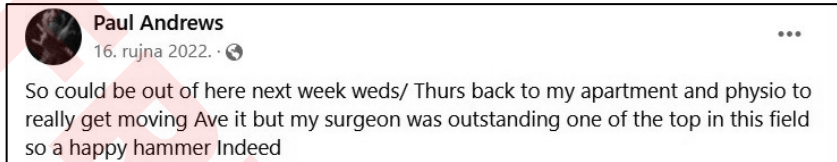
Imagine this. He wrote that the hospital wasn't providing him with enough nutrients and that he couldn't regain his strength like that. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. He said that he had only eaten three normal meals since he had been in the hospital and at that time, he had been there for a full thirteen days. Right after that, he wrote about ordering an oversized kebab and wanting mac and cheese, ćevapi and more but no mushy food. The fact is that Paul only wanted unhealthy meals and had been overweight for a long time, which only complicated his situation even further. After surgery, a patient needs to eat a diet that is strictly prescribed for him. But everything that Paul was doing was the opposite of what he should have been doing. What was even sadder was that people supported him by replying to his posts about the Croatian hospital, despite never having been in that country or that specific hospital.



On September 16, he started the day with the post, *'It's an exciting day. Hopefully few more steps and applying for Birth certificate and marriage details to send over. Wo-hoo!'* Paul was visited that day by his friends Steve Kenton and Donna, who brought with them a dose of Cockney humour that Paul had missed so much over these months. They could see for themselves that Paul was in good very hands and that people here were taking good care of him. They also realized that just four days after a very difficult surgery, Paul was fooling everyone around him and despite strict rules, was even smoking cigarettes in his hospital room after ensuring that nurses wouldn't come in and opening the window to let the smoke out. Steve and I exchanged silent glances, knowing that there was nothing we could do.

At one point, the duty doctor and a nurse came in to check on his condition and show him how he needed to exercise but Paul refused saying he was scared that he would fall. Right after that, he wrote, *"So frustrating. No one understands me here. I really need Matteo, my physio. He knows how to get me moving. I have to have someone with me to do this in case I fall."* He didn't hold back on the doctor either, and added, *"Doc came in, looked and*

fucked off again." Paul had made a bad mistake. He thought that no one read his posts but his updates were public and were being followed by everyone, including those that he wrote negatively about. This is one of many reasons, he was thrown out of the care home. Naturally, when it finally dawned on him that he had gone too far, he suddenly wrote this:

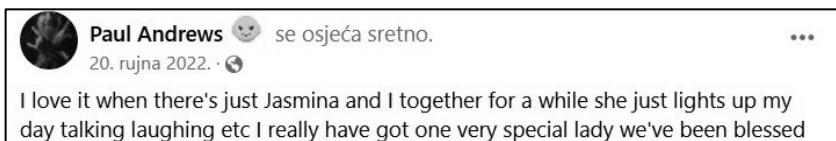
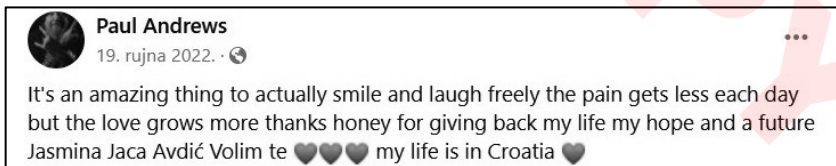
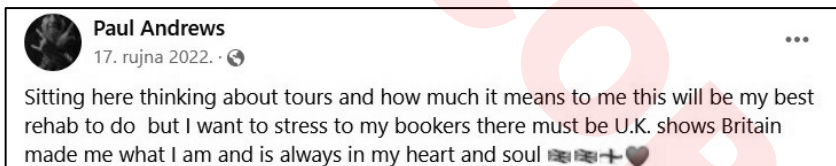
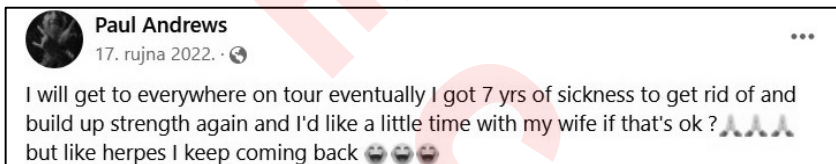


On September 16, during one of his exercise routines, Paul's surgical wound bled a little. It was just excess blood leftover from the operation which needed to expel somewhere, and it was a truly small amount. But what happens when any amount of blood seeps through tightly packed dressings and white compression socks? In an instant, the fabric absorbs the blood, which then spreads out all around, making it seem like litres of blood were lost instead of just a few drops. Paul, being who he is, eagerly awaited the chance to have such a sight photographed. He even asked a friend to take the pic and immediately posted it on Facebook with the caption *"Bigger!"*. Within moments,

he caused an internet uproar with comments like, *"OMG, doctor and nurse required ASAP"* and similar reactions. As he read the confused and frightened comments from fans and friends, he happily laughed like a little kid who knows they've done something naughty and revels in their mischief. But people were seriously concerned for Paul, some even wanting to call the hospital for staff to take care of him urgently. Of course, this was a hospital; doctors and nurses were everywhere, and the wound was treated in an instant. I say this from first-hand experience because I was right there with Paul at that moment and when I saw his Facebook post, I lost it and started yelling at him.



But later, panic set in. I received hundreds of frightened messages, and yes, I was indeed very angry with him. He seemed to sense it and slightly changed his tone to write about big touring plans and about Jasmina.



I then had to publicly address the incident on Facebook, to reassure people about the situation here and to show them with a photo that showed everything was quickly resolved.

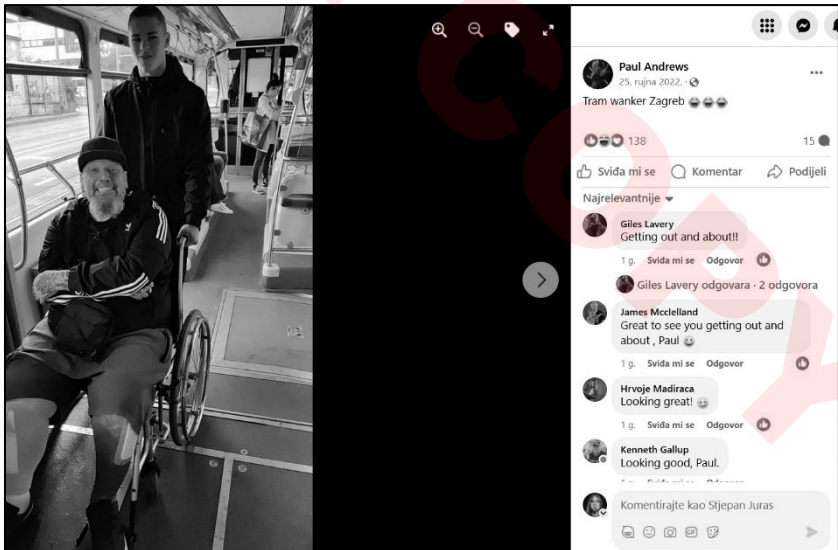
Okay guys, let's recap this day and Paul's condition after surgery. I spent almost the whole afternoon with him today. When I came to the appointment with the doctor, I translated all the details that the doctor told him about his health. Long story short, Paul's wound from the surgery is healing fantastically and it's happening faster than the doctors expected, which leads us to the fact that Paul may be released from the hospital earlier than originally planned. Paul started with walking exercises and physiotherapy, but as the hospital provides only basic services of learning to walk and physiotherapy, Paul will return to the Ribnjak polyclinic with doctor Milošević and physiotherapist Matteo, perhaps as early as next Wednesday or Thursday, to mutual satisfaction. Fortunately, Paul no longer has to live in a care home, because he is expected to stand on his own two feet in a short time and be able to move with crutches, so we will rent him an apartment as close as possible to the 'Ribnjak' polyclinic. During today's walking exercise



(with pressure on the leg), some blood came out of Paul's wound from the operation, which naughty Paul quickly photographed and posted on Facebook just to scare you a little. In principle, nothing dangerous happened, his white sock got soaked with blood and the stain spread. As you saw from the last posts, Paul had a fantastic time with his friends who came to visit him from England. I can't wait for Paul to be released from the hospital, because that's when his new life will begin and he'll quickly learn to walk again.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

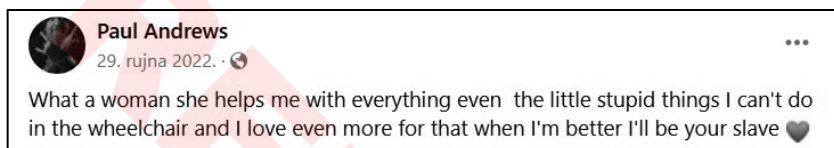
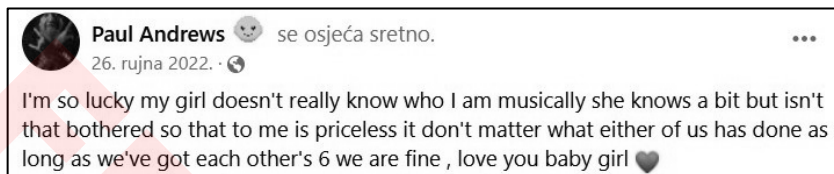
The whole time in the hospital, Paul and I were playing a game of 'cat and mouse'. By this I mean that I was trying to save him from himself and keep control so that he wouldn't do anything foolish but these foolish incidents kept happening. This one really angered me. One day while I was walking around the city, a doctor from the hospital sent me a screenshot and asked if I was with Paul. I answered no, to which he told me to call Paul immediately and bring him back to the hospital. After an extremely delicate operation with a long fresh incision, a patient should constantly be in a protected environment. But Paul had escaped from the hospital and not just anywhere, but onto public transport; a potential source of bacteria. When I made such a comment to him, he replied that he had asked permission from the nurse. However, that was lie, as when I asked the nurse, she responded that she had only allowed him to go downstairs to smoke a cigarette in the hospital courtyard and that he had taken that moment to sneak away for some fun in a bar. It was incredibly irresponsible because at this stage of his post-operative recovery, a bacteria could easily enter his bloodstream, and then it could be the end of him. A thought raced through my mind, "What if he really dies while he's here, regardless of the reason. What if he really dies?"



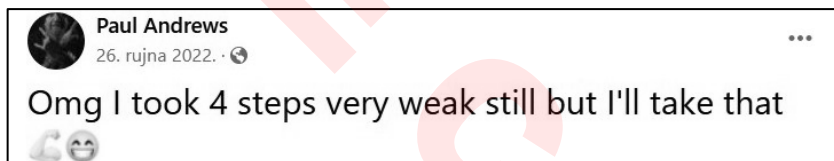
Stjepan Juras

Not too smart idea to leave the hospital without permission of doctor, but Paul is adult and probably knows potential risk of bacteria infection

In the following days, since I was still angry with him for leaving the hospital in such a reckless manner, Paul posted more online about how much he loved his Jasmina.

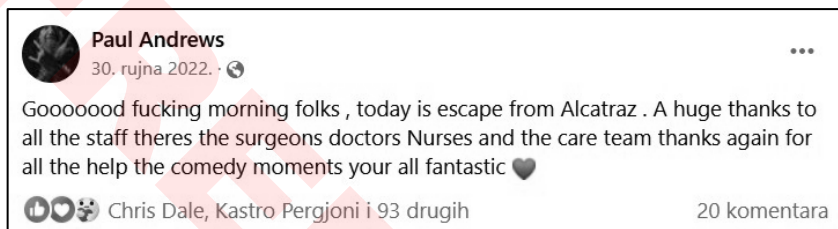


He also didn't forget to mention that he had started to take his first steps after the surgery, little by little. This was quite a significant achievement.

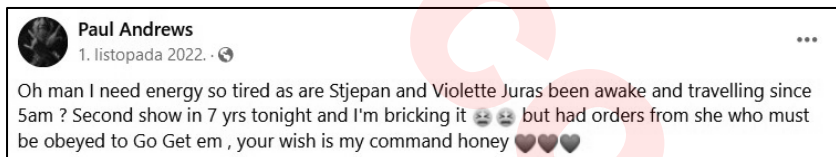


There were four days left until leaving the hospital, or five days until the start of the festival. Excitement was at its peak. What would happen after his release and how much progress would Paul make? I had daily meetings with the surgeon, who confirmed that the recovery was indeed going excellently but that he noticed something that bothered him. He had observed that Paul had become too attached to his wheelchair and lacked the mental strength to let it go. Every time he came for a visit, the doctor would ask him, "So, have you thrown away the wheelchair?" He was bothered when he saw that Paul hadn't, and encouraged him to do so, "If you don't get rid of the wheelchair, you will never walk again. At some point, you have to say enough and leave it behind. It will be hard, very hard. You will find it difficult to move around in the first few days. You will struggle with the frame and crutches, there'll be exhausting exercises and many other challenges along the way but letting go of the wheelchair is the first and most important thing." Paul was obviously not ready for that. He was scared, and when anyone brought up the subject,

he would react with panic. The doctor reassured him, "OK Paul, this is an exception. You're going to a gig and you need to perform. I understand that you'll need the wheelchair at the festival but when you return to Croatia, get rid of it, because you won't be going far. You'll only be exercising. I'm telling you this for your own good." I'm not sure how much Paul listened to him. He only had one thing on his mind at the point- to escape from the hospital he called Alcatraz as soon as possible and never return.



The next day, we woke early up to head to the Keep It True Festival. We were at the airport in the early morning ready for our adventure to begin. When we landed in Germany, we were greeted by a driver with an accessible van. Paul wrote this on his way to the hotel.



By that time Paul had slightly cooled off from the first emergency we encountered at the airport in Germany, after which I wondered if I was really ready for all of this. When we disembarked from the plane, everything went smoothly. One of the airport staff was pushing Paul in the airport wheelchair to the place where he would be transferred to his own wheelchair. Paul was in good mood but at that moment his stomach acted up and he urgently needed to go to the toilet. We quickly moved him to his wheelchair but when we finally found a disabled toilet it was occupied for a long time. Paul was getting very frustrated, shouting that if he had to wait one more minute, he would relieve himself in his pants. Finally, the door opened and a healthy-looking woman emerged from the disabled toilet. When Paul saw this, he began to scream at her, hurling insults as the woman

fled. Then he angrily entered the toilet. Although I told him to leave the door slightly open and that Violeta and I would keep an eye on it, he locked it and transferred himself from the wheelchair to the toilet seat. That was a big mistake. The toilet was designed for easy access but he didn't have the strength to lift himself back onto his wheelchair. As the door was locked, so we couldn't rescue him, Paul was now trapped on the toilet. Imagine the panic that ensued! Outside, the airport was noisy and the door was almost soundproof. We could only hear screaming not make out what Paul was trying to say. Violeta and I on our side of the door, were trying to figure out what to do while Paul kept yelling. We alerted some airport staff, but unfortunately, all of them were foreigners who did not speak English and barely spoke German either. The process of rescuing Paul lasted nearly half an hour while they found tools and spare keys to open the door. When the worker finally opened the door, he probably expected gratitude from the person he had saved but he was met with Paul's furious face, who told him to go to hell. The man literally ran away in the end...

The arrival at the hotel was peaceful enough, but we quickly realized that there was another problem. I must admit that what happened was my mistake, and I learned the lesson to never assume in advance that Paul would be fine until it actually happened. When we booked the gig in June, the surgery was also scheduled for June. At that time, the doctors were almost certain that Paul would be on his feet by the beginning of October when the festival was set to take place. He might not be running or walking long distances but he would definitely be up and using either crutches or a cane. Because of that, I didn't specify in the rider that Oliver the promoter should book an accessible room for Paul, just a normal double room, which he did. As the many subsequent delays to the surgery dragged on, we realised that Paul would indeed be coming in a wheelchair. At that point, we tried our best to change the room, but there were no accessible rooms available nearby. Würzburg is not a large city and since there was a festival on, all existing rooms had long been booked. Unfortunately, Paul had to sleep in a standard room without a bathroom he could access. That was catastrophic for him. We tried to improvise in various ways, by carrying him basins for emptying the goose and another for shaving and brushing his teeth so we managed somehow. But still, the whole situation was not good.

I tried to explain to Paul what had happened and somehow, he didn't blame me for it. Instead, he blamed Oliver, who was truly not at fault. Paul thought Oliver wanted to save money and didn't want to book a better hotel but that simply wasn't the case at all. If anyone was to blame, it was me...

All this led to Paul being very nervous the entire time leading up to the show. He was complaining about anything and everything, even when there was no real reason to complain. Everything on the rider was adequately provided along with meals. Tanja, the production girl who took care of Paul, was also very helpful and I thank her for her patience during this time. Paul's friends from the Hells Angels and other guests came to see him in the dressing room. He truly had no reason to be anxious or angry, and yet he was. With the best of intentions, I invited Oliver to come to the dressing room to resolve any misunderstandings between the three of us but Paul just became loud and agitated, making any conversation impossible. Oliver tried to explain to him that everything regarding the room was a misunderstanding but Paul maintained that Oliver was just trying to save money at Paul's expense. At one point Paul said, "Don't treat me like an idiot." Due to the general noise, Oliver didn't hear him clearly but he interpreted it as Paul calling him an idiot and replied, "You just said that I am an idiot!" before turning around and storming out of the dressing room...

Paul and I looked at each other in disbelief and Paul shrugged and said, "I really didn't call him an idiot, I don't know why he left." I ran after Oliver to explain what had happened and to try to calm all the tensions. Unfortunately, some journalists witnessed this from the sidelines and later wrote a very negative article about how ungrateful Paul was. But none of them knew that he was in an unsuitable hotel where he couldn't even go to the bathroom; instead, he had to use the public accessible toilet in the festival area and share it with the fans. This was not at all how a singer of his calibre should be treated. Not to mention that after the show, he couldn't even take a shower. Violeta and I had to pour water over him and improvise again. Oliver was truly not to blame for it (and if anyone should take the blame, it was me), but the journalists didn't know any of that. They only presented a one-sided view of the situation, and that's what frustrated me. Paul was justified demanding some dignity in this case but it was unclear whose fault it all was, making the atmosphere seem a bit uncomfortable.



When Paul entered the stage, the world momentarily stood still. No one truly believed he could do it; to come out of hospital after a complicated surgery and head straight to perform at the Keep It True festival. It sounded surreal and still sounds that way. When the live streaming started, besides the thousands of fans watching the show, Paul's family was viewing too, along with all those who had helped him and even the surgeon who had performed the operation (with whom I was constantly in touch with in case anything unexpected happened). Paul sang with a raw and powerful passion, as if it were his last concert ever. Considering he had just days earlier been lying helpless on a respirator under anaesthesia, the strength he radiated was nothing short of a miracle. Of course, after every show, especially a video stream, there will always be a small number of people who will write that the performance was disastrous and poorly sung. However, I was there and I know what I witnessed. Even though he wasn't the headliner, neither the atmosphere nor the number of fans in front of the stage was ever that high again for the remainder of the day. It turned out that so many fans wanted to meet Paul at the meet-and-greet that two sessions had to be organised; one before and one after his performance. Since we hadn't prepared any merchandise for that concert, we only had about thirty patches, and they sold out in the blink of an eye. The atmosphere after the show was excellent. After Paul went to the meet-and-greet, all the tensions that had built up during the afternoon disappeared. Paul, Oliver and I put aside the earlier dispute and were all satisfied that the mission was well accomplished. Germany had also definitely showed that it was eager to host Paul again.



The morning after, I woke up feeling of pride. The festival had been a very challenging but inspiring experience. This photo speaks more than a thousand words. Paul is shining with happiness alongside the band with thousands of people behind them all with their hands raised to witness the return of the beast. I was so inspired that I decided to write a post on Facebook.

You know what people? It will soon be almost a year since Paul came to Croatia. God alone knows how hard, tiring and challenging all this was, but it was worth every moment when I saw him happy and exhausted at the end of the concert in front of enthusiastic fans. I don't want to make any epics out of this FB status, but I'll just say this. This was Paul's last concert in a wheelchair. It will be followed by a four-month break, because starting tomorrow, Paul must have lymphatic drainage, strenuous strength training, physiotherapy, learning to walk and coordinate movements every day. The operation went fantastically, the surgeon, professor Robert Kolundžić is delighted with the recovery and under his supervision, but also under the supervision of Dr.

Milošević, whose physio team continues with rehabilitation, Paul will be fully ready for the tour in Latin America and for all future tours, and new music. I think I'm completely exhausted today and I need to go to sleep. Axes High Shirts will be produced soon and sent to everyone. Thank you for your support. This is the work of all of us together. Guys, we did it!

Looking back at my post now, I can see how naïve I was and how blindly I believed that a miracle would happen. The brutal reality would quickly prove me wrong. After I posted this on Facebook, we headed to the airport to return to Croatia as quickly as possible to continue with the physio and Paul's recovery. Since Paul is British and had been in Croatia, an EU country for over three months, we weren't entirely sure if he would be allowed back into Croatia. But as he had only gone to Germany and not left the EU, no big checks were made when we all arrived in Zagreb.



DOWNHILL FROM CASTLE FRANKENSTEIN

All reports indicated that the performance at the festival was extremely successful and Paul was very happy with it too, not just directly after the show but for days afterwards. The return flight to Croatia was also painless. For some reason, Paul loved Croatian Airlines. It just so happened that whenever he travelled with them, he had a wonderfully pleasant experience, from check-in to boarding, seating on the plane and in-flight service. For us in Croatia, this was hilarious as I know many Croatians don't like Croatian Airlines and their services at all.



Paul Andrews

2. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

Keep it true festival you legends who sang every word last night we're amazing see you all in Brasil when I finally get back home after seven yrs away I missed you so much ❤️❤️❤️



Paul Andrews

3. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

Gooooood morning legends Wow that was a great time on sat ? I'm totally humbled the crowd were amazing sang every song I even my family liked it 🥰 made me feel even more determined to beat this ?? Can I just wish you all the love health and happiness in the world ? Respects ❤️



Paul Andrews

3. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

Ffs I needed a blow torch to open my minces this morning ? Back to hard physio today thank god and hope some gym work again 🙏 bring it on if all goes well I'll celebrate with a Jimmy Fantastic candy bar ? Enjoy your day folks ❤️



Paul Andrews

3. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

In some pain today but thank you to all for making me feel like a king ❤️

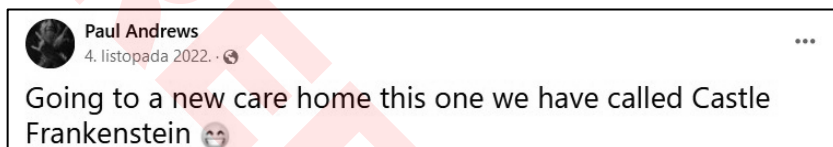
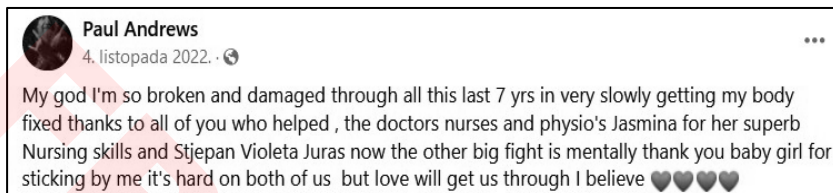


Paul Andrews

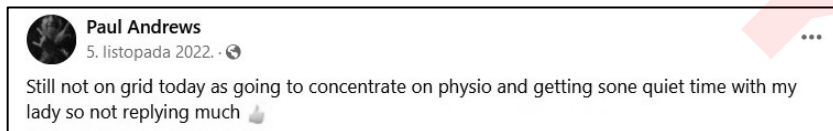
3. listopada 2022. · 🌐

A good first physio?

This the Paul everyone wanted to see; smiling, positive and fighting forward regardless of the obstacles and occasional pain. At every moment, he didn't miss a chance to express how much he loved Jasmina.



After spending a few days at the Westin Hotel upon his return, Paul was ready to move into his new, third care home, named Dom Duga. After calling the first one the Gulag and the second Stalag, Paul decided even before he saw it to call this new one Castle Frankenstein. Although it was generally a good care home located very close to the clinic where Paul had his treatments, it was filled with older and in many cases, demented patients. I completely understood that Paul might not feel very comfortable with this but he got a single room where he had cable TV, internet access and everything else he usually required. Since the care home was close to the clinic, he no longer needed the accessible vehicle every day. This meant savings of around 200 Euros a week. It was only 300 metres from the home to the clinic and so I decided it was better to pay someone from the clinic staff to pick Paul up and push him in the wheelchair for the short journey every day.'



Although nothing special, this care home was a good option for several reasons. Its proximity to the clinic was crucial, but it was also the only care

home that agreed to hold a room for me over the summer with a small deposit I paid in advance. The staff were truly wonderful and seemed like a small family. Best of all, the social worker not only was an attractive woman (which certainly impressed Paul) but she spoke fluent English and was immune to Paul's abrasive humour and outbursts. This meant I could be confident that no one try to throw him out when he had a rough moment, as had happened with the previous two care homes.

Paul continued to be in a good mood for some time. He was working with two therapists; one at the clinic and the other at the care home. He even humorously commented on the situation in the care home, where other patients were crying out and groaning, dedicating the song 'Madhouse' by Anthrax to them. He was focused on healing and walking and such distractions didn't bother him. Moreover, he even planned to go to Rio with Jasmina a week before the tour and possibly get married.

 **Paul Andrews** 5. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
So great there are a few Murders of crows outside my window at Castle Frankenstein they make me feel safe and secure in this new place 🙌

 **Paul Andrews** 5. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Haha it's an onslaught of crying singing shouting crying all day and some old dear keeps coming in my room Ffs this is the perfect tune 🤔🤔🤔🤔

 **Paul Andrews** 🌐 se osjeća uzbuđeno. 5. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Being fried alive but so happy if all goes to plan Jasmina Nirvana and me will have a week together in Rio before the tour starts happy days indeed ❤️

So you can understand what confused us all so much later on, I will need to show you several Facebook posts from the days when Paul was happy and when nothing bothered him. He liked the care home and its staff and looked forward to his physio sessions. With his odd sense of humour, he jokingly referred to the new therapist who worked within the care home, as Dr Mengele because he was strict, didn't want Paul to be lazy and forced him to get up and walk, unlike the therapist from the clinic.

 **Paul Andrews**
6. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Great physio today I love it? Can't wait for tomorrow 🤔🤔🤔

 **Paul Andrews**
6. listopada 2022. · 🌐

My other physio at the castle is one hard fucker a great guy I've called Mengle 🤔

 **Paul Andrews**
7. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Jeez that was a good physio training session and more this afternoon with Mengle ?

👍👍 Steve Kenton, Dragan Krehula i 7 drugih

4 komentara

 **Paul Andrews**
9. listopada 2022. · 🌐

That is amazing thank you all Legends ❤️



Paul Di'Anno - live at Keep It True Rising 2 - 2022
64 tis. pregleda · Vrijeme streamings: prije 6 dana

Keep It True Festival - Official

Thank you for tuning in again for Keep It True Rising 2 - live from Wurzburg, Germany. 00:00 Sanctuary 04:21 Purgatory 07:34 ...

Novo:

Sanctuary | Purgatory | Wrathchild | Prowler | Murders in the Rue Morgue | Remember Tomorrow... Broj poglavlja: 12

 **Stjepan Juras** je sa **Paulom Andrewsom**
8. listopada 2022. · 🌐

64 000 views so far. In next 7 days we can fill Wembley stadium with viewers!

At one point, when I posted the viewing figures of the live stream of his performance at Keep It True, Paul wrote on Facebook, *"Wow, not bad for third rate pub singer and no rehearsal at all. Getcha!!!"* It was joke about a comment made by one of the fans the day before on the official Iron Maiden forum, which had briefly upset Paul. This video currently has around 200,000 views which is a Keep It True all-time record.

 **Paul Andrews**
10. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Come on let's get this first round of physio done have a break for lunch of tuna salad and a protein shake , second round of physio with Mengle this'll hurt 🤔 and later fruit yoghurt and a little Gnocchi with Gorgonzola that's my day and diet , no more Burek or Cevapi ? But it must be done 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

I also decided to write an inspirational note for Paul on Facebook, after which he immediately shared my status and responded with, *"Seven years of fighting for my life is finally coming to an end."*

**Stjepan Juras**  se osjeća fantastično.
10. listopada 2022. · 

I am so happy to see Paul Andrews ready for the fight again. Two hard physio sessions every day. 3 hours of very hard exercises 5 days, each week. I will call him to celebrate NY eve in my apartment and for that he has to climb 10 steps, before the elevator. There, now we have a goal 😊

**Paul Andrews**
10. listopada 2022. · 

Seven years of fighting for my life is finally coming to an end 🎉🎉🎉🎉

Isn't this the best thing I could hear coming from Paul? Determination, dedication and strength were exactly what he needed right now.

**Paul Andrews**
10. listopada 2022. · 

Ffs this WiFi is driving me mental ! It's all paid up and still the tv goes on and off and the phone ? A bit miffed to say the least and fkn belly is growling with hunger have a better night than I'm gonna have 🤔

**Paul Andrews**
11. listopada 2022. · 

Goooooooood fucking morning you wonderful specimens of humanity , do you know how blessed I am to know that you've been fighting along side me for 7 hard years ? When I tell you how much I love and respect you all for all you've done for me I choke up inside , you've been my shield and my armour against crippling depression ? It's no lie I owe you all my life and I'm grateful every day to have you all in my life . Love and Respect always ❤️

**Paul Andrews**
11. listopada 2022. · 

So impatient today can't wait to start physio first round this morning ? Once this walking malarkey is done then on to the body building this'll be a laugh and beneficial too from the Bulk to the Hulk 🤪🤪🤪

We didn't know it at the time, but that was literally the last day when Paul's leg was progressing really well and when he had a genuine chance to get up on his feet within a few weeks.

Everything that followed that day up until Paul's departure from Croatia and beyond, was at best just treading water, if not a downhill decline. After that day, there was never any improvement with his leg, it remained the same. Paul swung between good and bad moods, but the latter became the prevailing state. On October 11, when he wrote his last positive Facebook post, just an hour later, he posted a new negative one. This was followed by an endless flood of negativity, resulting in a refusal to exercise, neglecting his therapies, self-isolation, depression and PTSD attacks. The place where he had recently felt so good and motivated turned into what was literally Castle Frankenstein, the worst nightmare scenario.



Paul Andrews se osjeća depresivno.

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

And boom just like that had a good physio session and the big Black dog is back with a vengeance ? Just want to curl up and die ? Fuck this 🐕



Paul Andrews

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

Gawd blimey I feel bad going off here and I'm out of anti depression pills this is gonna be a rough ride ? Take care folks ❤️



Paul Andrews

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

Goodbye glad Tp see ya go? Too much bullshit for me ?



Paul Andrews

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

I'm losing my focus , walking and music and playing live and MY family are the only things that really matter ? I don't want the stress of anything else to get in it's way? I don't believe in love I never have in the end it ruins your focus !



Paul Andrews

11. listopada 2022. · 🌐

...

I'm going to try and get rid of this black dog if I had Tequila I'd be fine ? My final words to some one -Ha Busted !!!

It was easy to read between the lines and see that the trigger for all this was heartbreak. There's a band from Paul's beloved Zagreb neighbourhood, Dubrava, which in its early days was an aggressive punk band. One of their lyrics says, "*Ne zovi mama, ne zovi doktora, jer nema lijeka protiv tog otrova,*

ma dobro mama, preboljet' ću ja to, samo pusti, nek' svira glasno rock and roll." Translated into English this would be:

*Don't call Mom, don't call the doctor
Because there is no cure for that poison
Oh well, Mom, I'll get over it
Just let it play loud rock 'n' roll*

However, Paul was not yet ready to just get over everything. He carried on writing dark posts and avoiding his exercises, despite the therapists' pleas for him to continue them.

 **Paul Andrews**
12. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Morning You fabulous people have a great day ? I'm still on a down ward spiral so I'll be no use to anybody today !feel so alone here ? This sucks and I must get home to my peeps I made a huge mistake I'm not ready for any thing but getting myself sorted !

 **Paul Andrews**
12. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Thanks everyone for the kind words but PTSD and depression are a mixture for disaster for me I hate it when it happens but I can't stop it but my meds help only one thing can really make it go faster and that's my Angel Jasmina she knows what to do ?

It was also time to remove the stitches. We were all curious about this, as it would allow us to better assess the situation and figure out the next steps.

 **Paul Andrews**
12. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Aaaaaagh fkn stitches coming out soooo painful as if I ain't going through enough today already 😞😞😞 deffo need a tequila now ? Blood everywhere ??? I forgot how sore that is to remove the fuckers im finished off now ???

 **Paul Andrews**
12. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
Let this day end 🙏🙏 dealing with ptsd anxiety and grief after losing everything is hard to deal with I must go from here it's too painful?

 **Paul Andrews**
13. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...
How do I fix a broken mind and Broken heart ?💔💔💔



It is not my place to meddle in private matters, especially in romantic ones. However, in all the previous posts and those that followed, it became evident that Paul was in one moment ‘spitting poison’ at Jasmina, while in the next moment, saying how he couldn't live without her and pleading for her to return. I didn't interfere and ask him what was going on, as I really didn't want to upset him or Jasmina and no matter what I did at that time, it would have been wrong. Also to be honest, I didn't really know who to trust regarding what was happening. However, after a few days, Jasmina returned to his life and for a short time, Paul was happy but the breakups and public accusations from his side became more frequent and it was clear to everyone that this story would not end well. That's why I referenced the song lyrics earlier, because I could gather all the donations in the world and pay for the very best doctors and therapists but all of that would be in vain, as there's no cure for the poison called love. Perhaps it is indeed true that a loud rock solution exists, and we would find that out on the upcoming tour.

However, Paul didn't understand how much his Facebook posts were hindering everything we were doing for him at the time. We were all well aware that he had been diagnosed with clinical depression, as he had publicly spoken about it multiple times. But it was quite clear that when an attack occurred, there was simply nothing we could do. Only professionals

and medications could help then but we hoped that Paul could also help himself a little. While his manic posting about depression online might have been his outlet for feeling better, I continuously told him that it was doing him great damage in the public eye and that it would be better not to post negative things when he was in such a state. Most of the public following his posts read it all quite one-dimensionally and when they saw that Paul was feeling bad, when they read posts claiming that nothing was right in the care home (when in reality, everything was fine), along with many of his other strange posts, rumours began to circulate about his mistreatment in Croatia. People said that we didn't care about him, that we had left him alone like a dog and much worse. These rumours could easily turn into flames and destroy all our efforts to gather funds for Paul's recovery. My advice to Paul however, had nothing to do with protecting my reputation, as Paul may have thought. Rather, I genuinely believed that this negativity was harming him and any possible future funding, as people began to doubt whether to donate anything at all.

**Paul Andrews**
13. listopada 2022. · 🌐

I'll make this clear clinical depression comes on and there's nothing can be done about it ? It's no one's fault and Stjepan had no idea what I was going through so back off saying he's not helping because without his help I wouldn't be alive ? I was told that when depression comes talk about it ? So I have it has nothing to do with your reputation Mr Juras it's a clinical thing and it will happen again and I will talk about it when it does and that's the end of it ???

 Chris Dale, Kastro Pergjoni i 37 drugih

11 komentara

With the return of Jasmina to his life, Paul also briefly regained his will to live, work and exercise.

**Paul Andrews**
14. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Amazing I wake up as I nothing has happened the last few days? After talking with Jasmina and all your fantastic messages I snapped out of it, seriously legends don't ever let it go as far as I did there is always some one to listen ? DM anytime and if I can help I will 🙏 you guys got me through so much it's the right thing for me to do? On a better note how about those Hammers eh 🤘🤘🤘🙌 you all had my 6 and I've got yours in some way ? Much love and respect always ❤️

Immediately, the tone of his posts changed and he was ready for double physiotherapy sessions with the motto 'Tako lako', which translated into English means, 'so easy'.

**Paul Andrews**
14. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Have a good un folks I got double physio today too make up for my melt down ? Tako Lako 🙌🙌

1 komentar

**Paul Andrews**
14. listopada 2022. · 🌐

It's a Good idea but when you have 2 physios with different ideas and one don't speak English it's a big difficulty and it's no one fault but it's so frustrating and stressful I want to do all the physio but it's not there there has to be some explaining to them ?

Meanwhile, an interesting thing happened. The physiotherapist at the care home had his approach to treatment which consisted of pushing Paul to get up, walk and work hard to the maximum of his endurance. This was in order to establish positive working habits and see results in a very short time. On the other hand, the physiotherapist at the private clinic (who, so far, had shown excellent results working with Paul) had a completely different method, cautiously developing Paul's muscles to prevent any injuries during exercise that could possibly damage the implanted prosthesis and bind Paul to his wheelchair forever. It turned out that Paul was telling both therapists what the other was doing with him during treatments and gradually they began to speak against each other and fill his head with unnecessary thoughts. This also led to animosity developing between the therapists they and both started refusing to take Paul from one place to the other, which they had been doing up until that point.

When none of them wanted to push Paul to his treatments, I took a taxi to the clinic twice a day, every day to do it. In the meantime, Paul gradually became friends with all the staff and became a familiar face around the care home. And with Jasmina back Paul could cope with anything.

**Paul Andrews**
14. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Sometimes I'm the captain but Jasmina is always the Anchor ?

**Paul Andrews**
15. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Ffs having a photo session with the nurses here they they are all mental and cheer me up 😊 thank you ladies 🙌

2 komentara

On Sunday October 16, it quickly became evident from Paul's posts that a second break-up with Jasmina had occurred.

 **Paul Andrews**
16. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...

Morning folks have a great day 🍷 I'm confused I don't know what I want anymore ?

 **Paul Andrews**
16. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...

I got the Sunday castle Frankenstein blues soooooo fucking bored 🤔

 **Paul Andrews**
16. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...

It's really hard to delete photos everyone has a story but I have to move on so keeping a few only of my boys and Luna and Sarah and Maria that will free up some space ?

 **Paul Andrews**
17. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...

Fuck no physio today back on antibiotics too much fluid still wtf doi have to do to get well I still think I'm gonna lose my leg after all the surgery and hard work I can't get a break ?,,

Around this time, Paul gained an arch-enemy in the care home in the form of an elderly woman named Barbara, who always watched him with suspicion and bad-mouthed him to the staff. She was old, frail and maybe even demented, but she couldn't stand Paul, even though she was the one who would bang around, yelling and driving everyone crazy at night while they were trying to sleep. But Paul had nothing against her; he even thought about how to cheer her up.

 **Paul Andrews**
17. listopada 2022. · 🌐 ...

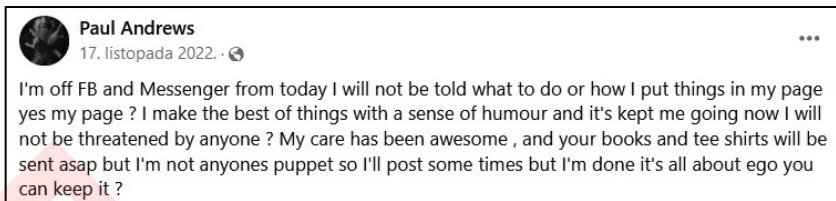
Shit I feel Bad we're all complaining about the crazy lady getting us all stressed out with her shouting and banging maybe we should all be thinking about how to make her happy (ish) maybe some flowers or candy or something I just don't know how I can help ??

The saga with Barbara would continue until the end of Paul's stay at the home. However, in mid-October, an argument erupted between Paul and I, after which he stopped communicating with me for a good month. I can say,

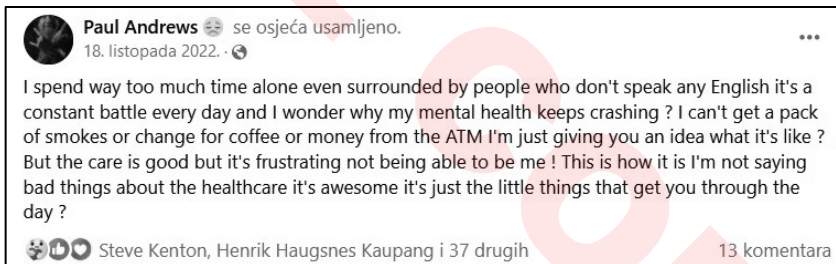
without any feeling of guilt, that my soul had a bit of a rest during that period, especially since just three days later, Paul also received a one-month ban on Facebook. This wasn't due the status that was contentious for me but it came back to him like some kind of karma. After that, Paul was in media darkness until November 18, 2022.

To return to the cause of our falling out I should explain that in October, Paul had his stitches removed and although his entire leg had healed quite well, a small part still hadn't and didn't look good. The physiotherapists repeatedly told Paul to sleep in bed with his legs slightly elevated to improve circulation and help the wound heal faster. But Paul constantly refused to be in bed. He spent all day in his wheelchair and mostly slept in it at night, covered with a blanket. He mostly continued to do this on tours and elsewhere. The open part of the wound looked worse and worse, and then one day blood appeared and some dripped on the floor. To clarify, it wasn't much, maybe 50 millilitres and it stopped flowing a few seconds later. The cleaners quickly cleaned it up and the nurse easily treated the wound. However, the cleaners weren't quick enough to stop Paul from taking spectacular photos of blood everywhere and posting on Facebook with a caption like, "Ouch!" or something similar. When I saw the post I reacted very strongly, calling him to say that he wasn't thinking at all and that his finger on the phone was faster than his brain. Paul has an odd sense of humour that he likes to use to bizarrely scare people. He truly enjoys it, especially the reactions he provokes by it. But he really doesn't understand that people on the other side of the internet see only his one-sided story, without any context and take everything that he says seriously. They saw only blood everywhere much like when he did the same thing in the hospital, after which I told him I would be seriously angry if he repeated it. Paul listened to what I said this time and deleted his post (which is why I don't have it in the form of a screenshot) and then he posted this.





Although people reading that first post didn't really know what Paul was talking about, in the second post, there was a coded explanation. Paul never wanted to mention my name during our arguments, but he always made sure everyone knew who he was referring to. His comment regarding communism was written with the implication that I, like some kind of communist dictator, was not allowing him freedom of speech and dictating what he should write. I didn't respond to that and simply decided that I wouldn't reach out to him first anymore; he would certainly come to me when he needed me. Paul and I didn't communicate for a good month, and just before his ban from Facebook, he wrote post indicating that he felt lonely:



Of course, he felt lonely. There was no one to buy him a pack of cigarettes or vapes, order delivery food, exchange money for the vending machine nor anyone he could trust to go to the ATM, since he no longer had Violeta or me to do those things for him whenever he called. At that point, we thought he might finally understand how much those little things mattered and how good it is to have friends by your side. Posts like the one below followed.



Paul was becoming increasingly frustrated by the sounds coming from the neighbouring room and a patient who was shouting "Sestro, Sestro!" almost all night. The word 'sestro' actually means sister and as in English is also used to refer to a nurse. So, the patient was calling for the nurse all night, both when he needed help and when he didn't as he was severely confused by dementia. This drove Paul crazy, so he listened to music through his headphones or turned up the volume on the TV. Violeta tried to explain to Paul what he was actually hearing (since I still wasn't in communication with him at the time).

**Paul Andrews**
18. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Croatian word of the day Destro Destro I hear it all day and bloody night ! Fuck Dementia so cruel 🤔

👤👤👤 Steve Kenton, Steve Lewington i 7 drugih 2 komentara

👍 Sviđa mi se 💬 Komentar ➦ Podijeli

Prikaži više komentara

**Violeta Juras**
I'm sure you didn't hear "destro", but "sestro"! It means somebody is calling a nurse 😊
"Sestra" is a nurse, and the same word is used for "sister" as well. And when you call a nurse, you say "sestro", with o, it's like "hey nurse!" 😊

1 q. Sviđa mi se Odgovor

**Paul Andrews**
19. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Morning folks I feel like crap another night of wailing and moaning and screaming I really don't know how much more I can take ? I'm alone here all day / night , it really is torture ???

👤👤👤 Kastro Pergjoni, Steve Kenton i 27 drugih 21 komentar

Paul had these noisy neighbours from the very beginning of his stay in the care home and at first, he said he could easily handle it. During the first ten days, when he was in a good mood, he even joked about it but once everything started to go downhill, it suddenly became torture for him.

**Paul Andrews**
19. listopada 2022. · 🌐

Yeah I am strong ,I am a Warrior, life will not break me , stand with me or get out of my life 🤘🤘🤘🤘

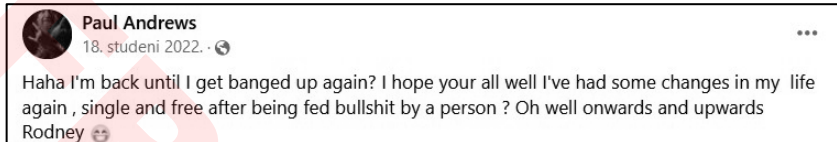
The last post on the previous page was the final one before his one-month ban, and following that he continued to be mainly in a bad mood and avoiding exercise for various excuses. Then ultimately there was the painful breakup with Jasmina, which was quite tough for both parties. During those weeks, I genuinely felt sorry for him but I simply didn't know how to help. We arranged a few visits from fans from other countries. My friend Marco Giovanetti came to visit him from Italy, and later, Paul's good friend from Greece, who is also a concert promoter, Elias Aravides, arrived in Zagreb too.

I attempted to explain my current position on all of this to fans around the world in a post on my Facebook page, so they could understand how exhausting it was to be engaged on a hundred fronts at the same time

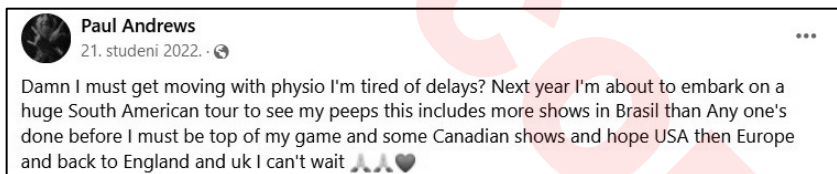
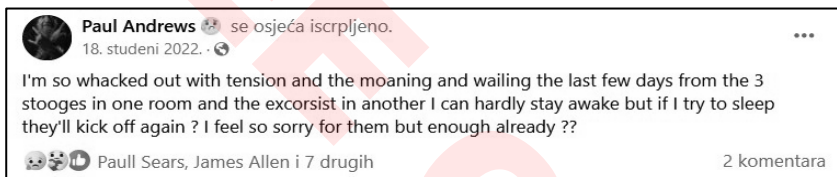
I can say that I have been living under a kind of pressure for a year now. Paul Di'Anno, my wife's pregnancy, and finally little girl Iris, came practically at the same time. At the same time, I had to print and send a huge number of books, t-shirts and patches, and there were also several more books in preparation, some of which were published (Somewhere in Time, 35th Anniversary set, Rise The Beast set, Maiden Avenue, Burning Records 3, TNOTB 40th anniversary set), and some are yet to come (Steve Harris, 66th birthday anniversary set, Virtual XI, Neal Kay biography). In the meantime, everything had to be done so that Paul, from the state in which he came to Croatia, would finally be ready for the operation and that it would be successful in the end. It was necessary to come up with a way to collect money, motivate people to do it and send them the purchased memorabilia. We had to organize two shows, organize the legendary meeting with Maiden, negotiate all the details with the doctors and be at the service of Paul almost every day for everything he needs. When little Iris was born, everything became much more complicated, but luckily my wife and I managed to find a way to deal with everything. And here I am now... sitting at my desk thinking about how to make life less stressful and in the same time continue doing what I love. Axes High shirts will soon be shipped to customers, all unfinished books will be released soon, and Paul will be on his own two feet by the end of the year. I think I will then take half a year off from writing and indulge in the adventure of touring with Paul around the world. However, when summer comes, we all know where we are... 'The

Future Past', a tour that came to me as the fulfilment of all dreams. The years 2022 and 2023 will be years that I will remember for the rest of my life!

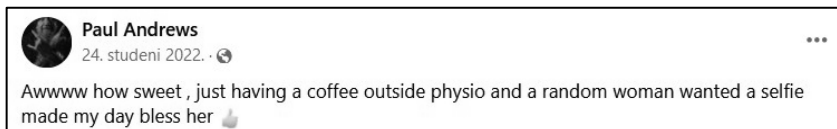
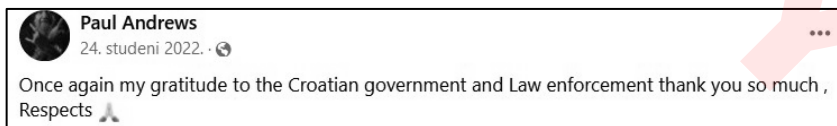
When Paul finally returned to Facebook, he announced that he had since broken off his engagement to Jasmina and that he was continuing life on his own.



Meanwhile, the saga with the demented care home residents continued, but Paul also realised that it was high time for him to be motivated again, as tours were awaiting him and he needed to be prepared for them. There was no more time for excuses and procrastination.



Now and then, positive things would happen to cheer Paul up, like when the police overlooked his illegal stay in Croatia or when a girl on the street recognised him and asked for a photo.



Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

**Stjepan Juras**
2. studeni 2022. · 🌐

For all those wondering where Paul Di'Anno is and if he's okay, here's the latest news. Mr Facebook put Paul in FB Jail again and he will be running free again soon. This is why you don't see him online. Brand new official Paul Di'Anno official website and official social networks will be announced soon. Paul is feeling fine at the moment and will have his first attempt at walking tomorrow, and should be taking more and more steps each day. It is normal that after many years in a wheelchair, and a very complicated but successful operation, Paul had various emotional and psychological fluctuations, because a situation like his would shake even the bravest people. However, Paul is willing to work, exercise and fight and we all hope that by Christmas 2022 he will be able to stand on his own feet without the help of others and walk with the help of crutches or a cane. After some time, if everything goes as expected, Paul will really be able to 'running free'. Thank you all for your support. Axes High t-shirts will be sorted by November 4th, and will finally start production. We can't wait to wear them. I assume you too!

P.S. He will do 2 surprise test shows for South American Tour this december in Europe. Do you know where?

**Stjepan Juras**
5. studeni 2022. · 🌐

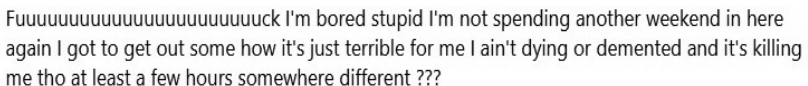
Standing up, but this time for the first time ever without orthosis. Many exiting days is in front of us...



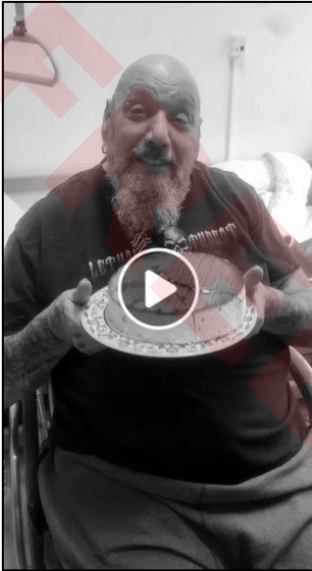
 Chris Dale, Scott McCallum i 317 drugih

48 komentara · 8 dijeljenja

However, then something happened that, in my opinion, completely changed the course of Paul's recovery. During October, as I mentioned earlier, Paul was visited by his friend and promoter from Greece, Elias Aravides. He's an excellent man who has since become a good friend of mine. Elias and Paul have known each other for decades and have worked together countless times. Paul calls Elias' Greek family his own, and his mother, his mother too. Paul was eager to play some shows in Greece before heading to Brazil to see if he was really ready to go on tour. Elias had no trouble making this happen. The interest from fans was high, so he was sure he would quickly sell out the shows, especially if Paul played with a band from Greece, put together by none other than Elias's godfather, the former Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Gus G. He along with Helena Kotina from Nervosa and other musicians, would be a draw for both the audience and Paul. Suddenly, Paul desperately wanted to leave the care home and did everything he could to let us know he wanted to get out. He increased the intensity of his posts in November, claiming that life in the care home (which had been relatively OK for him until then) had suddenly become so unbearable that he wanted to escape at all costs. This screenshot clearly shows that Paul had already made up his mind to leave the care home, even though I had still not finalised the concert details with Elias.



Just a day before Paul's post, I shared a video where I surprised Paul by bringing him a cake for his first anniversary of staying in Croatia, and wrote this on Facebook.



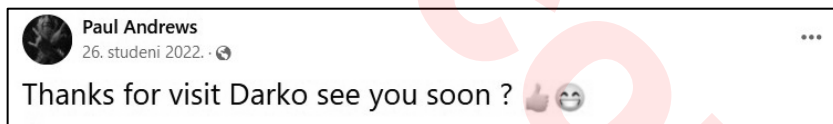
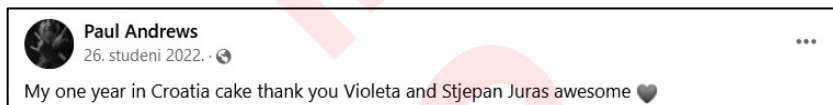
Exactly one year has passed since our lives changed forever. My wife Violeta Juras was a little more than two months pregnant, when we met the ambulance that brought Paul Andrews from England to Croatia in the late afternoon in Zagreb. It is no secret that Paul was in a very neglected state. What I was given as a task at that time was: Let the doctors at least try to save his left leg, and if the right one has to be amputated, let it be amputated. No way. Nothing will be amputated for Paul and he will walk again! The fight was very difficult and although many did not give him a chance, Paul went through a series of gruelling and demanding treatments, tests, surgeries and faced every challenge that came his way. Many times it was very painful, it required strict mental

strength of steel nerves on both sides. In the meantime, Violeta and I had our first child, and suddenly we had to take care of both Iris and Paul every day. And... A year after... Paul held two concerts in Croatia and Germany after seven years. In front of him is a mini-tour in Greece, the biggest South American tour that any musician outside of South and Central America has ever done. After that, the rest of the world follows. In the meantime, he met Steve Harris and Rod Smallwood after thirty years, and KISS after more than 40 years, and in Croatia he found a new love and a country where he would like to live. But most importantly... Paul underwent very difficult operations lasting several hours, which were completely successful. Paul is now working hard and has started to walk; every day one step more. In the next two months, we expect Paul to walk completely independently with a cane or crutches, initially, and later without anything. And, don't forget... Paul did a complete reconstruction of his teeth. Paul also founded the band Warhorse in Croatia, with whom he is currently recording a new album. And also, we

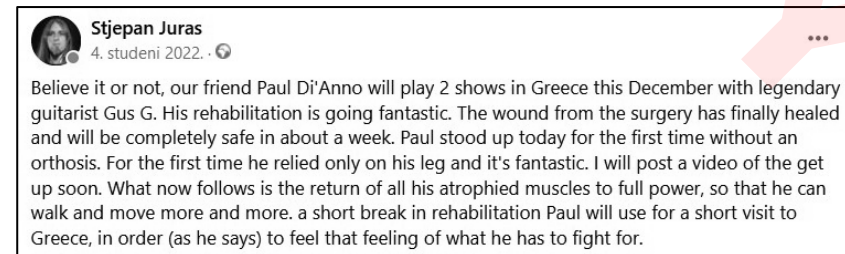
will announce one news, that will knock you all off your feet! That, when we announce it, will be a spectacle. We couldn't resist not make him a cake for the first anniversary of his stay in Croatia. Ok, ok, Paul has to think about his weight. Don't worry, the cake was shared with the staff of care home and with good friends. Good luck Paul, we can't wait for you to walk.

P.S. Many of Paul's friends, colleagues and fans were part of this great story and all are equally important for this great success of Paul. When the time comes and I write a big book about this unforgettable experience in the next year, I would like to mention them all and thank everyone for giving their time, life and everything else to help Paul. Thank you very much.

Paul expressed his gratitude to us for the cake and also thanked his friend, Darko Derganc, a fan who had always been a constant source of support for Paul in Croatia. Unlike many others, Darko did not use his acquaintance with Paul merely for the sake of getting autographs but was a true friend.



In the meantime, Paul continued to 'lobby' for his release from the care home by winning over friends and fans to his side and having them suggest to him, "Leave and don't go back!" At the beginning of November, I announced the following.





I strongly believe that Paul would be walking today if he had remained at the care home and continued his therapies. But instead, Paul had resolved that he needed to go to Greece at the beginning of December, even though the shows were scheduled for mid-December. I remember that we were having arguments over when to go to Greece and whether he should even go at all. Due to his intense insistence, I had to relent and allow him to perform the shows in Greece, but as I mentioned in the screenshot from the previous page, it had to be a brief visit to Greece and then a strict continuation of his

recovery efforts. We were so close now. It would be truly disastrous if the efforts to get him standing without the support of the orthosis faltered now, as this was the last step before truly starting to walk.

To make matters worse, the World Cup in Qatar had started, completely shifting Paul's focus away from recovery. For example, when England was playing, the entire day would be devoted to concentrating on the game. Physiotherapy had to take a back seat or sometimes not happen at all that day. These were not things I could influence, as anything I said would be resisted. I became merely a silent observer. What I was doing at that time was making hours-long phone calls to the Greek promoter, Elias. Paul wanted to escape from the care home in Croatia for a vacation in Greece and stay there for at least two weeks and I didn't agree to that because I knew what would happen. It would be like unleashing a wild dog from its chain. Relaxation and rest would turn into overindulgence in Greek delicacies with no attention paid to his diet. Then alcohol would come into the picture, gradually followed by everything else. I didn't want Paul to be away for that long and I opposed it, even though I trusted Elias to take good care of him.



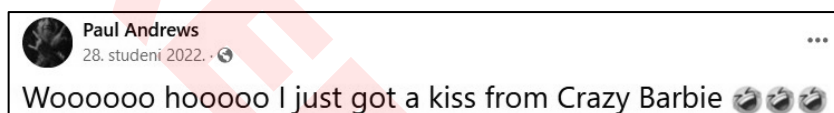
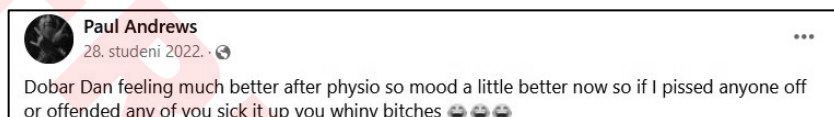
Paul Andrews

27. studeni 2022. · 🌐

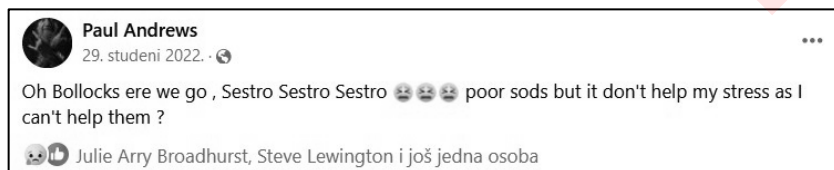
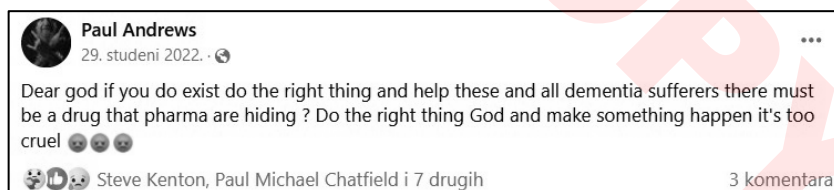
...

Morning all I'm so tired with Howler monkey in the next room making such a Horrific noise until way after 4 am so I'm knackered out ? Have a peaceful Sunday ? I got a fat rats arse chance of any peace my self? 🍷

Paul continued to post about the care home, even though he had already made the decision to leave for Greece in his mind. Unfortunately, I was still unaware of this and naively negotiated with Elias about the conditions of Paul's stay in Greece. On November 28, he posted an unusually cheerful Facebook update, followed by a post saying that 'crazy' Barbara had finally kissed him, which suggested to me that Paul was probably starting to say his goodbyes.



This actually created a big problem, as every care home was paid in advance at the end of the previous month, which meant I had already paid the full amount for December. If Paul left early and returned around December 20 after the Greek shows and then immediately went to Split to record the album with Warhorse, my payment of about 1,300 Euros to the care home would be more money wasted. And yes, that's exactly what happened. Under the pretext of, *"I need peace, I need relaxation, I need a break from the care home where I've almost gone crazy,"* Paul, decided to leave at the beginning of December, leaving two final messages to his housemates...





To unwind from the stress, Violeta and I decided to go to a concert by The Cure and then we made the decision to relax further from everything by heading back to Tenerife while Paul was in Greece. Tenerife, is a favourite destination for us and was an excellent choice for this cold winter, especially since hotel prices had dropped during COVID. For just 300 Euros, we got a 4-star hotel for a week with half board, which was more than affordable. We also wanted to see how Iris would react to the long flight and how we would manage through it too, as that was precisely what awaited us on the

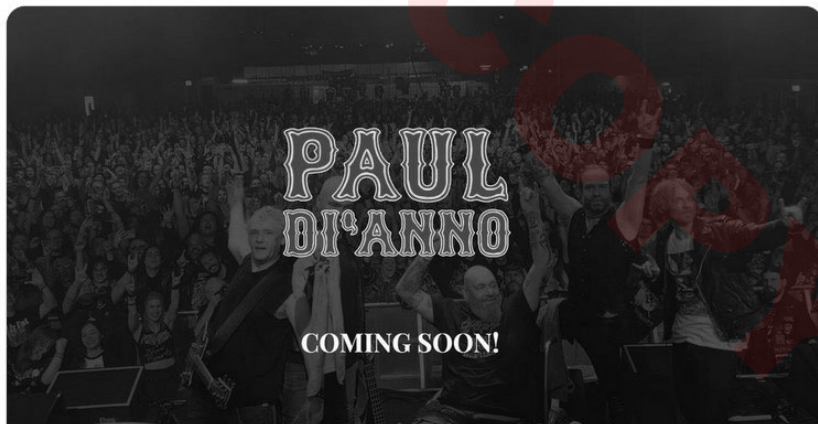
upcoming tour of Brazil that we needed to start getting used to. However, before we left, we had a few things to do.



Paul Andrews

2. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

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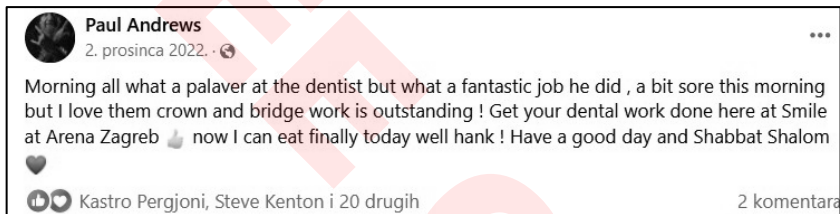


Stjepan Juras

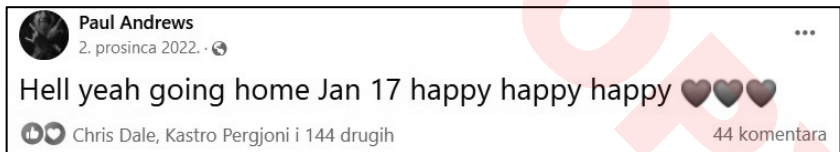
2. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

From January 1st 2023 - new, official website of Paul Di'Anno!
Join us from January 1st at www.pauldianno.co.uk

One was launching Paul's new official website and the other was finalising all the negotiations with Elias. Knowing that Paul would be in Greece for two weeks, I didn't want to risk a single day of downtime. I insisted on ongoing treatments and a physiotherapist, which was an integral part of my rider. Elias arranged for one of the best physiotherapists over there and the Croatian clinic sent him a work program for Paul translated into English to ensure everything was done according to plan. I still didn't like that Paul was going to Greece for such a long time now that he was so close to walking, but at least I felt a bit calmer. Meanwhile, the two shows grew to three due to high demand. There could have easily been more but we had to draw the line somewhere. Before going to Greece, Paul finally had his plastic teeth replaced with a permanent solution after months of waiting, and was overjoyed.



Paul also insisted that he wanted to go home to the UK before the tour of Brazil, which I thought was another big mistake, yet he was very happy when he received the date for his flight home at last.



Meanwhile, the Brazilian promoter Eliel Vieira was becoming concerned when he saw Paul's negative Facebook posts, so he decided to come to Croatia to see for himself how Paul was doing and whether he was really ready to go on tour. We went for lunch at Bikers Beer Factory and then Eliel was then introduced to a relatively OK Paul, with a leg of almost normal size and colour, who could take care of himself and manage his wheelchair independently without needing someone to push him. This was the condition in which Eliel found him, and in good faith, he decided that he would not cancel the tour.

 **Paul Andrews**
4. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

🇷🇸🇷🇸🇷🇸🇷🇸 please can I have a peaceful day no screaming and wailing and Defa no calls from Bosnian Skanks I'm on my last nerve ? Just want a good day and enjoy the football later !
Come on England 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿❤

   Kastro Pergjoni, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 9 drugih

1 komentar

The day before his trip, we had a small incident (just one of hundreds of similar ones), where Paul posted on Facebook, “*FFS, always having to wait to other to get things I need. It's not right. I am left stranded again. I will not be responsible for my actions,*” accompanied by angry emojis. In the comments, I responded, “*Calm down, the World does not revolve around you. Matteo told me (he would be there at) 1.40 and now is 1.39. (He) will arrive on time.*” Paul made a problem out of many things that didn’t actually exist, and then made them public. In this case the problem was his, as he got ready too early and had to wait a short time, even though he was aware of the scheduled meeting time. I’m sharing this one small example just so you know what I constantly had to deal with.

 **Paul Andrews**
6. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

Morning Legends have a great day it's packing today and escape from Mordor, the staff are great here they have to be to deal with the insanity they put up with, I'll miss those guys 👍

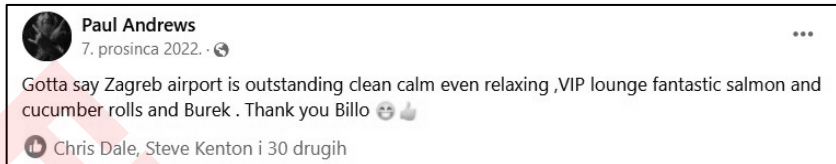
   Vi, Chris Dale, Steve Kenton i 30 drugih

5 komentara

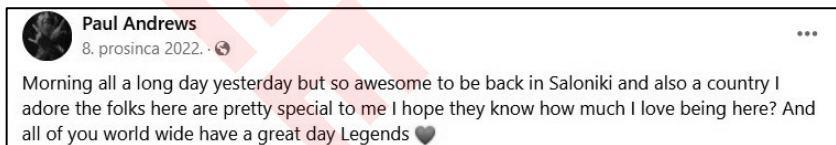
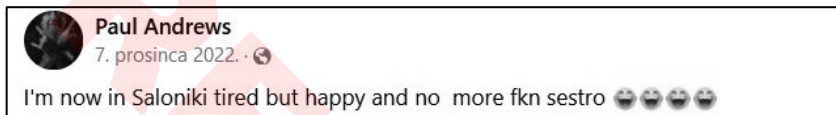
 **Paul Andrews**
6. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

Feel weird today can't get my shit together mostly packed will need help tomorrow tho it's amazing how much stuff you accumulate a year away from everything ? So next stop Greece the cradle of Civilisation and one of my fave places in the world my mental health and soul needs this so bad! After tomorrow no more Sestro Sestro if I had one wish it would be to help these poor souls it really is heart wrenching 💔 I hope you find peace and rest and comfort soon 💔

Elias had booked Paul a business class ticket for his trip to Greece, including access to the VIP lounge. Paul was delighted.



Upon arriving in Greece, he posted the following.

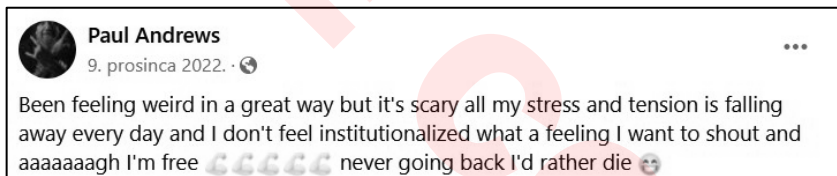
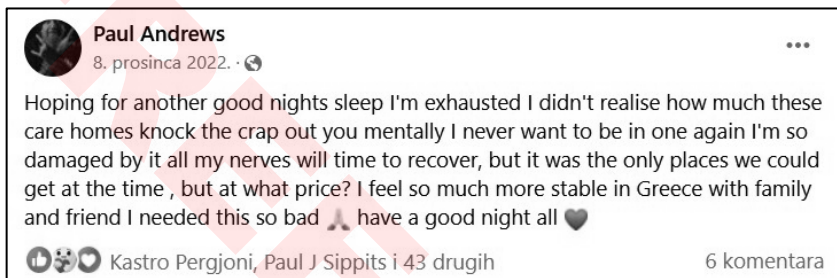


Of course, the daily photos of abundant homemade food on the table in front of him were exactly what I feared. There was no careful diet and nothing to



prevent him from over-indulging. He had large portions of meatballs with mashed potatoes, big fish dishes, moussaka, octopus and everything else he could wish for as he was staying in a five-star hotel. On top of that, the Football World Cup was on TV all day long so naturally, going to his treatments, which should have been the priority, became only of secondary interest to him.

He tried to justify his position in a Facebook post, claiming that the care home had set him back mentally and that he never wanted to go to one again. He also said that he no longer felt institutionalised and that he was finally free, stating he would rather die than return there. From what transpired later, it seems that Paul literally chose to die rather than go back to where he truly should be.



Paul did not understand in his circumstance, institutionalisation was necessary; that rules, strict routines, diet, daily exercises and hard work were essential, as only this guarantees success. The fund-raising and surgery had done their bit but now Paul had to do his. And if Paul were to die now, I have no doubt that the uninformed public would not blame him, but us who were helping him. That thought scared me deeply. "Stjepan, do you really need this in your life?" I kept repeating to myself.

In the meantime, Paul was enjoying himself in Greece, meeting fans, appearing on the cover of the Greek Metal Hammer magazine and hanging out with Gus G and the band members. Treatments with a physiotherapist? Well, sometimes. Elias had found and paid for the best physiotherapist in town for the full two weeks and Paul was introduced to a daily exercise program. Of course, he went to it at first but it lasted only two or three days before he got bored.

let him go to Greece. There was no doubt that the three sold-out shows in Greece would be a true media and commercial success, but the worry was that his two-week holiday would not only slow down but completely undermine everything he had accomplished so far. 2022 and the beginning of 2023 would definitely not be the time when he would walk again. By now, I had realised that giving Paul logical advice was somewhat like fighting windmills, so I packed my bags, and with Violeta and Iris, headed to Tenerife, from where I planned to return straight to Greece in a week



In the meantime, Paul was having fun in Greece, preparing for his shows and commenting on Bruce Dickinson's statements in the media. Unfortunately, our flight from Tenerife was delayed by seven hours (for which they refunded us a substantial amount), so we didn't arrive in time to see the first show in Athens but it turns out it was for the best that we missed it.



Paul Andrews

12. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

...

Oh dear history was made and you wasn't in it sorry Bruce but I'll defend this album always the songs were awesome and never Bettered proper music from the east end of London and our area it's not for public school boys , when you joined the Band it was a new direction and a bloody good one so leave it at that as I don't want to say bad things about some of your music !!!



Rock And Roll Garage

12. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

Bruce Dickinson's opinion on Punk Rock and the Sex Pistols:



Everything that could go wrong for Paul that evening, did go wrong. It wasn't a matter of the event organisation, which was perfect. The venue was sold out, the sound was excellent, the band was perfectly tight and the fans were loud and passionate. Paul sounded good at first but it quickly became apparent that he was on the brink of something like a heart attack. I wasn't there and these words are based on what I heard from the Elias and other attendees. It was so bad and dangerous that the show had to be interrupted several times to allow Paul to get air and muster the strength to continue. The planned setlist was not played as intended but was shortened, and Paul's behaviour towards the musicians and those assisting him was appalling. Although I was still in Croatia waiting for my connecting flight to Greece, I was receiving real-time reports. Paul somehow managed to bring the show to a close but from what I heard from the people involved in the organisation, one of Paul's 'friends' offered him

some high-strength ecstasy tablets known as 'Superman,' not realizing they could have killed him. Paul, who doesn't need much encouragement in this area, recklessly accepted them and that evening, everything nearly went to hell.

On the second day, Violeta, Iris, and I landed in Athens just a few hours before the show, so we didn't even have time to meet anyone from Paul's band, as they were all already at the venue. Paul was still in his room, which, like ours, was in a luxurious hotel with a beautiful view of the Acropolis. We had barely arrived and I was already thrown straight into the fire. While Violeta was unpacking in our room, Elias and I rushed to respond to Paul's panicked call from his room. He needed to be transferred from his wheelchair to the bed to get changed but it turned out to be no easy task with the high mattresses. At one



point, we almost dropped him and Elias hurt his back. The whole situation was distressing. There was a lot of shouting, screaming and urgent requests for additional help. Eventually after half an hour of struggling, we somehow succeeded in getting him changed and Paul was ready for the show. I genuinely feared that we would have to

do this all through the Brazilian tour. Both Elias and I did everything to ensure that the day would go smoothly, placing friends around as our eyes on Paul and making sure nothing was left to chance. The show finally began and this time went very well. Paul exceeded all our expectations and sang fantastically. Gus G and the band also enjoyed themselves and it really showed. Everyone was shining and Paul even did something he rarely does; he agreed to perform the song 'Strange World'. It truly was the highlight of the evening and five minutes of pure magic. I won't lie; I cried while listening to it from the side of the stage while trying to record it. Many friends were there: Manolis Varouchas, my longtime friend from Crete, who also photographed all three nights; Alexey Tsiftzoglou, a pilot and another great friend of Paul's; Nikos Falias, a loyal fan to the death and manager of the God's Restaurant in Athens, and many other fans that I've become friends with over the years

Greece is an exceptional country when it comes to heavy metal and the fans are truly loyal. I always love returning to Greece. Despite some usual minor problems with the concert, the day as a whole was actually extremely good.

The following day, since we had an afternoon flight to Thessaloniki ahead of us, we woke up early to have lunch at our friend Nikos's restaurant near the Acropolis, where we enjoyed excellent delicacies. We also had a small mishap that day when Violeta left her bag with a full wallet and all our travel documents in the taxi. Since it was a street taxi that we hadn't booked through an app, the chances of finding it again in such a large city were nearly zero. However, with the help of Nikos and other taxi drivers, not only did we find it quickly but we also got absolutely everything back including our money and travel documents. Some people may have had uncomfortable experiences in Greece, but ours was fantastic.

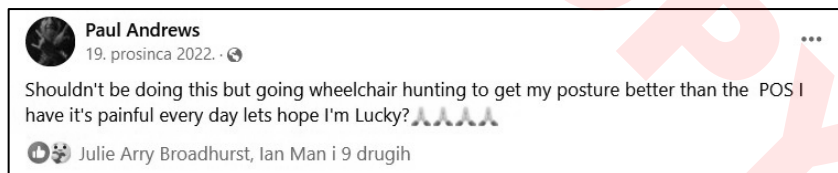
Thessaloniki is Elias's hometown and the show there was fantastic with everyone being relaxed. We kept a close eye on Paul to prevent him from doing anything foolish, and my friend Ioanis Gigis, a big fan but also a top orthopaedic surgeon, helped me with some additional advice for Paul. It was another great and sold-out show to remember. The hotel we stayed at, the Hyatt Regency, was the epitome of luxury, even better than most 5-star hotels. When we arrived there, I thought we didn't deserve this. And probably, we didn't. After the show, while returning to Athens to head back to Croatia, I learned a lot about what had happened during Paul's stay in Greece while I was away. What I heard wasn't good. During his stay at the hotel, despite the rules, Paul had frequently smoked in the room, tossing cigarette butts and ash on the expensive carpet and bedding. And when he sometimes positioned himself incorrectly while using his urinal bottle, he had ruined the costly mattress and bedding with urine. Although we understood the issues related to people with disabilities, no one approved of such behaviour. First of all, if smoking is prohibited, then simply don't smoke. Call us as many times as you need and we'll take you outside to smoke. That was no problem for us. Whatever needed to be done, we'd do it. Elias is a good guy and a great friend of Paul's and he didn't want to have to complain to Paul about it but because of what I've described here, he received a hefty fine of over a thousand Euros, which Elias truly didn't deserve.

Elias saw us off at the airport in Athens but before we parted ways, Paul started to become restless, but it quickly became clear why. He took Elias aside and asked him to pay him the fee for the performances. Elias looked at him and said, "Well Paul, I've already resolved that with Stjepan a long time ago." Paul replied that he needed to deal directly with him, not through me, to which Elias responded, "Paul, I arranged the show with Stjepan, who sent me the rider, the rooming list, a list of everything you need and who has been here with us to help me at every moment. Stjepan is your booking agent and if you want to work with him, you have to respect that. I am still your friend as we've known each other a long time but still, some order and hierarchy in this business must be respected." Paul muttered something under his breath but he had nothing to add. He had to accept what his friend was trying to advise him.

I remember that we landed at the airport in Zagreb, where Dino was waiting for us with the van. A World Cup match between Croatia and Morocco was in progress, which we listened to in the van. Paul was supposed to go to Split the next day to record an album with the band Warhorse and his flight had already been booked, meaning he would need to spend just one night in Zagreb. Since I had already paid for the care home for the entire month and his room was empty, I told him that we should return there and that he should be patient by spending one night in a place he knew well. If nothing else, the nurses would change his bandages and clean his leg again. His expression turned and he began yelling, "Never, I'd rather sleep outside on the street than go back there. I want to stay at the Westin!" Immediately, I pictured Kastro in my mind, reminding me, "I told you so." But Paul continued, "Westin, I want Westin, call them right now and book it!" I looked up the price on my phone, which, during the pre-Christmas world-famous Zagreb Advent, was around 350 Euros a night. I paid him his Greek fee and coolly replied, "You know what? Book it yourself. You now have all the money from Athens. The fans who struggled to part with every cent to pay for your treatment don't deserve this kind of entitlement from you. We spent a thousand three hundred Euros unnecessarily paying for the care home in December and if your fine ass doesn't want to spend one more night there, I'm certainly not going to waste any more money. Feel free to pay for the hotel yourself or sleep on the street like you said you would." That's how our day ended and I left with my family.

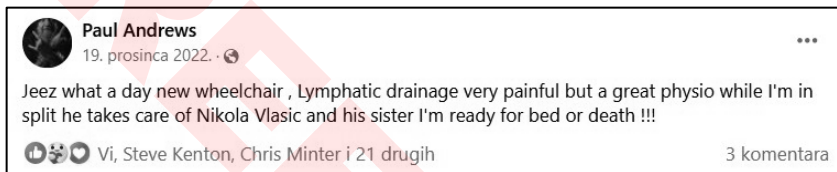
IN THE STUDIO WITH WARHORSE

Paul's move to Split to stay with my good friends from Warhorse brought me at least a semblance of peace for a while. Since Paul was supposed to stay in Split for at least three weeks so I was finally able to dedicate myself entirely to my family and especially my little daughter, Iris. I would be lying if I said I didn't breathe a sigh of relief at this break without Paul. Christmas was approaching, and it was the ideal time for Paul to record an album. As I explained before, during the holiday seasons, people in Croatia combine the holidays with weekends and their remaining days off, so from around December 20 to January 10 not much work happens in Croatia. For institutions like care homes, the staff is often reduced to a bare minimum, consisting only of essential on-duty personnel. Anyone in such a care home or hospital is better off not being there, as they will feel even more lonely and anxious. While everyone else is celebrating the holidays and enjoying rich family feasts, the poor patients are left to the grumpy nurses who couldn't avoid being on duty that day. I therefore considered it the perfect time for Paul to record the album, as he would be surrounded by friends, receive good treatment in a beautiful setting by the sea and he would also have paid sessions with a physiotherapist while he was there. The guys from Warhorse agreed with me and promised that Paul would have top-notch conditions during those days.



Hrvoje is an excellent musician and a great person, and Paul knew that Hrvoje would do anything Paul wanted because he couldn't say no to him. Therefore, I got the impression that he tried to exploit the opportunity to have Hrvoje buy him new wheelchair. On an almost daily basis, he complained to both me and Hrvoje, as well as publicly on Facebook that his wheelchair was starting to

fall apart, that everything hurt him and that he could no longer move around like this. Eventually, Hrvoje took him to a store to buy a new one. Although Hrvoje had good intentions, I (having learned from experience) responded to that and told him that Paul had made enough money from the three shows in Greece and that if he wanted a new wheelchair, he should pay for it himself. Hrvoje resisted this idea, but I was no longer willing to yield. It was time to start saving. It definitely wasn't the time for extravagance or for drawing more people into this situation. After the purchase, Paul publicly said how happy he was with it and with the therapist that Hrvoje had organised to take care of him during his stay in Split.



Knowing how hospitable Hrvoje is as a host, I had no doubt that Paul would be treated like a king and taken to restaurants every day where he would eat only the finest foods. Our mission was for Paul to be happy during the holidays and to feel accepted and loved. No one should feel abandoned during that time. For the good of both the recording and Paul's recovery, we

needed to make meticulous plans. Before Paul arrived in Split, his doctor and the therapist in Zagreb had written a document detailing his medical history and recommended exercises that Paul needed to do. We had to find an accessible car service for his daily transportation to the studio, an

accessible apartment where he could stay safely and in comfort as well as many other things to ensure that everything went smoothly. However, despite all our efforts, not everything went smoothly.

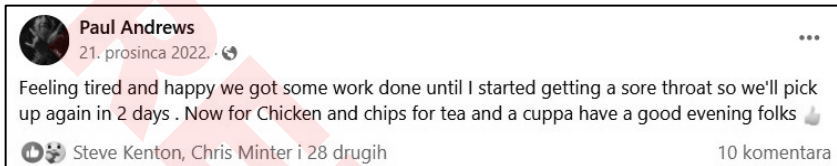


We found Paul a truly lovely apartment close to the studio but he didn't want to hear about it. Instead, he insisted that we put him in a hotel (and the only one with available accessible rooms was quite far away). Once again, I realised how right Kastro was when he told me that I made a mistake by giving in

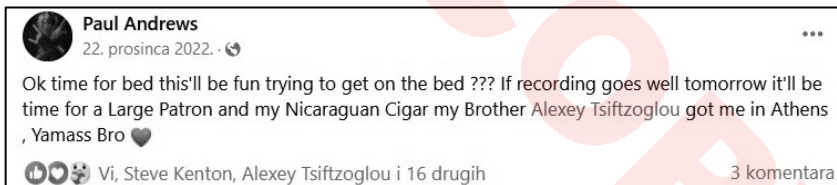
to Paul and booking him into the Westin hotel that first time. Of course, it wasn't Paul who paid for this new 5-star hotel; it was Hrvoje. Paul began posting photos of his fancy breakfast on Facebook. Naturally, at a cost of 340 Euros a night during the holiday seasons, you wouldn't expect anything less. Staying in a hotel further away from the studio also required renting the accessible car with a driver for longer times with additional costs. However, the Warhorse guys wanted to spare Paul the stress over his expenses, and no one even mentioned it to him. The recording started on December 20, and a lot of work was planned since time was short. However, since moving to the hotel had brightened his spirits, he didn't forget to call the Dubrava Crew to join him for a "jolly boys" party weekendD...



On that first day, the guys managed to record quite a lot but then Paul started having throat issues which delayed the recording a little. During the session between vocal takes, the guys would have to listen back to the tracks to check what had been recorded and generally do a lot of studio work. The problem was that as soon as Paul wasn't given attention for more than half an hour, he would start posting statuses like, "Bored." These posts gave people the impression that Paul was abandoned again and made the Warhorse guys feel a little let-down after all their efforts.



Nonetheless, the recording progress over the days. While taking a break, Paul entertained himself with internet posts where he let fans choose what he would eat from the hotel menu. Also, from the posts you see here, it was clear that he had started drinking tequila while alone in his room, which was never a good sign.



Paul and the band were actually recording quickly. By around December 23, Paul announced that the recording was almost finished and that mixing and mastering would be completed by the end of the next year. In the meantime, they hung out, went for drinks and dinner. During those days, Paul seemed truly happy. He posted more pictures of various meals he was eating, claiming that he had earned it through hard work. Meanwhile, I was calling the guys from the band to find out what was happening. I also called the therapist, since I was the one paying for his services. I positioned myself as a kind of surveillance camera, as I didn't want Paul's focus on the most important thing (namely, his recovery) to waver.

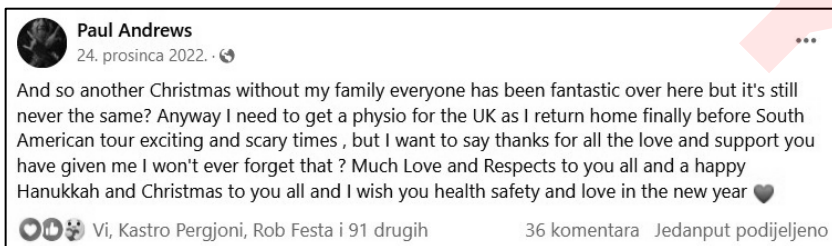


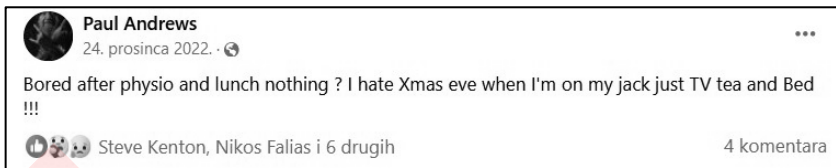
Paul's trip to Split was certainly a good move because if he had stayed in Zagreb, he would have got depressed, done nothing and his general morale would have dropped significantly. Instead, he was well taken care of and recorded almost every day and he also had an excellent specialist for his treatments. We all hoped that his mood would remain positive to maintain his physical progress and that Paul would come back to Zagreb in much better condition.

At the same time, director Wes Orshoski also made a funny post about Paul with him wearing Eddie's face to announce that he was busily working on the film. Everything seemed to be happening in parallel: the album recording, the documentary, preparations for the tour and Paul's on-going treatments.

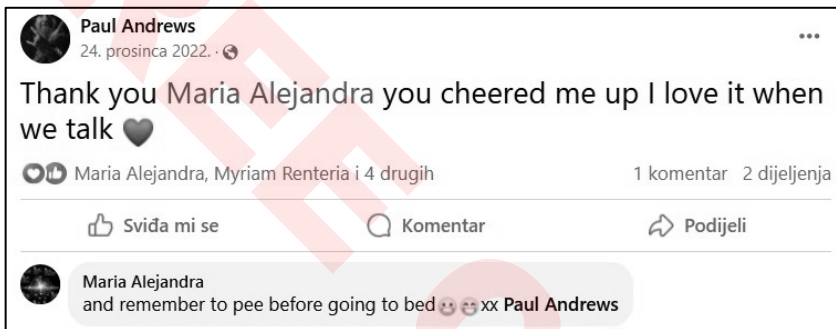


By Christmas, Paul was in good spirits, and this was reflected in his Facebook posts. In the picture you see, he wore the jersey of the Croatian national team, a gift from the famous basketball player Dino Rađa. The day before Christmas, he thanked everyone and announced that he would have treatments in the UK when he returned there the following month. I wasn't entirely convinced by that, but he promised me and I had no choice but to listen to him. My idea was for him to stay in Croatia until the Brazilian tour, which Eliel, the promoter, also preferred.





And then little by little, Paul's mood started to change and when it starts to go downhill, it's not something that can be stopped. Depression rolls down like a heavy ball to the very bottom and drags all the world's evils with it. Of course, Paul always rises again like a Phoenix but that could take days or weeks.



For a brief moment, his beloved Maria Alejandra calmed him when she saw he was starting to sink again. She called him and cheered him up. In this screenshot, I intentionally left her comment, as it actually highlights the essence of a problem at that time. After having the catheter removed before the surgery, Paul was able to control his urination again and luckily, he wasn't incontinent. However, sometimes, as in this case, he would get drunk and fall asleep without having urinated in the goose bottle that he had with him. This meant he might end up uncontrollably wetting the bed in his sleep and that was certainly not a good thing especially in a luxury hotel. It didn't help either that he was smoking his hotel room too. Despite all the rules, the cleaners found cigarette butts and burns on the expensive carpets and bedding every day. Around Christmas, at the worst possible time, Paul slowly realised that he was no longer welcome at the hotel where he was staying. Initially, the staff subtly hinted and later they became more open about it. It was not a nice Christmas present for Paul and this surely contributed to his already anxious state.

Happy Christmas Bah Humbug and feck off in drinking me tea aaarse



This photo is Paul's last before the wave of holiday negativity came crashing in. If I hoped for anything, it was that it would pass quickly. We tried to cheer him up and called him in vain because when Paul sank mentally, he also began to evade recording and treatments, showing no interest in them anymore. That was what we all feared the most. No one wanted an unmotivated Paul, as it affected not only his mental state but also his physical condition. Lack of exercise weakened his circulation again and his leg started to swell due to the accumulation of fluid. All the good work done up to that point was going down the drain...



Paul Andrews

26. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

...

Ffs go away pain I thought it would go after the ops but it's killing me today it really hurts !!!



Steve Kenton, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 15 drugih

3 komentara



Paul Andrews

26. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

...

Gotta rest I can't concentrate too much pain , see ya later x?



Nikos Falias, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 8 drugih



Paul Andrews

27. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

...

Damn I wish this fluid would fuck off in pain and miserable again but no surrender to it I'm too strong for it but it's a tad aggravating 🙄



Paul Michael Chatfield, James Allen i 16 drugih

2 komentara



Paul Andrews

27. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

...

Goodnight all been fighting the pain again all day it's worn me down thank fuck having drainage tomorrow 🙏 so up early get ready for the lyric learning as can't concentrate again but I'll do it , can't is a word not in my vocabulary 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄



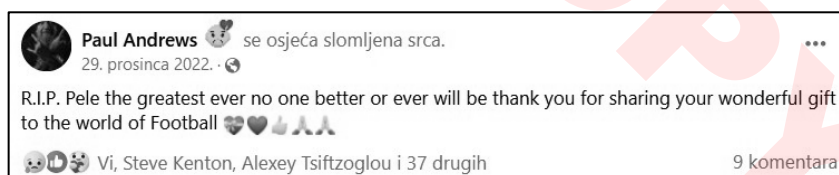
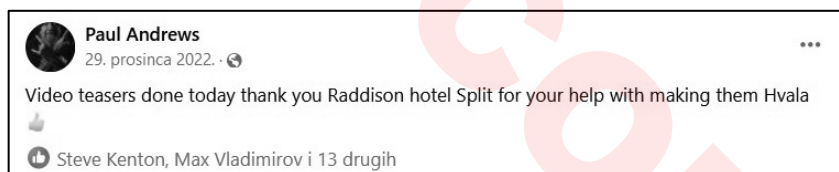
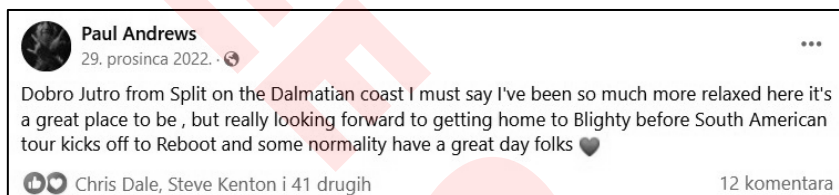
Steve Kenton, Nikos Falias i 30 drugih

4 komentara

This depressed state lasted over the Christmas period but with his last post, he hinted that he hadn't completely sunk down; rather, he wanted to fight back and that the word 'can't' wasn't in his vocabulary. This gave me hope that maybe the end of his depression was in sight.

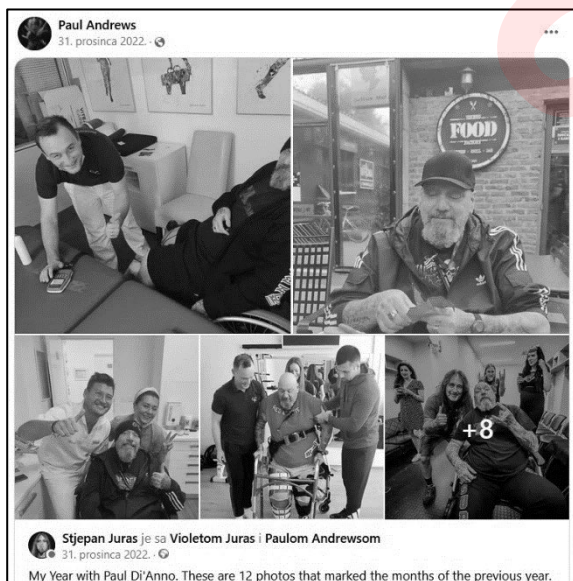
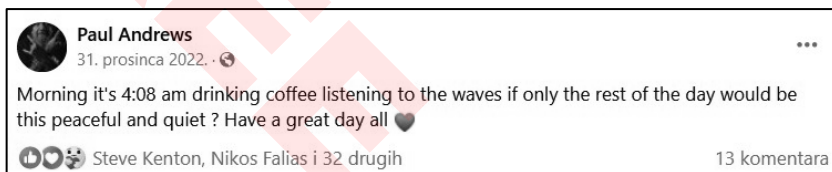
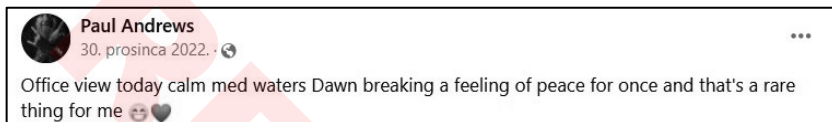
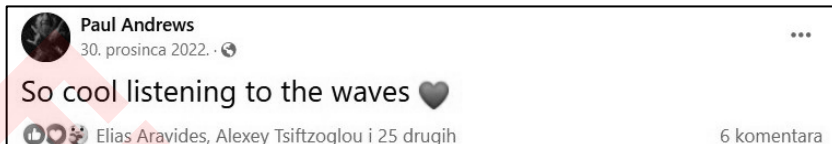


According to this screenshot, he was still struggling but the change came unexpectedly quickly. While researching this book, I noticed that the tone of his posts changed with the day of his departure from the first hotel and his move to the new, also luxurious, Radisson Blu.



As the Brazilian football wizard Pelé passed away, Paul dedicated a few words to him in his own style. He also dedicated some Journey lyrics to his beloved Maria, *"And being apart ain't easy on this love affair, two strangers learn to fall in love again."*

As the final days of the year approached and the recording was coming to an end, Paul had perked up a bit again. What he was posting at that time was promising.



As you can see, the morning of New Year's Eve was promising. Paul posted a nice message and shared my Facebook post, *"My Year with Paul Di'Anno. These are 12 photos that marked the months of the previous year. The battle is still going on. Thank you to everyone who helped. All of them that I know of will be listed in the upcoming book '666 Days with the Beast'. Thank you for being so awesome!"* Everything pointed to a good day, but in the evening, he wrote something that did not bode well again.

**Paul Andrews**

31. prosinca 2022. · 🌐

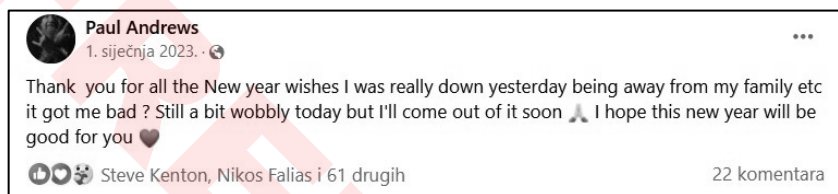
...

Have a good un all i'm in Black dog country so just want to be alone for now until I get my head right I won't reply so dont waste your texts and I'll be ok in the next 24/48 hours ?

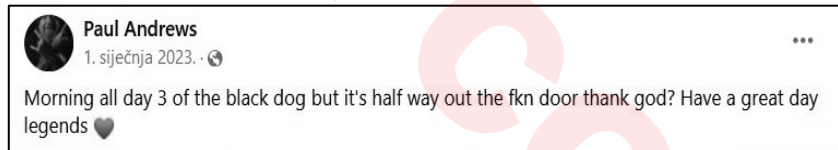
👍👍 Steve Kenton, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 24 drugih

9 komentara

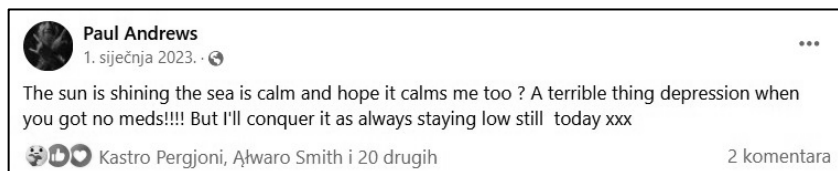
The first day of 2023 was somewhat daunting. We had a whole new year ahead of us in which no one knew what would happen. Would Paul be able to walk? Would he be able to perform more concerts? No one could say for sure. The only thing that was certain was that at that moment, he was recording a new Warhorse album and we were facing a year full of challenges. Paul sent his first New Year's address from Split.



A few hours later, he seemed to be battling the deep depression. No matter how incredible the recap of 2022 looked, and how striking my collage of the 12 iconic photos, for Paul it had been a year that was filled with great but not completely fulfilled expectations.

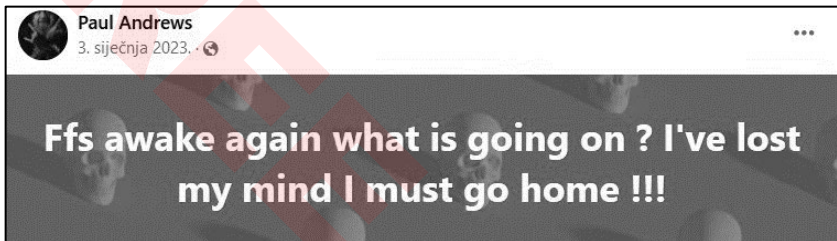


As time went on, it seemed like things would get better. Paul tried to explain that this happens when the attacks come and he doesn't have his medication. I genuinely tried to work wonders to get those medications, especially antidepressants for Paul. I wasn't sure if he had any idea how difficult it was to obtain such prescription drugs here. But also, wherever he travelled, Paul always left something behind, often his medication. Although he blames his disability for this disorganisation, I think it's more a part of his personality...





On the second day of 2023, Paul recorded the song 'Precious' by Depeche Mode for the Warhorse album. Paul had always claimed it was one of his all-time favourites. It turned out much better than expected but then he suddenly fell back into a depressed state.



Paul suffered from severe insomnia every night. He could hardly fall asleep until five or six in the morning, despite being in a luxury hotel. He was overly excited at the thought of returning to his homeland. That day, we released a large poster with all the dates of the South American tour. Seeing this, Paul posted the following:



This post didn't really have much connection to reality because, although he does have family in the UK, none of them came to visit him upon his return. And the USA, where his beloved Maria lives, was a distant and unattainable dream for Paul, due to his visa issues, which he had previously spoken about publicly. Many of the plans Paul shared were based on nothing but imagination, and of course they confused both fans and friends quite a bit. The official tour announcement that we released to the public at that time was as follows.



BRASILIAN LEG			
27.01.23 Fortaleza - Armasim	12.02.23 Iguazu - Gorrillo	28.02.23 Boa Vista - 174 Pub	
28.01.23 Recife - Estrela	14.02.23 Jato de Fora - Cultural Bar	05.03.23 Manaus - O Condiado	
29.01.23 Salvador - 30 Segundos	15.02.23 Divinópolis - Zeppelin	09.03.23 Beldes - Boleuquin	
31.01.23 Brasília - Tonho	16.02.23 Uberlândia - Siva Baza	04.03.23 São João - The Music Hall	
01.02.23 Goiânia - Rolinho	18.02.23 Curitiba - Caverna Bar	06.03.23 Teresina - Rua do Rock	
02.02.23 Rio de Janeiro - Agito	19.02.23 Campo Grande - Blues Bar	07.03.23 Juazeiro do Norte - Prodi Rock	
04.02.23 São Paulo - Caracol Club	21.02.23 Maringá - Titulo	08.03.23 Natal - Whiskeyano	
05.02.23 Belo Horizonte - Mr Rock	23.02.23 Porto Alegre - CITE	10.03.23 João Pessoa - After Pub	
08.02.23 Florianópolis - Cidelo Showcase	25.02.23 Lemeira - Mingo	11.03.23 Maceió - Tanque Chelo	
09.02.23 Curitiba - Jokers	26.02.23 Santos - Arena Club	12.03.23 Aracaju - Chô Music Bar	
11.02.23 Vila Velha - Correlia			

REST OF LATIN AMERICA

15.03.23 Asunción, Paraguay - Absoluta Rock	19.03.23 La Serena, Chile - Elgy
17.03.23 Buenos Aires, Argentina - Ulicub	21.03.23 Pto. Montt, Chile - Barra Base
18.03.23 Santiago, Chile - Subterraneo	26.03.23 Mexico City, Mexico - TBC

MORE DATES SOON...

Stjepan Juras
3. siječnja 2023. · 🌐

It's time for something very special. At the end of January, Paul Di'Anno will embark on 'The Beast Resurrection Tour', which will cover a large part of Latin America. After a successful leg operation, it is now time for constant walking exercises and physiotherapy. As the crowding campaign for Paul's recovery is over, he is leaving Croatia in two weeks and returning to the UK, from where he is starting this tour. At the concerts in Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte, we announce a special guest from the big Maiden family, which will delight many fans. This tour will also have special t-shirts with a new visual, and a carefully designed tour book. We will soon publish a list of all support bands outside of Brazil, as well as many other details. Paul thanks you all for your support and says that this tour is a victory for him and a big mental milestone that will give him extra strength to complete his recovery. Namely, he still has a few months of work left before he can fully stand on his feet. Expect new dates and new continents in the very near future. Booking! www.pauldianno.co.uk **Sažmi**

— s Violetom Juras i 2 drugih.

Edit

👍👍👍 379

🗨️ 125 🗨️ 90

👍 Svida mi se 🗨️ Komentar 🗨️ Podijeli

Komentirajte kao Stjepan Juras

The announcement about the tour seemed to help alleviate his depression a bit. However, Paul continued to write nonsense, now about moving to Greece. What he claimed was not a lie as such, as he firmly believed it, but his mental state constantly led him into new and further delusions.

Paul Andrews
3. siječnja 2023. · 🌐

Good morning you fabulous fuckers I hope your all feeling great and ready for the day? The black dog has finally fucked off that was a tough 5 /6 days it's worse as i'm Terribly gone sick been away far too long and I really love Croatia but I need to re boot and be with family and friends until I move to Greece this year 🤔 be safe be Happy ❤️

👍👍👍 Kastro Pergjoni, Steve Kenton i 60 drugih

16 komentara

👍 Svida mi se 🗨️ Komentar 🗨️ Podijeli

Prikaži više komentara

Julie Ann Bruce
Can you do that due to Brexit?

At home in the UK, as it later turned out, there was no reboot waiting for him, only more suffering, blood, pus, and tears. The talk about Greece turned out to be just that, pure talk. The move to Greece never happened, and the fact that it's not as easy as it seems was highlighted by a comment

from at least one fan who thought a bit rather than posting comments like, "Great," "Can't wait," and so on. It also quickly became clear from his posts how Paul was 'treating' his depression.



As someone who dedicated a year to fighting for his life, it was not easy to read this but I knew that if I commented on it, I would receive a barrage of public insults and angry posts saying that while communism may have left this country, the mindset remained in the people. There would be comments about how no one understands him, how no one knows what he's dealing with, how tequila is his only chance to finally get some sleep and how no one is going to tell him what to do. A fierce public counterattack was always Paul's solution to any of my attempts to influence him to focus on his health and finally leave his vices behind. Two beers and two shots of tequila are too much for his condition, but when he writes about two, we can multiply it by at least three in reality. I learned this from all the shows we've done together and Hrvoje also regularly sent me reports on the true state of affairs. However, now Paul's stay in Split was coming to an end and according to our earlier agreement, he was supposed to return to Zagreb on January 5 to continue his intensive therapy work to improve the condition of his leg as much as possible returning to the UK. Since the holiday season in Croatia lasts until January 7, Paul was supposed to spend three days relaxing and then work hard with the therapists. The problem was that Paul did not want to go to the care home again, even though it was just a few days. He complained that it was mentally destroying him. He only wanted the 5-star Westin. Considering their discounted price was around 130 Euros a day; his stay from January 5 to 15 would mean spending 1,300 Euros of the donation money, which truly broke my heart. Many times, I replayed Kastro's warning in my head that we should never have put Paul in a hotel in the first place. Allowing him to stay in a hotel for a few days before the show in Zagreb was my biggest mistake. But what's done is done. It was soon time for Paul's return to Zagreb and despite everything, I had high expectations for him.



Before leaving Split, Paul had time for one more disaster. This was the Facebook post that awaited me in the morning when I woke up. After that, Paul posted a series of panicked updates. A few hours later, he posted photos of his left (healthier) leg in bandages and wrote, "Fuuuuuuuck!"



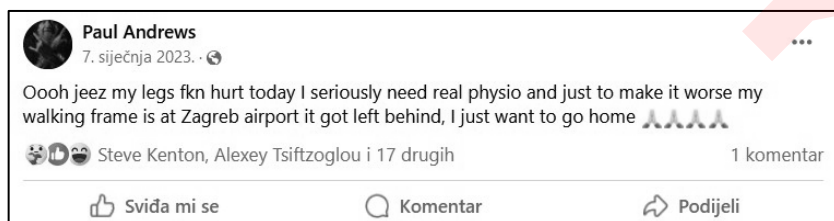
What had happened was that Paul was pushing himself around in his wheelchair with bare feet and stubbed his toe on the doorframe and cut it. His toes, which already looked quite bad, now appeared even worse. By cutting his toe in an awkward spot, he bled everywhere and the room looked like a crime scene. What made matters worse was that Paul, despite bleeding profusely, refused to allow the ambulance to come, fearing they would take him to the hospital. This drove Hrvoje and Pupi to the brink of their nerves, as well as me as I was expecting him in Zagreb the next day. His flight was already booked and he was already inherently a risky traveller on the edge of being denied boarding at the best of times. Now with this issue, we were sure they would refuse him.

After further denying medical assistance, Hrvoje and Pupi decided to act anyway without Paul's consent, as they felt it was their obligation. After several more Facebook posts where he shocked people, Paul finally calmed down, had his leg bandaged and went to sleep but the damage had already been done again. People were outraged in the comments section, wondering what was happening and worrying about him. And that was exactly what Paul didn't need for either his public image or his concert future. He didn't realize that everyone, including concert promoters were watching his posts before considering potential tour offers.

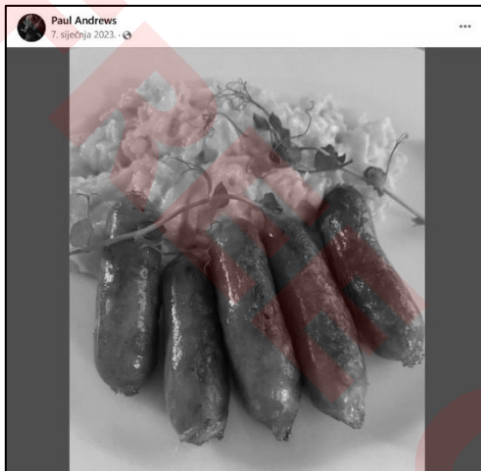
Before leaving the hotel in Split, Paul posted about how frustrated he was with packing his suitcase, while knowing full well that his band mates were coming to help him prepare for the flight. This was another trait of his that I didn't like. Everyone, and I mean everyone around him, was making an effort and dancing to every one of his whims. Yet if someone wasn't there for just a second, he would post about it on Facebook, making it seem like no one cared for him and that everyone around him was to blame. I was growing increasingly weary of such behaviour from him.

Hrvoje described to me all the events of the day of Paul's departure from Split. It was a cold day and everyone expected Paul to wear long tracksuit trousers and trainers to cover up his injury from the airline staff. However, when the band came to pick him up, he showed up in shorts and summer flip-flops. Whenever something reasonable was expected from him, he would do the opposite. Because of this, the flight manager barely allowed him to board the plane.

When Paul landed in Zagreb, I had organized for Dino to meet him at the airport with the adapted van to take him to Westin Hotel. However, since he took little or no care of his belongings, he didn't inform Dino, the airport staff or anyone else that he had a walking frame with him, which he left at the airport. He only remembered it two days later on the day of his first planned physiotherapy session and since the next day was a Sunday, I could only go to the airport to look for the walking frame on the Monday. In the meantime, I was enduring constant messages from him in the form of, "I want my frame!", "Where is my frame?" and, "If I don't have my frame, I can't exercise properly," even though the loss of the frame was entirely his fault. Of course, because of this excuse, Paul skipped his first trip to the clinic. This was yet another repeating pattern of behaviour.



Despite everything, upon arriving in Zagreb, he managed to sleep six hours straight for the first time in weeks, which he immediately posted about on Facebook. Of course, his unhealthy eating habits continued. Naturally, I didn't count every sausage he ate but this is just one of the many similar photos.



However, Paul was regularly posting about how he felt awful, blaming the fluid buildup in his leg and on January 9 (a day that he once again avoided his therapy session), he wrote, *"I am awake, I am alive, in pain, but breathing, so great success."* It quickly became clear that the planned recovery program that was supposed to prepare Paul for his trip to Brazil would ultimately come down to just one or two

therapy sessions. Days went by, the departures to the UK and Brazil were approaching, and there was no significant progress to be seen. Paul was obsessed with returning to the UK and believed he would experience a true reboot there but that was doomed from the start.



On January 9, he posted, *"Ffs come on, tomorrow start lymphatic drainage again. My legs are on fire and so painful, makes me want to cry. It hurts that much?? But, No Surrender. Have a great day legends."* Three days later, Paul posted a video in which he said that he had seen the surgeon and had been told that everything was fine, but that reason he was still not walking was that he wasn't exercising enough.

He added, *"I don't know what to do; still not walking and I'm pretty upset."* In the video, Paul sounded somewhat accusatory, saying that he wasn't getting enough physical therapy; just one hour a day. In fact, it was quite the opposite. The doctors were literally pushing Paul to exercise and if he wanted to, he could have practiced more frequently. As it was, he exercised every third day with some new excuse for why he couldn't on the others. On those sessions, he could barely last an hour before crying that he wanted to go back to the hotel. In the video, Paul cited the reason for his lack of treatment as us running out of money, which not the truth at all. To make matters worse, he ended the video with, *"That's the deal, so I want to let you know, just in case for future reference, and... I wanna kill somebody. See you later."*

Who that "somebody" is that he wants to kill, you can guess for yourself, and why Paul felt the need to spread fake news about a lack of money for his treatments (he probably thought it would evoke new sympathy from the fans and lead to more donations). As he himself noted, he recorded this video, *"just in case for future reference."* This leads me to conclude that he was already aware that his recovery was not happening and if things developed in that direction, he would already have an excuse to lean on. He also knew that donations had come to an end. Fans had donated what they could, and the expected results hadn't fully materialized. No one intended to donate again. Now Paul was completely dependent on his finances, which could only come from album sales, concerts tickets and tour merchandise. There was no turning back and Paul knew it. He was afraid that, starting this year, he would have to rely solely on himself for his finances.

On January 14, I posted an important Facebook status that was shared by all major metal media outlets, titled 'Di'Recap'. In it I recorded everything that had happened during Paul's stay in Croatia so far. By this time, although I still hoped for Paul's recovery, a shadow of doubt had begun to creep into my mind that it might never happen. Nevertheless, I pushed away the negative thoughts and wrote this.

Dear friends

Everything comes to an end, including Paul Di'Anno's stay in Croatia. Paul Di'Anno came to Croatia at the end of October 2021 and stayed there until Saturday, January 14, 2023. I still remember that cold, dark and rainy day

when Paul came to the care home in pain, completely neglected, without much will for life. The prognosis for his legs was dire and included the amputation of his right leg, however the brave medical team decided to take the minimal chance of recovery and they performed a miracle. In just a few months, his legs took on a new color, the girth decreased several times, and every day Paul had more and more will for a new life and progress. Day after day fantastic things happened to him. He founded his new original band 'WARHORSE', recorded and sold out 666 copies of his first single 'Stop the War' within an express deadline. Later, he recorded a whole album with 11 songs, and even 5 video clips, which will soon be released. Due to drinking heavy drugs against pain, depression, etc., Paul's teeth completely rotted, however, in Croatia he got completely new teeth and a smile. During his stay in Croatia, he also had a romantic adventure, made many friends, launched a new website, and the biggest music media outlets reported on him on several occasions. In Croatia, after 30 years, Paul met Steve Harris and Rod Smallwood, and saw an Iron Maiden concert, and after that he met his friends from the band KISS again. After 7 years in a wheelchair, Paul had his first comeback concert in Croatia, and held a successful performance in Germany and three sold out concerts in Greece together with Gus G and a fantastic, specially prepared band. Iron Maiden, a band that has always been selfless when someone needed help, joined fans from all over the world and sent a crucial donation to Paul's surgery, as did Derek Riggs, by designing a special t-shirt.

But most important of all, Paul's legs were not amputated and what's more, we all together raised a huge amount of funds to help Paul through the difficult days and to finally perform a very complex and complicated operation in which Paul finally got a new bone, which extends from the thigh bone to the lower leg and along which he will finally start walking. Polyclinic Ribnjak, headed by Dr. Milan Milošević and excellent physiotherapist Matteo Šošтариć, worked wonders in Paul's rehabilitation and saving his leg. The doctor who operated on Paul, Robert Kolundžić and his team, despite the very complicated condition of the leg, did an excellent job and the artificial bone was perfectly placed. You will see all this in the upcoming documentary shot by Wes Orhoski, the famous director.

However, what is most important now is to motivate Paul to continue with the treatments and to finally walk. Technically speaking, Paul has absolutely

everything needed for this, except for strengthened muscles, which must be restored, and motivation, which began to decline in the last months after the operation. Paul now needs the help of all of us, because after such a difficult operation it is not realistic to expect to walk immediately. All the doctor's predictions boil down to the same thing: Paul can walk after two, up to a maximum of 3 months of persistent and constant exercises, without skipping days, slacking off and with an appropriate diet and control of nutrient intake. And that is (in my opinion) the most difficult and crucial part of the entire recovery process. Therefore, I invite everyone who can, in any way, to try to influence it to happen. Namely, Paul should come to Croatia at the beginning of April and stay for two months. If the exercise is regular and disciplined, Paul will walk again.

On January 23, Paul travels to Brazil, where he will start a big Latin American tour, and the Brazilian promoter will crucially help us to make the final rehabilitation successful. The interest in Paul around the world is enormous and Paul is definitely back. Thank you Kastro, thank you all fans and friends. You will all be mentioned in my book '666 days with the Beast', which will describe my 666 days with Paul. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Before departing for London, Paul posted on Facebook praising Zagreb Airport for its convenience, cleanliness and friendly staff. He also didn't forget to thank his friends while announcing his return for the final treatments in Croatia. In reality, it had been arranged for Paul to come back in early April, not May as he said in the post but I wanted to draw special attention to this status in light of everything that happened later. With his departure from Croatia, Paul's financial support from others came to an end and the start of the tour meant that Paul was finally ready to take responsibility for himself and spend the money he earned primarily on his health needs. With all the shows he had lined up, Paul should have had enough funds to cover a whole year's worth of treatments and all of his living expenses. After the South American tour, he could have comfortably taken a five-month break for treatment (with only two shows in between) and by September, he should have been on his feet and finally walking again. All the doctors who had worked with him confirmed this. I had suggested that we travel to Brazil directly from Croatia and that Paul's insistence on staying in his own home in England was anything but good for him but he didn't want to hear any of it. He had made his decision long ago.

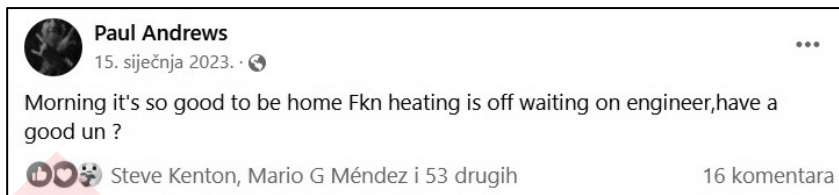


Paul Andrews

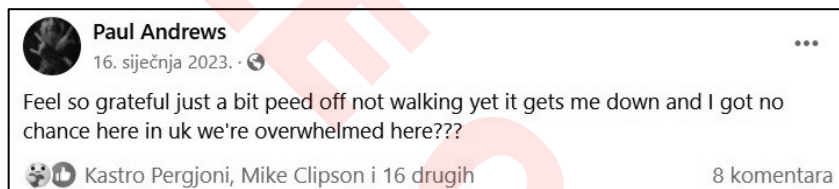
13. siječnja 2023. · 🌐



Goodbye my dear friends in Croatia I'll see you in may



The status about how the heating in his house wasn't working in the middle of winter was the first post Paul made when he got home. Maybe he already realised that his idea of taking two weeks to relax in the UK wasn't the best one. In Croatia during those two weeks, he would have been under the supervision of therapists and nurses, training almost every day to maintain the improvements made with his leg so far. Instead, going to the UK turned out to be much worse than anyone could have anticipated. The next day, he wrote the following post. From there on no good could be expected.



Adding to all of this, was the fact that despite what we and his doctors kept telling him, Paul still reached for a drink in solitude at home. This provided all the ingredients necessary for a disaster. To make matters worse, Paul received another month-long Facebook soon after. As he was no longer active on Facebook, unless we called him on the phone, we couldn't know what was happening with him. All this happened right before embarking on the most important tour of his life. All we could do was hope that everything would be OK and that Paul would indeed show up at the airport. This was mine and Eliel the promoter's biggest nightmare.



Although Violeta, Iris and I could have flown to Brazil directly from Zagreb, Eliel insisted that we go to London first and be with Paul at the airport, as if he had a premonition that something would go wrong. Violeta and I had our worries about whether we would be accepted into Brazil since neither of us was vaccinated against Covid, and we had no intention of doing so. Far from being anti-vaxxers (as we did not hesitate for a moment to get vaccinated against yellow fever in Brazil, nor when our child needed vaccinations for common diseases), we didn't get vaccinated against Covid since, at that time, vaccination requirements for entry into Brazil were still somewhat in force, but the enforcement varied depending on random checks and who you encountered at immigration.

The evening before our departure for Brazil, British Lion had a show in London, so of course we decided to go. Steve Harris wanted a copy of my then-new book, 'Neal Kay- Recollections of a Rock DJ', so I went to personally hand it to him and update him on how the situation with Paul



was developing. Steve genuinely cared about Paul and constantly asked about his health. I got the impression that he really loved him and was making an effort to help despite Paul's self-destructive nature. He kindly signed my book and wished me all the best with Paul on the tour, which we definitely needed. Unfortunately, while waiting for Steve outside the venue for about two hours in temperatures below minus five degrees Celsius, it seems I caught a severe cold, which marred my first few weeks in Brazil.

HEAVEN AND HELL IN LATIN AMERICA

If to write a book solely about this tour, I could easily fill over 300 pages. Brazil is a fantastic country and an eternal inspiration. For people from the so-called Western world, just mentioning a tour in Brazil evokes deep emotions and invites our wildest fantasies. Leaving the European snow and ice to visit the beaches of endless summer always warms the heart. Added to this, and the boundless passion of the Brazilian fans, along with the energy exchanged at shows there, is so captivating that it leaves its mark you for a lifetime. Once you go on tour in Brazil, you know that you will surely return one day at any cost. While I would love to write pages about Brazil itself (the varied Brazilian gastronomy, the welcoming hotels we stayed in, our travels along endless Brazilian roads, the culture, architecture, tourist attractions, nature, the people we met, their lives, the carnival during which the entire tour took place and everything else that a full-blooded travel story could provide), I will here focus solely on my relationship with Paul and the events of the tour.

As I write this and reflect, I realise that in one way, we were exceptionally blessed to have Paul banned from Facebook for a month. If that hadn't happened, I'm not sure the tour could have gone ahead if the public started reading his posts.

But let's start from the beginning. After our meeting with Steve Harris, Violeta and I headed to Heathrow Airport, where Paul was thankfully waiting for us with his friends, Steve Kenton and Chris Dale. Steve and Chris did the immensely important task of transporting Paul from his home in Salisbury to Heathrow on time. Due to Paul's level of immobility, leg pain and excessive weight, it's quite difficult to be his assistant so I was truly grateful for what Steve and Chris did that day. However, an unknown factor loomed in the air. I had seen Paul off in Croatia in good health and able to move independently in his wheelchair and partially care for himself. What happened in less than two weeks in his home was anyone's guess, while the clues that we gathered from his Facebook posts didn't suggest anything

good. I anticipated that his condition might be worse but what I found was truly shocking. I am quite sure that Steve Kenton and Chris Dale could write a long essay about how that day went, especially the story entitled 'toilet disaster', which occurred just before Violeta, Iris, and I arrived at the airport. When we met them on the terrace of the airport bar, we handed Paul a vape machine that he had asked us to buy him and then quickly escaped to check-in and the gates as the airport staff would take care of him boarding the plane anyway. Also to be honest, Paul didn't look his best and the smell around him was, to put it mildly, not very pleasant. "What the hell happened to him in UK?" I thought. He left Croatia in good health, neat and clean. What had gone so badly wrong since? As I walked toward the gates, I asked myself whether anyone at all had visited Paul in his house since he returned to the UK and even if he had been doing his 'business' in his pants during that whole time. I had every right to wonder and I wasn't far from the truth.

Before heading to the gates, I took Chris aside for a moment to talk about the situation. I also asked him, "What do you actually do for a living, Chris? We all know you're a bassist, but do you have a steady job or do you earn your money from the music business?" Chris responded that he lived off music, mainly as a roadie or crew on tours. The reason I asked him this was because I saw him as a potential collaborator for the future. Very soon after, this question proved to be crucial for the tour to happen at all. We shook hands and he wished us good luck for the tour.

When we arrived at the gates, Paul had already been taken to the plane by airport assistance, as disabled people usually board before everyone else. I couldn't believe they had actually let him fly to Brazil in that state. I clenched my fist and told myself, "Yes, we are indeed travelling!" However, that happiness didn't last long. As soon as we boarded the plane, Paul greeted us from his seat with a look of utter dejection on his face, and said to me in a dead-serious tone, "Stjepan, I can't travel to Brazil." "What?" I thought, responding, "But you're in the airplane, in your seat. You boarded and it's done; you're going. What's wrong with you?" "No, no, I'm not going. I'm just sitting here waiting for assistance to come and take me off the plane again. There's nothing to be done," he sadly replied. It seemed that other

passengers seated near to Paul had made complaints about his odour. "Well, why aren't you doing anything? Why are you so quiet?" If I knew Paul at all, it was as the loud and fierce Paul who fought for himself and shouted when things didn't go his way. Now he was a quiet, frightened old man who had resigned himself to his fate. "Where is that loud Paul Di'Anno now?" I thought, but at the same moment, I answered myself. Perhaps Paul is only loud when he comes to countries like Croatia, which many Brits still consider third world countries, but when something happens in England, he wouldn't even make a squeak.



If he won't protest, then I will. I rushed immediately to the front of the airplane and asked to speak with the flight manager. I explained that this flight was very important for us because Paul is the ex-Iron Maiden singer going on tour on a mostly sold-out tour of Brazil and if he didn't make it there, it would lead to damages of several hundred thousand euros and the story would quickly spread in the media. "Be smart about what you're doing," I told them, not threateningly but in a calm tone, assuring them that I would assist in any way possible just to ensure that Paul could fly to Brazil. I also

mentioned that I was writing a book about this experience and promised that if British Airways helped us, I would praise them, which I am doing now. The flight manager told me to return to Paul and wait while they made their final decision. Since the flight was fully booked, there was no option for Paul to be relocated to a seat away from other passengers. Meanwhile, everyone around Paul was trying to find ways to protect themselves from the contamination of the air around them. My wife sneakily took a photo, pretending to do a selfie. In the photo, you can see a passenger just two seats away from Paul completely covering his face with a scarf.

Eventually, the flight manager came back to me and said, “I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience, but Mr Andrews must leave the airplane for the safety of the other passengers who purchased tickets seated near to him. We understand Mr Andrews’ difficult condition and the issue of frequent urination caused by prolonged catheter use, also his legendary status, the importance of the tour and the potential costs that its cancellation would incur. Therefore, we have made a decision that could provide a solution. You will fly to Brazil and he will stay overnight in an accessible room at an airport hotel at our expense. We just ask that you find someone who can help him change, shower and come fresh for a new flight tomorrow. We will arrange for staff to transport him to the hotel and bring him back to the airport. Mr Andrews will arrive on the same scheduled flight a day late but as I understand it, everything will still be fine. You told me that the tour starts on January 27, and tomorrow will be the 25th, so it’s not too late. Do you accept the offer?”

I had no choice but to agree; after all the proposal did seem seemed reasonable. I said goodbye to Paul, hugged him and promised that I would do everything to see him soon in Brazil. It was with a heavy heart that we watched as the flight crew came to take Paul away and cover his empty seat with a blanket to prevent the contamination from spreading further but that was how it had to be. I quickly informed Eliel about the new situation and unsurprisingly, he wasn’t exactly thrilled but had no choice but to wait to see how events would unfold. But now, it was time for Violeta, Iris and myself to fasten our seatbelts and set off for São Paulo.

Once again, I must emphasize how fortunate we all were that Paul was banned from Facebook and unable to post statuses. If he had been posting, I am certain that British Airways would not have been happy with what they might have read and I’m not sure Paul would have ended up going at all in that case.

At this stage, I would like to clarify one thing. If you read in this book that Paul didn’t smell nice, that he had urinated in his pants and many other related issues; you need to know that this is not presented as a way to mock the situation or turn a tragedy into comedy. Rather, it is an attempt to convey a complete and uncensored picture of the events so that readers can

understand how difficult and unglamorous it is to be immobile and dependent on others. Paul is a person who needs constant assistance, no matter how much he sometimes tries to deny it. After prolonged catheter use, it is difficult for anyone to return to a normal routine for urination, and there is a significant risk of permanent incontinence. So please don't think that Paul was careless or that he didn't try to look after himself as he should have. Paul would be the first to do anything to walk again and to not constantly wet himself due to his catheter problems. Such a life is a nightmare. Anyone who hasn't experienced such disability cannot truly imagine what it's like.

Now try to imagine what it is like to go on tour with such a person and how difficult it is for both Paul and everyone helping him to endure all those struggles and hardships day after day. We were constantly changing hotels and flights with daily physical therapy and doctors' visits. We had to get him upstairs into venues, dressing rooms and finally onto the stage, most of which lacked ramps and accessible entrances. It was a daily grind and relentless effort, and Paul endured it all with heroism. You cannot even begin to fathom how much of a hero Paul was for agreeing to put himself through all of this. Of course, he needed the money from the tours for his healthcare and daily life, so ultimately, he had no other choice. But still, imagine being in his situation with so many problems; would you have the courage to do what Paul Di'Anno did?

There are many unanswered questions about Paul and a multitude of opinions on them from so-called 'internet experts'. It was incredibly difficult to deal with all of that but I won't allow various conspiracy theories to develop or for untruths to be written. This is a tough story but I am glad the truth of it has been recorded.

Violeta, Iris and I arrived in São Paulo on January 24, three days before the first show. This gave us time to adjust our biological clocks to avoid the effects of jetlag, as well as acclimatize ourselves to the tropical heat after the harsh winter we came from. Eiel's plan was to make all the last-minute preparations for the tour in São Paulo and meet with all the band members and crew to discuss the work plan. And then on the day of the first show, to fly from São Paulo to Fortaleza to arrive allowing enough time for the band to set up their equipment and rehearse the set one last time.

Although the band pleaded for at least one rehearsal with Paul before the concert, Paul is not really one to do rehearsals. His Norwegian band had warned me about this, saying that in the more than ten years they had worked with him, they had never had a single rehearsal. He simply shows up on stage and sings. For him, 'rehearsal' is an unknown word.



On my first day in Brazil, I started to feel a burning sensation in my throat and began to cough uncontrollably. I realised that I had caught a nasty cold (perhaps even Covid) while in the UK. I was running a fever for the first week and continued to cough for another two weeks after that. However, the tour was about to start and there was no time for complaining. While I left Violeta and the baby to relax at the Golden Tower hotel, I headed across the city with Eliel to a company that rents tour buses. It was a large parking lot filled with hundreds of buses, mostly double-deckers,

and we entered one after another to check for accessibility options such as ramps and considered the process of transitioning from a wheelchair to a bus seat for each. Once we chose a bus, it would be brought in front of the hotel for Paul to try out. If everything was satisfactory, the bus would be sent for any needed modifications and also custom branding for the tour to make it as attractive as possible, serving as a living advertisement for the shows. I believe that while waiting for the company owners in the uncovered parking lot, I got sunstroke, as the sun was so strong that I could barely move or breathe. When I finally returned to the hotel and met Violeta, I wanted to cool off in the rooftop pool but that turned out to be a bad decision. Distracted by my cold and the sunstroke, I jumped into the pool with my wallet containing all my cards, cash and receipts. As they dried in the sun, I took a bit of a nap, carelessly allowing myself to get sunburnt in addition to me sunstroke and severe cold, all on my very first day in Brazil. A true recipe for disaster! Then, at the end of the day, to at least unwind a little, Eliel and I went to the famous rock and metal shopping mall, 'Galeria do Rock' in the city centre.



All day, while working on the numerous final details for the tour such as printing the set lists, finalizing the itinerary and creating the guest list accreditation, I tried not to think too much about Paul, because the thought him still in the UK drove me crazy. Since he didn't have access to Facebook, I couldn't even keep track of what was happening that way. Still, every few hours I called him to check how he was doing, whether he had managed to settle into the hotel, if he had been able to shower and change and most importantly if he was ready for departure. The thought that he was so far from us, and that it

was still uncertain whether he would even set off for Brazil was haunting me. The tour was completely set; thousands of people had already purchased their tickets, the crew was paid, as were the clubs, hotels and flights. The musicians were ready, the backline equipment was rented as well as the very expensive tour bus. Wes had also flown in from New York to finish filming the documentary. And now we were all dependent on the goodwill of someone from British Airways to allow Paul to fly to Brazil.

It was evening in São Paulo, and Galeria do Rock was about to close. Eliel, Violeta, and I found ourselves both excited and anxious about the tour, which hadn't even started yet. As the old Croatian saying goes, we were preparing the spit while the rabbit was still in the woods. We were all waiting with our hearts racing. I must admit that I felt a lot of pressure that day and was feeling down, as if I sensed something bad would happen. I asked myself, "What's wrong with you, Stipe? If anyone is always an optimist, it's you and now your thoughts are wrapped in darkness. Keep your head up, think positively!" We stood in the square in front of Galeria do Rock, counting down the minutes until Paul's scheduled flight departure. Since there was a four-hour time difference, I called Paul every hour just to be safe. "Have you had a shower and packed your things?" I asked during

my first call, to which Paul replied that everything was OK and ready. "Did you contact the airport hotel staff to help take you to the airport?" I asked on my second call, and he confirmed that he had. I later called him frequently to check if he was at the airport, if he had checked in, if he was at the gate and he answered positively each time. This gave me hope that things would turn out well after all. When he moved away from the gate towards the plane entrance, Paul lost signal, as he doesn't have any internet plan on his mobile phone. For reasons known only to him, Paul doesn't have and doesn't want internet included in his phone plan, which often becomes a pain in the ass. Wherever we travel, he relies on hotel, venue or airport Wi-fi and constantly complains when he doesn't have it. But that's another long and complex story in itself. As he headed towards the plane, he had a about half an hour until departure. We all monitored the path of his flight online and it seemed to be on schedule. Each of us was tracking the plane on different channels. I was using Flight Radar, Violeta was monitoring British Airways website, while Eliel kept an eye on Heathrow airport's website. At the moment the plane took off, smiles appeared on our faces and a weight was lifted from our hearts. But still being sceptical about all of this, I said we should wait half an hour before being sure that Paul was airborne. I couldn't call Paul because he was offline but I knew he would definitely call me if something went wrong. Half an hour passed and finally, we felt we could all breathe a sigh of relief.

You know those moments when you remember exactly where you were and what you were doing when an important event occurred? I can pinpoint exactly where I was and what I was doing on that warm Brazilian night about an hour after the flight had taken off, when my phone vibrated and I saw that Paul was calling me on Messenger. "No!" I thought, "How is this possible?" A small flicker of hope was tinged with anxiety as I hesitated to accept the call. My only glimmer of hope was that Paul had connected to British Airways' Wi-fi onboard but I knew that wasn't his style nor was he technically savvy enough to do it. With a trembling hand, I answered the call and heard Paul on the other end. "Stjepan, help me! They're not allowing me to fly to Brazil again! But they've given me one more chance to return to the hotel and come back tomorrow. This time, they said that someone must accompany me. Otherwise, I'm not going anywhere!"

Eliel momentarily experienced a blackout. Then he started shouting and waving his hands frantically, as in his mind he already envisioned the collapse of the tour with newspaper articles about the disaster. He was mentally calculating the thousands and thousands in losses, including the advance money Paul had asked for to cover the rent for his apartment in Salisbury. I could see the panicked fear in his eyes, while Violeta also looked disappointed. We had only just arrived and now we were already thinking about our return. A new flight was scheduled for Paul for the next day at the same time, but it was going to be extremely difficult to find someone close to Paul who knew how to handle him and who lived in the UK, specifically in London or its surroundings, and who would be willing to quickly pack a suitcase and to travel to Brazil at such short notice for a few days. People have jobs, families and obligations so that they can't just leave the country at a moment's notice. Nightmare scenarios were developing in my mind, yet on the outside, I remained completely calm as if nothing was happening. I simply said to Eliel, "Friend, calm down; there's no need for panic. Let's go back to the hotel, get some rest and I guarantee you I'll come up with something by morning. This tour will still happen." Even so, I went to my room and began to despair. My temperature was rising; I was coughing heavily; my skin was burned from the sun and I was still suffering from the sunstroke fever. I had told Eliel that I guaranteed him something for which I had no assurance. The only guarantee was that I knew myself and that it was my specialty to pull myself and others out of seemingly impossible situations. I had always been lucky and somehow managed to succeed in that. No wonder Paul called me 'Agent Juras,' and tonight Agent Juras had the mission of a lifetime.

First, I lay in the bathtub with cold water to hydrate my hot, burned skin. Once Iris fell asleep, I returned to bed, lay on my back and started thinking about who could possibly take a flight to Brazil with Paul tomorrow. I called Paul's former manager Cliff but he was too busy with other work to fly. I also considered the option of using someone from Croatia whom both Paul and I knew, like Paul's driver, Dino. I had already looked up flights from Zagreb to London and then from London to São Paulo, processing a million details in my head. However, everyone I contacted in Zagreb also wasn't able to leave on such short notice. Then, suddenly, a light bulb went off in my head. The solution had been right in front of me all along. I didn't really know Chris

Dale well enough to call him late at night but given the urgency of the situation, I decided to do it. I recalled our conversation from a few days prior where he mentioned that he worked as a roadie and led a life without commitments to steady employment. He seemed to be the ideal candidate but just as I decided to call him a few minutes before midnight, by coincidence he contacted me first.

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How's Brazil?

Mate, re you free next few days. Do you want to go to Brazil and be paid

I answered his question with a counter-question almost instinctively; as if I were saying, "Come and see how it is in Brazil." There's no need for me to elaborate extensively on the details of our negotiations that led to Chris actually packing his things at the last minute and flying to Brazil with Paul. But as you can see



from the evidence, Chris finally managed to bring Paul to São Paulo. If some busybodies were to wonder why Chris had to be paid for this (as you can see in the screenshot), my answer is simply because although we all work and help, putting our hearts and souls into it as much as we can, and we all love and respect Paul as the idol of our youth I wouldn't allow him make such a last-minute sacrifice and do this favour without being compensated. Regardless of whether Chris would do this for free or not, if everyone on the tour, including the tour manager, merch guy, all the roadies and even myself are being paid, then it would be hypocritical to ask someone to do something for free, even if they get a paid flight to Brazil and all expenses and accommodation covered. This third attempt to fly Paul to São Paulo

also didn't go as smoothly as expected but British Airways did let Paul fly at last and what mattered most was that he would soon arrive. Upon Paul's landing Eliel immediately took a photo with both him and Chris to send to the public, to reassure everyone (as rumours about our problems had already begun to spread) and to show that Paul was finally in Brazil.



The news that Paul would be staying at the Golden Tower Hotel spread quickly and many fans began to swarm the hotel. Among them was my longtime friend and big fan, Adriano Ribeiro, who unfortunately passed away a year later. I want to immortalize him in this way and thank him for all the beautiful days spent in this world.

However, our nightmare upon Paul's arrival in Brazil was just beginning. The first thing he said was that he wanted new wheelchair or he wouldn't perform. You have to bear in mind that after his surgery in September, he had a new wheelchair, then while recording the album during December, he bought another new one and upon returning to Zagreb in January 2024, he purchased yet another. Despite being heavy-duty, they each fell apart, mainly due to his improper way of sitting in it. Eliel had only just had to pay for Chris' last-minute airfare to Brazil and his expenses and now there was a request for new wheelchair. Eliel looked at me, wondering why he should be purchasing a wheelchair from his own money. "That's a personal expense," he told me. But Paul didn't stop there; he also needed new XXXL clothing (t-shirts and trousers), wet-wipes and a pack of Lucky Strike menthols. Of course, Paul didn't even mention reimbursing those costs. I looked at Eliel and quietly whispered, "You better listen to him and buy him all of that. Forget about the money for now but at least we'll save the tour and hope we can cover some of the costs later somehow."

Paul's arrival at the hotel was one of the most stressful situations I've ever experienced in my life. Paul was already very grumpy and completely wet making it truly unpleasant to be in his company. Before his surgery, when he had the catheter removed, his condition was reasonably good and stable, and he was able

to urinate without problems. However, after returning home, his condition in that department had rapidly deteriorated. The early signs that this would happen were evident as far back as December when he left the care home and went to Greece.

Once we took Paul to his room on the eighth floor, Eliel, Chris and I (accompanied by Wes, who was filming everything) heard him screaming for help to shower, also go to the toilet and urgently find a doctor to put his catheter back in because, in his current state the tour was impossible. Eliel wondered if this was the same Paul he had seen just two months earlier in Croatia, who was almost fully recovered. Upon arriving at his room, the situation escalated. Paul started shouting at us not to panic, when in fact, he was the only one panicking. As Chris and I brought him into the bathroom, undressing him and discussing out loud how we would shower him most easily, Paul began screaming at me to bring him scissors. "What scissors? Where am I supposed to find scissors?" I asked, to which he yelled, "Bring me the damn scissors, figure it out! Ask at the reception or find the housekeeper or anything!" In that moment, I remembered that Violeta always carried some scissors in her bag for trimming her bangs, so I rushed to the 12th floor to grab them and immediately ran back to Paul's room. The scene I encountered was horrific. The pants Paul was wearing were completely soaked in urine, sticking to his swollen legs which were covered in sores. "Oh my God," I thought, "Paul left Croatia with healthy legs. What has happened in the meantime?" The scissors I brought were actually needed to cut Paul's pants because there was no other way to get them off him. As Chris held him, I knelt down and began to cut away his pants and underwear, constantly on the verge of vomiting. There was no time for fancy things like protective gloves; I had to grip the fabric soaked in Paul's urine and tear it away from his reddened skin. I was indescribably saddened by everything I was seeing. My hero, my idol from my youth, the rebellious and wild Paul Di'Anno was now before me, naked, helpless covered in blood. Once I removed his pants and underwear, I encountered an even worse situation. His skin was soaked with urine and smeared with faeces mixed with blood. I was about to faint. Chris turned on the shower and we began to wash and rinse Paul down like that, splashing water everywhere in the bathroom. Water spilled out under the door, flooding the room and trailing down the hallway. As the water drained down the plug-hole, it mixed with the blood, faeces and urine, and since I was in flip-flops my bare feet were standing in the foul mixture.

While Paul finished up showering, we tried to manage the flooding with all the towels we could find. After that, I ran out into the hallway towards the elevator with a look of horror on my face, my half-bloody hands holding the scissors raised above my head like some sort of maniacal murderer. I elbowed the button for the 12th floor and when I arrived in front of the room, I started kicking my feet against the door for Violeta to open it. The next thing I remember is that I spent nearly half an hour frantically washing my hands and later my entire self, thinking each time that it wasn't enough. I vowed never to eat with my fingers again. The whole time, I thought about how incredibly lucky Paul was that he didn't end up with sepsis or an infection in Salisbury, because if that had happened, he would have been dead by now. It all ended up becoming an inside joke, which even Paul laughed at. The Golden Tower Hotel was instantly renamed; 'Golden Shower, obviously for some reason. Paul and we and the crew called it that from then on and we will continue to call it that.



There was no time for a breather. As soon as we sorted out Paul and washed, I booked an Uber, and around 2pm, we set off on an adventure around São Paulo, searching for the best possible wheelchair for Paul. We had many requirements, among which were a fully adjustable and extra-long footplate, as well as various custom add-ons. Being close to Paul's weight, I was the model for testing its functionality. We decided that instead of buying new wheelchair, we would rent one in São Paulo. A fan who personally helped me navigate São Paulo and find companies that rent wheelchairs was Vinicius Lamansov Germano. He even rented the

wheelchair in his name, taking a significant risk for any potential damage to the equipment. Just two days later, Paul had another request. Eliel now needed to buy a so-called 'princess', a portable toilet that disabled people can use in the absence of an accessible toilet.

The next day, a brand-new tour bus arrived in front of the hotel for Paul to try boarding. The company had sent us their very best bus, which had they had just taken delivery of and still smelled fresh from the factory. Paul was happy with it and we were thrilled because we had the tour bus of our dreams. However, the bus was only for the second part of the tour. Before that we faced six shows that we had to travel to by plane, the first of which was in Fortaleza.

From the very start of the first show-day, it was clear that Paul was in a bad mood, and in front of him was the gig of his career, which would determine the direction of his future in Brazil. He complained heavily about the flight, the "incompetent airport staff", about the crew, about me and everything else. It was just one of those days. I was completely exhausted and drained from my cold and high fever. I could barely see and was coughing non-stop but I hid it at the airport, for fear that they wouldn't let me on the plane. We arrived in sunny Fortaleza by midday and immediately upon entering the hotel, were greeted with an unpleasant surprise. This was the only show that Eliel hadn't organized; he had sold it to another promoter. This promoter wanted to save money and had booked a terrible hotel that was also infested with tiny bedbugs that were all over the sheets and pillows. The hotel had a lift that was too small for Paul to fit into at all, so they urgently needed to find a better hotel at least for Paul and his carer. This added stress only infuriated Paul further. He was so angry that it was clear something bad was about to happen.

The show in Fortaleza took place in a beautiful open-air venue, and as the day went on, more and more people arrived. Many reporters came to witness the first show of the tour, along with fans from all over Brazil. I remember some of them approached me wanting to take photos and talk with me, and I could only sit helplessly in a chair with my elbows on my knees and my face buried in my hands. I was truly unwell. Finally, show time arrived. I was too weak to even go on stage or behind, so I remained seated in my chair to watch how things would unfold. The first two bands were both quite good and then it was time for Paul. I should mention that at this point, Paul had no confidence in his backing band because he wanted a guitarist named Vinnie, who had previously played with him in Brazil a few years ago. However, this wasn't possible this time due to schedule complications. Instead, the backing band was comprised of three

members from the support band, Noturnall, and the other guitarist came from the opening band, Electric Gypsy. Throughout the first part of the tour in Brazil, Paul used every opportunity to express his dissatisfaction with the choice of backing band (even though the guys were excellent and he praised them highly by the end of the tour). During this first performance, he was just waiting for something to go wrong so he could say, "I told you so." And indeed, during the show, several such incidents occurred, including the repetition of one song. Including the intro, Paul managed to finish only seven songs before everything boiled over with him and he decided the show was over.

I didn't know at the time because I had just started working with him, but now I realise that the reason for abruptly ending the show (which he did quite frequently) was not always a health issue but sometimes simply his will to destroy everything around him out of sheer defiance, just to show everyone that something had displeased him and was even done at the risk of ruining the entire tour. Why am I saying all this when I know that just a day earlier, he was in a critical state in the shower? It's because I saw him that very night, not an hour after the show, laughing and drinking with friends in the dressing room, showing no signs of being as unwell as he claimed. Moreover, he even came up with an utterly ridiculous idea, which he communicated to promoter Eliel as a command, "I'm sick of being shuffled in and out of planes. I don't want to fly to Recife tomorrow; I demand to go by road!" We tried to talk him out of it, asking, "Are you crazy? The flights are already paid for, Recife is about 800 km away and to get there on time, you'll need to leave very early in the morning. Who knows if we can even find an accessible vehicle and driver by then? Plus, you said you ended the show for health reasons and now you want to undertake an even riskier journey?" But Paul was unyielding: "I want to go to Recife by road!" And so, it was decided. We found a vehicle and he took the arduous journey by road with Beto, Eliel and Wes, while the rest of us took the short flight as planned.

Meanwhile, the story of the disastrous, half-finished first show spread like wildfire in the media. People immediately began demanding ticket refunds and journalists universally wrote horrific reviews of the show. What was supposed to be a celebration of Paul's recovery and a look at great things to come in the future turned into a major fiasco. Even Paul even promised he would return and perform a free show but everyone knew that wouldn't happen and that the

damage was done. As fans and journalists online literally competed to tarnish Paul's image, Eliel showed me the ticket sales graphs for each city.

Whereas, the daily ticket sales had consistently been around 25 tickets over the past week for each of the 31 cities on the tour, since the news of the fiasco in Fortaleza spread only about a dozen tickets had been sold the following day; not per city but in total. We spent the next few days sending numerous videos to the media showcasing excellent shows in other cities, fantastic press reviews and video announcements where Paul invited people to attend the shows but we all knew that a bad story spreads much faster than a good one, and significant damage had already been done to the tour's reputation from the very start. I confidently maintain that Paul could have brought the show to a successful end but that he did not as all due to his own self-destructive decision. If he had truly been that sick and incapable of handling it all, a twelve-hour drive to another city after just a few hours of sleep would not have helped him. At the very least, the entire first week of the tour should have been cancelled, not just the first day. I know that if Paul was reading this, I would receive a strong denial from him but this is my opinion, based on what I witnessed and I will not change it..



During the journey from Fortaleza to Recife, yet another mishap occurred for which Paul used to lay the blame on us throughout the entire tour. Paul left had his walking frame at the hotel (something he never used on tour anyway so simply no one took care of it. We all thought the therapist would take it and he thought one of us would, and that's how the mistake happened. The therapist was a new member of the crew, along with a nurse. When Eliel came to Croatia and visited Paul, the three of us concluded that Paul was sufficiently recovered for the tour but would need a therapist and nurse for a two-hour session in every city

on the upcoming tour. Eliel's plan was to hire a local medical team in each city.

Although we managed to find a doctor in São Paulo who set up the catheter for Paul and saved both him and us from his uncontrolled urination, by the first show, we realised that getting in medical teams for short visits wouldn't be enough. Eliel understood that he would have to incur the additional, much larger costs of hiring a therapist and a nurse to look after Paul 24/7. This meant covering fees for two individuals for a full month, plus their food and drinks, hotel rooms and flights. They could quote any fee they wanted because they knew Eliel was in a tough spot and would have to accept it.

The next day, we woke up early and boarded the flight to Recife. It felt strange to go there without Paul, but this was entirely his decision. After Eliel had unexpectedly had to cover the last-minute flight, fee and expenses for Chris, the new wheelchair, the latest specialized tour bus on the market, the flights that Paul had refused to take, the fees and expenses of the full time nurse and physio service, he now also had to pay for an accessible van for over 12 hours of driving on a route of approximately 800 km (and of course the return trip, even though the vehicle would come back empty). These unexpected costs were piling up and the tour threatened to slide into a financial catastrophe but there was no turning back. Also, if you're wondering why an 800 km journey takes more than 12 hours to drive, you need to understand that the speed of travel must be reduced when a disabled person is being transported, especially considering that Brazilian roads are not exactly renowned for their smoothness and comfort. Meanwhile, we arrived in Recife, at the beautiful Transamerica hotel, which was located on the sea-front. While the crew headed to the venue to set up equipment, Violeta, Iris and I had time to go to the beach and relax since Paul wasn't there, and there was nothing much to be done. During our time relaxing by the ocean, by his own choice, Paul was being driven on a bumpy ride through the Brazilian wilderness. The biggest irony in all of this was that after the first 100 km in the van, Paul had second thoughts and regretted not flying after all but by then, it was too late. During this time, he was being driven through the Brazilian wilderness along with Wes, Eliel, his personal carer, and security guy Beto.

That day was so beautiful and peaceful for us and after all the stresses of the previous days, we finally relaxed in the sea. However, I didn't dare post even a single picture from the beach on social media because Paul had always thought Violeta and I thought we were on vacation, not working on the tour,

and that thought weighed heavily on me. I have the impression that to this day he never realised how much Violeta and I did for him, and that this tour would have been over before it even began without all the efforts we put in. Paul openly told me multiple times that he hated that I brought my wife and child on tour and that I shouldn't be on the tour either because I'm the booking agent. Instead, he thought I should stay at home and hire a tour manager. However, he didn't grasp one simple fact and that was that there is not a single professional tour manager in this world who would accept to work with someone like Paul, and even if they did, they would run away within a few days. In this sense, I was managing something that was unmanageable and everyone was bewildered by how it was at all possible. If you look at the Brazilian tour programme, my role on this tour is titled as 'Crisis Manager', and that's exactly what I was. I resolved situations incognito (such as like the drama at Heathrow) while the public and often Paul had no idea what was happening. On this tour and all the other dates in UK, Europe and Australia, so many near-disasters went 'under the radar' and never even occurred due to our intervention. I simply feared leaving Paul alone, especially with promoters he was meeting for the first time, because I was sure that without me there to smooth things over these shows would be cancelled as soon as he arrived.

Violeta helped me immensely throughout all of this. In addition to designing Paul's merchandise and lending her company's account so that all these shows could be conducted legally, on a day-to-day basis on the tour she oversaw merchandise sales, monitored the tour expenses, took care of Paul's laundry and packed our things every day to ensure we were all ready to catch our flights. She kept the entire travel organization under control so that I could focus solely on my tasks and without her, this tour wouldn't have succeeded. Yet, even if she had done nothing and had just come to enjoy the ride, she still had every right to be here. After all, through nine months of pregnancy and the first seven months of our baby's life, she had taken care of Paul in Croatia almost more than she had cared for her own child. And I certainly wasn't the kind of father who could leave my wife alone with a newborn to fend for herself in the middle of winter to go to the summer beaches of Brazil. There was also no way I was going to miss witnessing my child's first steps or hearing her first words. Violeta and Iris needed to be here with us; that was my decision, and I stood by it no matter how much Paul hated it and how quickly he had forgotten what this woman had done for him over the past year.



When Paul and the van finally arrived in Recife, they all looked visibly tired. But knowing that this show was crucial for the rest of the tour, Paul did everything he could to deliver a top-notch performance. There were no crowd barriers in front of the stage, which posed a potential danger to both Paul and the passionate fans who were pushing to get as close as possible. Paul's carer and security guy, Beto, decided to sacrifice himself and stood in the front row of the audience, right in front of Paul, serving as his shield for a full hour and a half before the show. After the show, he left completely exhausted, having earned a very well-deserved break. The second show had been successfully completed, and for now, the tour was saved.

The next city on the tour was Salvador. Our Brazilian companions warned us not to go to the city centre, telling us that it was very dangerous and that they didn't particularly like white people, especially light-haired gringos like me. I believe Salvador is the only city on the tour that I did not visit the centre of, but not because of the warnings from our Brazilian companions. Instead, I had to deal with something else entirely that afternoon as all our luggage had gone missing!

We thought it was unlikely that it had all been stolen because it was in the lobby of a 4-star hotel while we were just a few meters away eating in the restaurant. We ate as soon as we arrived because there was little time before the show. The bags were literally 10 meters away from us and we would have seen if anyone suspicious had approached them. Even though we explained to Pedro Kaluf, our tour manager that it didn't make sense for someone to steal things in such a hotel, which also had video surveillance, he had no sympathy for us. Rather, he yelled that we were careless, saying, "Welcome to Brazil, that's everyday life here!" He then contacted the security service that monitored the surveillance cameras, and upon reviewing the footage, we saw that our bags had mistakenly been taken by Diogo, the merch guy, who had taken them to the venue thinking they contained t-shirts. As much as we had been warned by locals that Brazil was sometimes dangerous, the country left me only with beautiful memories, though this may be down to sheer luck. One time we even forgot a bag in an Uber vehicle, and the driver returned it to us a few hours later.

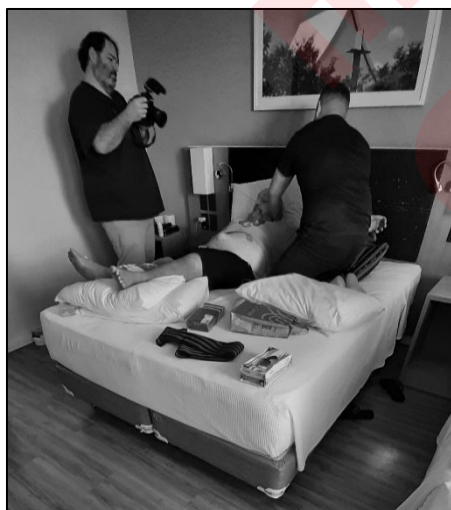
The Salvador gig went very well and despite some small challenges, Paul delivered a superb show. The area around the venue did seem a little dangerous to me, and it appeared that very few of the audience knew who Paul Di'Anno was and almost none spoke English. I can't understand how Paul, all the musicians and their equipment managed to squeeze onto that tiny stage and still play. At one point, Paul began to talk between songs about President Lula, claiming he was a personal friend of his, after which the atmosphere in the club exploded and everyone began chanting against former President Jair Bolsonaro. That was the last thing I saw of the show. I had to go back to the hotel before the end as I was still exhausted from the illness that I had brought with me to Brazil.

On the last day of January, our journey took us to Brasília, the capital of Brazil. We had some time to explore the modern city and some tourist photos. It was also the day when Paul decided to make some new demands; paradoxically, whenever he was like that, it meant he was doing well. You could equate Paul's complaining and asking for various things with him feeling good. This time, he wanted Twining's English Breakfast Tea, which could only be found in very occasional specialist shops and so was very difficult to get hold of.

Naturally, he refused to accept any other tea, and if we couldn't get Twining's, it would spell disaster. Along with the tea, he requested a whole range of other items, too numerous and trivial for me to remember right now.

We stayed in a resort, where everyone felt good. The atmosphere was visibly better and the fiasco of the first show was almost forgotten. The guys from the bands and crew went out for dinner together, while Violeta and I went out on our own and found a lovely Churrascaria (a traditional Brazilian barbecue restaurant, where meat is served until you can't eat anymore). We didn't want to stray more than 500 metres from the hotel because Paul might call for assistance at any moment. We had also finally bought Brazilian SIM cards, so from that day on, we were constantly online.

I had an online acquaintance in almost every city, usually someone I had never met face-to-face before. But when you've been a Maiden fan for decades, those people become your family as if you've known each other your whole lives. In Rio, for example, it was Ricardo Lira. In São Paulo, it was Adriano Ribeiro. And in Brasília, it was Alan Victor Rosseto Biroli, who held the impressive position of being chief of police in the capital of Brazil. He welcomed us like kings, drove us around the city, helped with our shopping and was the main reason that Paul got his Twining's tea. We went to various shops before we found it and Paul's other requirements. After the shopping trip, we returned to the hotel, where Paul was having treatments in his room. Since this was only the fourth day of the tour, Paul hadn't yet really bonded with the therapist, as he didn't speak English. Wes was also in the room filming everything. When we entered, Alan brewed Paul's tea and offered to help translate the therapist's words. I don't need to mention that Alan also paid for the tea and everything else Paul ordered. Alan was so modest that at first, he didn't want to disturb Paul or even ask for a photo, so Paul might have thought he was part of the hotel staff. However, when the therapist suggested a break, I introduced Paul to Alan, telling him everything that Alan had done for him and that he is the chief of police in Brasília. Alan said that he would help in any way needed, even a police escort with flashing lights to the venue if we wanted. Although I had known Paul for a while and understood his nature, even I expected at least a, "Thank you" but instead Paul snapped back, "Finally, I've run into a cop who's good for something!" Alan and I just looked at each other in shock, not believing what our ears had just heard.



Before the show, the guys from the local Hell's Angels came to visit Paul. The atmosphere in the dressing room was truly joyful between them. Paul was in an extremely good mood (I wandering why), which had a significant impact on the show, which turned out to be fantastic.



After the show, Cris, the nurse and Pedro Kaluf, the tour manager (who openly disliked Paul), called an emergency meeting in the hotel lobby with Paul's carer Beto, Lury the therapist, Eliel, Wes and me. Pedro took the lead, while Cris, who didn't speak English, silently supported him, presenting evidence in the form of photographs. Pedro explained that his mother is a medical professional and that he could easily recognize someone who was dying. According to him, Paul was dying and he wouldn't give him more than a week to live. He proposed that the tour be immediately cancelled without any further discussion because if it continued, he didn't want to be responsible for Paul's death. What he presented as evidence didn't relate to Paul's leg problems, but rather a photo of Paul's spit that he had coughed up after the last song, which showed bright pink-red blood in it. He claimed this was haemoptysis and a clear sign of a possible pulmonary embolism, pulmonary oedema, lung cancer or even tuberculosis. They explained to us that the blood we all recognize as dark red looks different when it comes from the lungs, being pink and frothy, indicating that these were Paul's final days. It was a very painful start of the tour. We were only on the fourth gig; Paul had started to come back into form and the shows were just getting better. We still had 27 dates left just in Brazil but Pedro and Cris were trying

to cancel the tour already. Several times, I thought that it wasn't so much about Paul's health as it was a sabotage attempt by Pedro against Paul and the tour itself. Furthermore, Eliel owed him money from previous work and he was on the tour only for that reason. I suspected this was the real reason for their insistence that the tour be cancelled even before we had consulted a doctor for an assessment. I said that we should call for a medical evaluation and only make a decision based on those results. Nobody even asked Paul for his opinion and nor was he present at the meeting, as they wanted us to discuss the issue without him there. I also questioned whether the pink blood in the photo could simply be a result of stage lighting or some other cause but I was silenced and even accused of not caring about Paul. At that moment, all the times I had spent with Paul flashed through my mind, all the struggles we had faced and everything I had done to save him when he was at death's door. These accusations that I didn't care about him truly hurt me. I insisted that Paul must see a doctor so that they could determine what was actually going on, rather than someone who was unqualified making the decision. After that, I abruptly left the meeting and said that I was going to talk to Paul first, as I hated the thought of anyone hiding anything from him regarding his health condition. When I told him about the story of his bloody spit and impending doom, Paul laughed and said, "Nonsense, they don't know what they're talking about. This blood is just because, while singing hard in the last song, I bit my inner cheek and bled into my mouth, so I had to spit blood. That's what happened. No cancellation needed; don't even think about it." Thus, the tumultuous evening ended on a somewhat calmer note and the tour was set to continue. I only regret that Wes was prohibited from filming this dramatic meeting for the documentary.

The beginning of February was marked by our journey to the city of Goiânia, which we travelled to by bus, as the distance was too short to fly. It was a relaxed day and the show was exceptional, taking place in one of the most beautiful clubs we had played in during this tour. Everything just seemed to fall into place that day. I remember that Violeta and I had a brief evening out in the city to find a pharmacy and buy some medicine for the cold that was still bothering me. Everyone was excited for the next important destination, Rio de Janeiro.

We flew to Rio and stayed at the Ibis Hotel. At that time, I had no idea that I would later spend an entire week in Rio with my family, so I spoke to Paul and said, "I've arranged everything to be perfect for you today and made sure that you lack nothing. Please, this might be a once-in-a-lifetime chance for my wife and child to see Rio; let me go for a few hours and if anything goes wrong, just call me and I'll sort it out." Surprisingly, Paul let me go and it truly was a beautiful day for an excursion. Since there was little time, I didn't want to just wander around, so I hired a guide to take us to the attractions. The guide was actually one of my Facebook friends. The show in Rio was completely sold out and went down very well. Leaving Rio also marked the beginning of the second part of this tour because we finally stopped traveling by plane and it was time to meet our tour bus. That same day, Winterstorm Festival and I announced significant news on our social media- Paul's first confirmed concert in the UK after many, many years. This of course, sparked heated reactions from both fans and the media. But that was just the beginning...



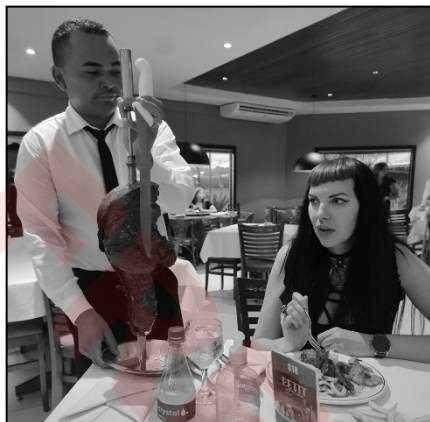
Eliei saw that I, as a writer and someone who had been caring for Paul's health and career all this time, was also a person with significant influence over the fans. He therefore asked me to go onstage before each of Paul's performances and ask the audience to support the on-going fight for Paul's recovery by purchasing merchandise. Each time before the show, I would take the stage with Thiago, the lead singer of Noturnall, who would introduce me and if necessary, translate my words. This resulted in a drastic increase in merchandise sales, as well as in my books about Iron

Maiden. I must admit that this somewhat shocked me. While I was aware that my books were selling well in Brazil and had been bought by many fans,

I definitely wasn't prepared for people to recognise me on the streets and run after me, shouting my name as if they had seen a famous rock star. It was a wonderful, yet somewhat overwhelming experience. We even needed a new suitcase just to fit all the gifts we received in South America and Mexico.



This photo from São Paulo speaks more than a thousand words. While we were resting in the Golden Shower hotel room before the show, I received a call from reception informing me to come down to the lobby because I had a visitor. "A visitor? Me?" I thought, "I don't have any appointments." When I got downstairs, I was greeted by my friend Luiz Gustavo Folego and a crowd of my fans, all carrying stacks of my books. I sat there for over an hour, signing books, taking photos and marvelling at how many people in Brazil had bought so many of my books. As I walked around the rock shopping centre Galeria do Rock, the shop owners recognised me and gifted me t-shirts, figures, CDs, vinyl records and various other gifts. It was all quite incredible. The show in São Paulo was again excellent and you can still watch it on YouTube today. Many journalists attended, and over 1,200 fans came; the queue for the meet and greet was enormous. The show was a huge success and again went towards redeeming the stain from the first show; however, it did not manage to help the ticket sales for the following shows, which remained slow. In São Paulo, I also had the opportunity to make a detailed video of the tour bus and how Paul boarded and disembarked. That video soon went viral around the world.



In São Paulo, I finally had the time to go out with Vinicius, the guy who had helped us tremendously by renting the wheelchair for Paul in his name, knowing that wheelchair would never be returned to São Paulo (even though we told the company otherwise). Even though his girlfriend was scheduled to have surgery the next day, the five of us with Violetta and Iris went out for dinner at Chicken Heart Barbecue and once again enjoyed the

fantastic Brazilian Churrascaria. A beautiful friendship was born that evening, one that is sure to develop in the years to come.



At several shows, the guitarist Chico Brown (son of the legendary Brazilian musician Carlinhos Brown) performed as the third guitarist and was a great addition to the band. He got along extremely well with Paul and was also very engaging on stage.



This picture is taken from www.igormiranda.com.br – Courtesy of Jeff Marques - www.instagram.com/jeffmaarques_

São Paulo was a crucial show for the success and morale of the tour. If something succeeds in this city, it would surely succeed in other Brazilian cities, and that's exactly what happened. Many Brazilian media outlets reported on this show and all gave it high praise. This was felt strongly among both the musicians and the fans. The atmosphere really improved and everyone eagerly anticipated the upcoming shows. The bands found their groove and got into a routine, leaving no room for mistakes (and even if small mistakes did occur, nobody noticed them). Paul also added a few more songs to the setlist, including 'Iron Maiden', which he had initially not performed. In terms of the performance, everything was now completely falling into place.

In São Paulo, I also had several business meetings. I met with my previous publisher, who released my book about Steve Harris and who paid me all my royalties from the book. I also had the opportunity to meet Luis Aizcorbe from Corbe Toys, who finally brought Paul his own action figure. He wasn't selling those action figures outside of Brazil, so I struck a deal with him to take them and redistribute them worldwide. The arrangement worked out, and by mid-February, I had crafted the 'Brazilian Beast' bundle, which included a tour t-shirt, action figure, tour poster, tour pick and tour program.

During the tour in Brazil, especially after the fiasco of the first day, many people tried to play internet doctors, claiming that Paul shouldn't be on tour, that he should be resting at home and that his condition would worsen in Brazil. In reality, the opposite was true. His condition deteriorated only when he was left alone by everyone in his home in Salisbury, where a nurse cared visited him for maybe one hour a week. Had he stayed there, he would surely have died. Physio therapist Iuri took a photo comparing the condition of Paul's legs (the colour, texture, and sores) at the beginning of the tour and then after just one week. By the end of the tour in Mexico, every little sore had healed up and Paul was so comfortable that he performed onstage in shorts without any bandages. It was during the tour that he received daily attention from both the nurse and the therapist and he was actually improving rapidly. I wrote the following status on Facebook under the photo:



Going back to England after successful operation in Croatia to his home in Salisbury, without any care, daily lymphatic drainage and physiotherapy was the worst mistake and bad decision of Paul. His legs became swollen again and whole situation was critical. BUT, after only 7 of non stop physiotherapy, lymphatic drainage and exercises his legs are drastically different. We will post another picture on the end of February. So, you can see now why this tour is so good for Paul and why he need daily care 24/7. On this tour promoter Eliel Vieira provided everything for Paul. Accessible bus, private physiotherapist and nurse 24/7 and fantastic crew which take care about Paul every day. He is in a very good hands and he is better every day. Brazilian tour saved him and I can't thank enough to all fantastic fans here. You stole my heart forever.



Anyone who has never been on tour in Brazil would look at some things there with great astonishment. At one point, I saw people bringing bags filled with vegetables and canned food, into the shows and leaving them in a large pile at the entrance. For those who didn't bring their own supplies, several elderly individuals were outside selling similar food items for pocket change, which bewildered me even further. I wondered what this was all about and thought, "Surely not everyone has just been to the shops and is leaving their food at the door, like we leave our

jackets at the door of clubs in Europe?" The answer shocked me. In Brazil, there is some sort of social policy that we are not familiar with in Europe. For all events of this type, there are two types of tickets. One is more expensive and the promoters pay higher taxes on those, while the other is cheaper but fans can only buy the cheaper ticket if they bring a kilogram of non-perishable food. At a show with 500 attendees, this can of course amount to 500 kilograms of food for the local homeless and needy community. However, there's a trick here. On the more expensive tickets, every promoter sets an unrealistically high price so that these tickets are essentially never purchased.

The expensive tickets serve merely as a diversion for the government, while the cheaper tickets are actually standard tickets with no discount, at the real price that the promoter intended to set. Additionally, for those who find it bothersome to carry a kilo of food to the shows, there are the elderly and homeless individuals I mentioned earlier, who have received these items for free, only to resell them to fans attending the shows, thus enabling them to earn a living too. In this way, some of the same non-perishable goods constantly circulate, perhaps for years and the promoter pays less tax by not selling the expensive tickets.



The other completely unusual thing that caught my attention were the makeshift stalls selling drinks at low prices, mostly from the trunks of cars or on improvised tables. These sellers offered bottles and cans of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages chilled on ice. By the second show of this tour, this practice had already caught my eye and it continued until the end of the tour. As you can see in this photograph, two individuals parked their car just two meters from the entrance to the club and were selling drinks at almost half the price of those inside the venue. Confused by what I saw, I called the club manager over and asked her, "Are you aware that there are two guys right in front of the entrance to the club selling drinks? Are you going to go out there and do something about

it?" She nonchalantly replied, "No, why would I do anything?" At that moment, many question marks popped up above my head as I started to imagine such a situation happening anywhere in Europe, where someone was literally selling drinks just steps from the entrance to a club at half the price. That person certainly wouldn't have a good time. I asked again, "Don't you have a club here? Don't you pay rent, workers, taxes, and everything else? How can someone just illegally set up shop and cut into your potential profits like this?" To which she replied, "No one is stealing anything from us. The space they're in isn't space we've rented. It's in the street, a public area and as long as the government allows them to do so, they can work there. Don't worry, they'll leave in about fifteen minutes when the show begins and everyone goes inside. You know, they're not some villains; they're just people trying to survive, and as a society, we need to give them a chance.."

Her response opened my eyes significantly and added a new dimension to my way of thinking. I was honest with myself and realised that we in the so-called Western world sometimes act in an arrogant manner, thinking we are better or more business-savvy than everyone else, while viewing countries like Brazil as third-world nations. Anywhere in Europe, such a situation like the drinks stall would have resulted in a response from the club's security or a call to the police, at which point the unlicensed vendors would face legal consequences. Here, however, there was no malice involved. The club made its money, these people earned something to survive and the fans had the chance to enjoy something cheap before entering the club. In the end, everyone was happy. While I still believe that the more organized and business-oriented Western system can ensure long-term prosperity, development, higher living standards and ultimately offers better opportunities for socially vulnerable individuals, we must also recognise that Brazil has over 220 million inhabitants, nearly the same population as the USA. For those who consider Brazil a poor and miserable country, it's important to know that the Brazilian economy is the eighth largest in the world by GDP, while based on purchasing power parity, it is the seventh largest. Brazil is one of the fastest-growing major world economies and I can tell you that their perspective on the socially vulnerable really opened my eyes. This wasn't just about the concerts; there was something else I noticed. For example, everyone selling small items on the street or beaches (like coconuts and watermelons, various canned drinks, souvenirs and handicrafts) all have the option to accept payments via POS devices. Anyone, even the poorest homeless

person, can do this. According to what my hosts explained to me, the government has allowed everyone to have POS devices to facilitate transactions and many use this to buy basic necessities cheaply in stores and then resell them at a higher (yet still affordable) price to tourists on the beaches. In this way, they were all given a chance to work and feel useful, while the government likely takes a percentage from the transaction fees. In the end, once again, people are happy for the opportunity provided, consumers are happy because they can pay without cash, card companies and the government are happy with commission fees from transactions, and thus, the cycle of happiness continues. In most European countries, to have a POS device, one must have a registered company and go through various paperwork and regulations to enable sales outside of business premises. In Brazil, it seemed that was of little importance.



A similar story emerged around the sale of merchandise on the black market. When I was at an Iron Maiden show in Brazil, there were hundreds of unofficial merch stands around the stadium. Unlike in Europe, these people weren't hiding or keeping a safe distance; they sold their wares openly as if it were the most normal thing in the world. In Europe, I had only seen similar practices in Italy and occasionally in Greece. The fans in Brazil were buying these items en masse because the shirts were identical to the originals, just at a

lower price. The Paul Di'Anno shirts you see in this photograph were pre-printed with dates (which Eliel failed to do for the official shirts, despite me telling him to). At first, I tried to urge the locals to help me remove the unofficial stands, as they were directly harming Paul's profits but everyone shook their heads and said it was impossible to suppress this in Brazil, advising me to just give up. I remember stepping outside and, in front of the people buying merchandise, approaching the vendor and asking him how he could sell fake shirts at a show of someone who was fighting for his life, who

was in a wheelchair and who was raising funds for his treatment through merchandise. I said this loudly enough for everyone present to hear but not in an angry tone; I just wanted to draw attention to the situation. When the fans heard me, they practically banded together against him, demanding that he remove the Di'Anno shirts. Some even offered to keep watch and report him if he ever tried to sell those shirts again. When the Brazilians from the bands saw how I managed to eliminate the fake merch stalls, they were astounded and we maintained this practice until the end of the tour.

We left São Paulo once again and after a long drive, we finally arrived in Belo Horizonte, Eliel's home town and also that of the band Electric Gypsy. It's actually a large and beautiful city but I don't recall it as such, as it seemed to us that our hotel was in a rather unrepresentative neighbourhood and the hotel was also not great. We joked that the air conditioning sounded like some doomsday steam punk machine. The concert however was again excellent, with plenty of fans coming out to see Paul and their local heroes, Electric Gypsy. I remember that day that Paul went for lunch, leaving a considerable amount of money carelessly scattered across the bed. Later, when we returned, his carer Beto warned him not leave anything valuable in his room because it is never truly safe.

After leaving Belo Horizonte, we faced a seemingly endless journey back in the same direction we had come, so extensive that we had to stop for an overnight stay in São Paulo after a whole day of travel, utterly exhausted and mentally drained. However, the road to Florianópolis after that was just as long. Looking at the numbers, it may not seem like such a big distance. 600 kilometres to the first stop and an additional 700 to the second but along the way we faced severe floods, landslides and various other disasters. The stops along the highway often lasted for hours. Because of this, Paul became increasingly angry with Eliel, as all the days off turned into long journeys with no real rest as it was supposed to be. Paul also started to become suspicious of Eliel generally and demanded payments that we had agreed upon in one way to be made in a different manner thus changing the flow of funding. When Eliel asked him why he had done that, Paul's response was that he didn't trust him. At that moment, a turning point in the entire tour occurred where Eliel entirely changed his behaviour towards Paul....

The road to Florianópolis had been very long but once we arrived, every moment was worth it. To top it off, we had a day off, allowing us time to explore the city. Iris visited her first Hard Rock Café, and accordingly, we bought her first official Hard Rock Café children's body suit. After that, we decided to head to the beach and take a swim in the ocean. Later that day, when I returned to the hotel, Paul quite seriously chastised me, claiming



that I wasn't on vacation and that I had no right to go to the beach while on tour. I realized that such comments often arose whenever I or my wife posted a photo on Facebook that wasn't related to the tour but rather showed the more enjoyable parts of our trip. As a result, we decided to avoid such posts in the future. Paul needed to understand that when it's a day off, it's a day off. If he had any needs, he had his personal carer, therapist, nurse and tour manager; he could reach out to them for assistance. If he really needed me, I had told him a hundred times that he always had my contact information and could reach out for anything. Of course, I was fully focused on the tour, but come on, everyone sometimes needs to relax and unwind from all the accumulated stress and that applies not only to Paul but to everyone in the crew. We are all human, and on a day off, we need just that – reset!

It often seemed to me that his frustration stemmed from the fact that he could not enjoy himself and go out with us in the city and to the beaches, and because of that, he hated when we had a good time and so he made efforts to sour our experiences. Not just for me and my family but for everyone on the tour. On the other hand, we all had invited him a million times to join us in the

city, at the bar, at restaurants or at the beach and he almost always declined, preferring to stay alone in his room and later write statuses like, "So booored." The concert in Florianópolis was another good one, and with each passing show, the tour was improving in terms of performance. The next city was Curitiba, followed by Vila Velha and Ipatinga, and when you look at these cities on a map, you might wonder why we were traveling such long routes unnecessarily. The schedule of cities for the entire tour was indeed nonsensical, and this section of the tour was a perfect example of that. The rough distances we travelled per show were as follows: Belo Horizonte - Florianópolis 1,283 km, Florianópolis - Curitiba 300 km, Curitiba - Vila Velha 1,082 km, Vila Velha - Ipatinga 410 km, Ipatinga - Juiz de Fora 430 km, Juiz de Fora - Divinópolis 342 km. This totalled 3,847 kilometres travelled by bus for just six concerts. If Eliel had thought more economically (and he had enough time), the order of cities could have been as follows: Divinópolis - Belo Horizonte 116 km, Belo Horizonte - Ipatinga 216 km, Ipatinga - Vila Velha 410 km, Vila Velha - Juiz de Fora 350 km, Juiz de Fora - Curitiba 867 km, Curitiba - Florianópolis 299 km. This totalled 2,258 km, which is 1,589 kilometres less. I didn't even mention a whole series of cities which we had already passed by. With just a little smarter routing, the entire tour would have been much more economical. So, as much as there were unnecessary costs incurred due to Paul, Eliel himself put together a highly inefficient routing that needlessly increased his own expenses. Furthermore, rather than taking easier, direct routes, many drives were rerouted through Belo Horizonte just so he could go home, forcing us (including Paul) to endure hours of additional travel in the bus. Eliel would surely have some justification for his logic, because no any promoter want to lose his money, but the impression shared by all of us was that he had made significant mistakes, not just in costs but in unnecessarily exhausting the drivers, crew, bands and especially Paul. Many days labelled as 'days off' on the schedule were not spent resting and gathering strength for what lay ahead, but rather in travel, which did not improve the atmosphere.

The Curitiba concert was held in an old theatre building, Teatro Bom Jesus, which was unconventional for Paul's type of music but it didn't take long for the atmosphere to heat up. I met many old friends and made many new ones. I was also very happy to be staying on the thirty-third floor of the hotel, from where I could see the entire city. Curitiba is definitely a city I want to return to and I will with the Airforce band.

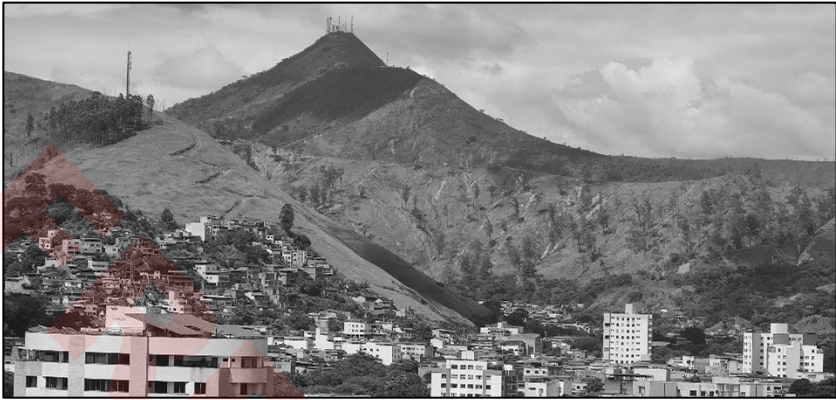


The next city was the beautiful Vila Velha, where I had the pleasure of meeting a dear acquaintance, Ana Karina Locateli, with whom I had been communicating for a long time. Since we managed to resolve all potential issues at the venue in a timely manner that day, Paul was satisfied and Violeta and I took Iris to the beach to enjoy the stunning sea, generous portions of shrimps and to soak in the true spirit of Brazil. Even though this city is relatively unknown to people outside Brazil, like Curitiba, Vila Velha is undoubtedly one of those

places I would love to return to. The show was excellent, Paul was in great form and our little family was happy and refreshed. Because of this, we headed to the next city, Ipatinga, full of energy, where another surprise awaited us..



A big fan of Paul's and my dear friend, Rodrigo Sabioni Ferreira, invited us all (Paul, the bands and crew) to stay for free at the Green Valley hotel where his wife is the manager, in the small town of Timóteo just a few kilometres from Ipatinga. Wow, what a generous gesture! The hotel was excellent and the view from it was magical, making it clear to us how the hotel got its name. We got many gifts from them including football shirt.



Rodrigo (who works as the mayor's assistant in the city administration) introduced us to his whole family and we went out for ice cream. It was a wonderful gathering and a beautiful day. His little boy, Enrico, who has been an excellent drummer since he was very young and is already quite popular on his Instagram profile, had the chance to meet Paul. I want to take this opportunity to thank the entire family for their kindness and for hosting us so generously.

We left Timóteo feeling happy and rested as we set off towards Juiz de Fora, which was about a 430 km drive. I mentioned earlier how the relationship between Paul and Eliel had become strained, escalating when Paul told Eliel that he didn't trust him. Prior to the start of the tour, Eliel had already paid out some money to Paul to help him pay the rent on his apartment in Salisbury.

It had been agreed that the rest of Paul's fees for the shows would be paid to me to hold for him and at the end of the tour, all the money would be transferred into his account to cover the costs of his final treatment, which I would organize for him. During the tour, all travel expenses, hotels, food and drinks were covered. After that, Paul actually only needed a small allowance to buy little things that he wanted, such as cigarettes, vapes and iPhone headphones. That was the plan Paul had initially agreed to before the tour, but now he turned the tables and was demanding payments for every three shows in advance to his account, continuing this way until the end of the tour. But it made no sense to transfer anything to him before the end of the tour; Paul didn't need a large sum of money right now. Moreover, Eliel was worried that this way, Paul could potentially end the tour at any moment and take the money home with him.

Up point, Eliel had been paying for all of Paul's additional expenses without question to save the tour. As mentioned, this included Chris Dale's last-minute flight, the wheelchair rental, the additional van and driver, the 24/7 physio therapy and nursing services, extra crew members as well as all their hotels and flights but also Paul's new clothing, medication, cigarettes, vapes and more. However, when Paul began to publicly say to me, the crew and everyone around him that Eliel was a dishonest promoter who wasn't to be trusted, Eliel sent me an email saying that he had endured Paul's behaviour and been silent up until now but this was too much now. From this point on, he would itemise all the expenses that he was not obligated to cover and charge them against Paul's merchandise sales, and if that wasn't enough, then against the show fee. Basically, if Paul wanted anything outside of the agreed terms, he would need to pay for it himself. Soon enough, little by little, he stopped travelling with us and made it clear that he didn't want to have anything more to do with Paul and would only assist with what he was contractually obligated to do.

When we arrived in Juiz de Fora, it was February 14, Valentine's Day, so I found a way to treat my wife to a romantic dinner before the show. We were staying at the beautiful Parc Hotel. Unfortunately, it rained that day, so the crew couldn't enjoy the lovely outdoor pool. We made good use of that day for washing Paul's laundry and finding his medications and vapes. The show turned out to be excellent and everyone really enjoyed themselves.



The show in Divinópolis also marked my 47th birthday. I had planned to treat Paul, the crew and the bands to a night out for this occasion, however, they all advised me against it, suggesting that I wait for the weekend, as Divinópolis is a small town with nothing much to do and everything would be closed after the show. The Brazilians joked that they would take me to a strip bar and gift me a shemale, "No, thanks!" I laughed. The concept of a 'small town' in Brazil and Croatia clearly differs drastically. With a population of 250,000, Divinópolis would be the second-largest city in Croatia and

nearly double the size of Split, which is second town now. But Brazilians regard Divinópolis as an insignificant place, not much better than a village. I truly couldn't understand such a belittling attitude, even if the others lived in metropolises like São Paulo or Rio.

After we took care of all the usual things related to Paul and the tour, Violeta, Iris and I went for a little walk around the city to do some laundry and buy baby food at the pharmacy. Along the way, we stumbled upon a hotel named Iris, where we took a photo for the memory. That day, Paul's Venezuelan love, María Alejandra, contacted me through Facebook to wish me a happy birthday. She said that she had told Paul he must thank me for publicly for everything I do for him by wishing me a happy birthday from the stage and maybe even singing 'Happy Birthday to You' for me. You could say that Maria is Paul's best friend and he usually listens to her advice, but he didn't this time. The show was held on a very small stage and it came and went without any acknowledgment. When we returned to the hotel, Paul bought me a green can of Pringles from the mini-bar at reception. That was my birthday present. I remember that both María Alejandra and the fans were disappointed when I posted a photo of my gift on Facebook but it didn't bother me. Given Paul's condition, he had neither the possibility nor

the time to go shopping, and the mini-store at the hotel reception was the only place open. To me, that can of Pringles was a cool gesture and I was fine with it. Another city, another day. It was time to head to Uberlândia.

Although it initially seemed that this would be just another average day on the tour, Paul made sure that it wouldn't be. In the morning, he ran out of vapes.



When this happens to Paul, it's a complete disaster, as if the end of the world had come. Paul had known for several days that he was running out and had asked the Brazilian crew to get him vapes but they're banned in many parts of Brazil and are not easy to come by. He then sent 'Agent Juras' to work his magic and

find vapes at any cost. I remember spending hours searching every part of the city and leaving several cigar shops empty-handed until I finally found some vapes at a street stall selling cheap electronic equipment, similar to what you might find around the East End of London. The vendor looked at me like I was some kind of criminal before discreetly selling them to me.

However, the real drama ensued later. Paul had been insisting for several days that we retrieve his walking frame, which he had lost back at the hotel in Fortaleza. He accused us of preventing him from walking and hindering his ability to exercise. The therapist responded that he couldn't use the walking frame anyway because he was too weak and didn't have enough muscle strength to stand. He insisted that Paul focus on other exercises that were more necessary for him at that stage but Paul was adamant about having the walking frame because, by blaming us, he had an excuse for why he wasn't walking yet. We told him that we would soon return to the Fortaleza area and that we would pick it up from the hotel when we go there. But he wanted it immediately.

By the time we arrived in Uberlândia in the afternoon and took the equipment to the venue, all the shops where one might purchase a walking frame had already closed for the day. Paul exploded with rage, declaring that he wouldn't leave the hotel until his walking frame was brought to him. The problem was that to reach the next show, we had to leave the city by six in the morning, and the first stores wouldn't open until 8:30 am. But Paul was unyielding; he refused to leave the hotel, despite promises that a new walking frame was already arranged and would be waiting for him in the next city. Paul was defiant, "I want it now or I'm not leaving the city," and thus the following situation unfolded. After a really good show, we all got a few hours of sleep then got up and were ready for the 6 am lobby call for the bus. Both bands, the entire sleep-deprived crew and the drivers were ready and just waiting for Paul. Meanwhile, Paul's carer Beto, the therapist Iury and nurse Cris (whom Paul affectionately called Minion) raced to the shops to be ready the moment they opened to buy a walking frame. To make matters worse, at that moment Paul suddenly felt an urgent need for the toilet. None of the remaining crew at the hotel wanted to help him as due to his behaviour, they were afraid to work with him. I remember the heightened drama of Paul raging and screaming about how no one was around when he needed help, forgetting that those people he claimed were missing were at that moment waiting outside the store for it to open so get him a new walking frame. It was an incredibly frustrating situation.

Cuiabá is another one of those cities that, when mentioned to most Europeans, they shake their heads. However, it has an urban population of over 650,000 and more than a million live in the metropolitan area. But Cuiabá did not impress me much. It didn't exactly give off a sense of cleanliness or safety. It was the only city where I didn't attend the show because I felt extremely exhausted but luckily the day went well, with no drama that required my intervention. The guys from the band informed me that the show had been fantastic and that Paul was satisfied with it, and that was the only thing that mattered. There wasn't much time for sleep at the Taíama Hotel as we had to set off on the long journey to Campo Grande in the middle of the night.



Campo Grande is a beautiful city. The Brazilian crew warned us to be cautious when we said we were going to explore the city but we honestly didn't encounter any problems at all. The show took place in a lovely theatre, and was one of Paul's best performances of the whole tour. By now, Paul had formed a strong friendship with the guys in the bands and

during the Campo Grande show, he decided to invite Guzz, the lead singer of Electric Gypsy to sing 'Running Free' alongside him. A huge amount of merchandise was sold that night and the line for the meet and greet was very long. Paul was happy to spend time engaging with all the fans.

With the show in Campo Grande, the good streak continued. The tour routine had become well-established and a good rhythm for the journey was created as each show seemed to get better. Despite the inevitable daily dose of grumbling and complaints from Paul, everything was actually going quite well and the dust on our bus clearly showed how many kilometres we had travelled. Another day off followed this time in Maringá, a city of over half a million that I had no idea about, nor do I believe the average European has heard of either. Even though it felt like we were going to the ends of the earth, Maringá charmed me with its quality of life, cleanliness and a distinctly strong European influence especially in its architecture. I spent the day off exploring the city, particularly its uniquely designed futuristic cathedral. It's a beautiful city I would recommend to anyone visiting Brazil. The show day there was thankfully a day without drama, and on such days (though they were rare) I wholeheartedly enjoyed myself. The tour could sometimes be genuinely beautiful and relaxing, and when that happened it was reflected in the concerts, as the show in Maringá was another great one. After the fantastic experience in Maringá, we faced a long drive of about twenty hours on the tour bus to the southern city of Porto Alegre. However, the route was very scenic as the stunning landscape changed before us at every moment. At one point on the highway, the air

conditioning in the bus stopped working, so we had to stop and wait for a full two hours for mechanics to come and fix it. However, nothing could dampen the atmosphere on the bus as all the band members and crew had already gotten to know each other well and become firm friends. This made the long hours of travel and minor problems such as this, much more bearable. In this photo, you can see the crew chatting in front of the bus while we waited for the mechanic to arrive.



The concert in Limeira was one of those that etched itself into my memory for all the wrong reasons. While the performance itself was fantastic, what happened before the show was yet another annoying incident. We were all staying in some sort of apartment-hotel near the main highway and a large shopping centre, and Paul was visited by his longtime friend Carla Baldassari Cocconi, who was staying there too. He spent the entire afternoon with her and her friends at the hotel and then in the dressing room at the concert. A few days prior, my friend Linda Harris (Steve Harris's sister, who had played a crucial role in reuniting Paul and Steve and thus for the donation Paul received from Iron Maiden) had asked me for a favour. Their dear family friend from Brazil, Benedito Bandola, wanted to attend the show with friends and family and asked Linda if she could see if Paul could have a brief meeting with them to shake hands and possibly take a photo together. Knowing what Linda had done for us, it was the least I could do for her and

her friends. I had arranged it with Paul a few days before and he confirmed that it would be OK. However, on the day of the show, alcohol had taken its toll along with the distracting presence of beautiful women surrounding him in front of the club. When I approached him and asked for this small favour, he lashed out at me in front of everyone, shouting that he was the boss, not me, and why my friends would be more important than his, who were there with him. He was most likely wanting to appear important in front of his female friends. "You fool," I thought to myself, "these are Linda's and Steve's friends, and Steve literally saved your life a few months ago and now you treat them like this, while embarrassing me just because you're surrounded by women and want to show off." Of course, I don't want to blame Carla and her friends here. She's not a groupie, but a loyal friend of Paul's, with whom I have a very good friendship. Anyone could have been there that day.. An incredibly awkward situation ensued with Linda's friends eventually apologising for the disturbance while Paul continued to shout at me triumphantly. Right away, I wrote a long letter to Linda, apologising for everything and I also sent Paul a long Facebook message with my thoughts on the subject. Fortunately, after the show, there was a second attempt and this time Benedito and his friends managed to meet Paul. So, everything ended up OK but a deep bitterness remained in my heart, as one string of the love I held for Paul had been irreversibly plucked away.

Benedito, on the other hand, was a true gentleman and showed real character throughout this entire ordeal. After the show ended, he wrote a Facebook post in which he tagged both Linda Harris and me.

'Paul Dianno's show in Limeira was well above what I expected it to be, even with the physical limitations it was pretty impressive to see, I found myself watching a show from the beginning! Really really cool and an experience that will stay in the memory. I would first like to thank the incredible Linda Harris, who made everything possible, (thank you for being with me in the worst and best moments even if not in person) to Stjepan Juras for treating us so well and always worrying that we were being treated well. My fiancée Andréia Menezes who is all I have the best in my life, to my friends Marcelo Benelli and Cris Mozer Borges who were amazing and the best companies ever! Nights like this are the best things in life!'

This heartfelt message not only highlighted the essence of the concert experience but also reflected the true spirit of friendship and gratitude. None of us allowed Paul's behaviour to turn us toward negativity. After all, what mattered most were the beautiful memories and that indescribable feeling of music connecting all of us into single entity no matter who we are, where we come from, or what we do.

The show in Santos was the last show of this part of the tour in southern Brazil, and the atmosphere was more relaxed. Noturnall, who were from nearby São Paulo, welcomed their friends and family to the event. The lobby of the Ibis hotel was full of friends and fans, and my friend Luiz Gustavo Folego brought some wonderful gifts for both me and Paul, funky pop dolls made in the likenesses of ourselves. That day, Violeta, Iris, and I had time to stroll along the beautiful coastline of the city while Paul enjoyed time with his friends. At one point, we experienced an incident at the hotel when a fan snuck into Paul's room and started rummaging through his things while Paul was at the bar. Paul had a habit of not closing his room door properly but this time he left the door wide open when he went out. Fortunately, Paul's carer Beto caught the girl during her attempt and kicked her out. I remember how she cried the entire night in front of the hotel room because they wouldn't let her back in, even though Paul had forgiven her.

That day, there was a football derby in the city, between rivals Corinthians and Santos, the home team. Paul didn't miss this opportunity to provoke the local fans by wearing a Corinthians shirt during his show and showing his support in his speech between songs. The Brazilians in the crew warned him not to do it, saying that here, regardless of his disability and significance in the music scene, there are crazies and football fanatics who would be ready to kill him without a second thought. Of course, Paul didn't listen to them but fortunately, everything passed without incident. The show was again very good, and afterwards the bands and crew were all excited about the upcoming journey to the Brazilian north. However, Violeta, Iris and I had to stay behind in Rio. Rarely would anyone in the world complain about a week of peace in the paradise of Rio but we were disappointed that we weren't going north for the next leg of the tour. As we took our last ride in our beautiful tour bus, Violeta booked our flights and hotel in Rio (even though Eliel said he would take care of it, he didn't). At São Paulo airport, we unloaded our luggage, said our goodbyes to everyone and our bus honked at us one last time as it drove off into history.



This powerful photo of the branded tour bus quickly spread around the world, and since a picture speaks more than a thousand words, there was no need to write anything special alongside it. Bookers and promoters across Europe and the globe saw that Paul's shows were not a desperate attempt to revive a failed career, but rather something serious and reliable. Offers for shows flooded in from all corners of the world, and it soon became clear that Paul would be performing over a hundred shows that year alone. On average, performing every third day for a whole year.

Both Electric Gypsy and Noturnall, impressed me significantly and I promised them that I would do my best to bring them to Europe and help them with their careers. Both bands later performed a full UK and EU tour with Paul in 2023, and they will be returning again soon. I also took Noturnall to Australia and to the 70,000 Tons of Metal festival, they also had the opportunity to be special guests for Bruce Dickinson in Brazil and their story is just beginning to unfold. Electric Gypsy have also been invited to perform at major shows in Colombia. From a chance encounter with two bands that I didn't know until then, something was born that could in the future, change the heavy metal world as we know it.



Even while we were still on the road during the tour, I received a flurry of messages from renowned European booking agents asking how it was possible for a foreign heavy metal artist to perform 31 shows in Brazil and how I managed to open up such a large and previously unexplored market. They begged me to forward them the contacts so they could sell their bands in a similar manner. Until then, European bands had only played around five to a maximum of ten shows in Brazil, yet there was so much more untapped potential that nobody was aware of. With this tour now seen to be possible, a whole new era of touring for foreign bands in Brazil was born.



While Paul and the bands and crew were flying north to the city of Boa Vista, Violeta, Iris, and I were stuck at São Paulo airport, from where we would later fly to Rio. Paul was set to perform in the cities of Boa Vista, Manaus, Belém, São Luis, Teresina, and Juazeiro do Norte. I was deeply saddened that I wouldn't have the chance to witness the Amazon up close, especially as I was a huge fan of the Italian Bonelli comic hero Mister No. It's a classic comic from the old Italian school about an American ex-war pilot living in Manaus, flying a tourist Piper and getting into various troubles. As a child, I dreamed of Manaus. I would have traded a week in Rio just for one day in Manaus. But I had to stay in Rio. Fortunately, the adventures in those cities were recorded on paper by the bassist of Noturnall and Paul's band, Saulo Xakol. These writings will be an integral part of the second part of this book. When I saw the first posts from this leg of the tour, it became clear to me that the expensive airfare wasn't the only reason that we were asked to stay in Rio. The problem also lay with the minibus (with an emphasis on 'mini') which, when packed full of equipment, barely accommodated the crew, making travel with it a true nightmare. If Violeta, Iris and I had gone with them, Eliel would definitely have had to hire a larger bus while at this point because of all the unexpected costs to the tour, he was on the brink of bankruptcy. Amidst all that happened in northern Brazil, I would like to highlight one very emotional moment when Paul showed his kind side by meeting a girl who opened her heart to me, sharing her diagnoses and describing how much a meeting with Paul would mean to her. I wrote a status about it on Facebook.

Tonight was a really special night in Belém. Paul fulfilled my wish and hosted Marcia, an autistic girl with ADHD disorder too whose life was changed by his music. Thank you Paul for that act. Marcia came to the meeting accompanied by her mother and brought a gift to Paul. At the end of the meeting, she sent me a message.

'Thank you so much for this night! When you guys come back one day to Brazil, send me a message, and I will go no matter where or when. Paul gives me the best day of my life. He is an amazing person, really. I have a lot of compliments to him, but no one can describe his person, because he is unique in this world! Stjepan, you and Paul saved my life and saved me from depression, suicide... You accept me no matter how I am, even though I'm

*autistic. I owe you my life for this day. Thank you so much for me and for my family! You and Paul are my friends now and forever!
Best regards!"*

It is very important to accept such people into society. Marcia told me that many times she felt guilty as if she was some kind of monster and that she felt rejected many times because of her diagnoses. I am glad that we made this evening unforgettable for her. Thank you, Paul Andrews.



Following that, a lot of very positive comments started pouring in, one of which was from Julie 'Arry' Broadhurst. *"This post fills my heart with joy... I will have to bring my daughter to meet with you Paul.. She's also autistic, suffers with manic depression, selective mutism (which really holds her back socially) she's such a talented musician and artist, but hasn't the confidence to pursue a career. Maybe a few words from Paul might work for her too. Marcia, you are one in a million sugar, don't ever let anyone treat you*

otherwise and don't ever change the way you are. You are AWESOME!! we should start to spell Autism like AWETISM because you are. You are not a monster, but the people that treat you like one are the real monsters."

Paul responded to that, *"It would be an honour, Julie. I try to do as much as I can to help. The only thing holding her back is society. She can do anything she wants to do! Bless her."*

While Paul was performing in the north of Brazil, I prepared and launched the famous 'Brazilian Beast Bundle' for pre-sale, which included Paul's Brazilian action figure. This bundle was my way of testing whether Paul had any place in the world as an artist whose merchandise could sell and also whether fans liked his new visual identity (and if it was okay to continue with him). I needed to know if it would be worthwhile to invest in Paul's merchandise when he returned to Europe. Given that the entire bundle sold out in just two days, I concluded that I should focus my efforts on producing as much quality merch and promotional materials as possible. When I mentioned the tour program to people, many laughed and said the idea was foolish. They said that outside of Iron Maiden, nobody did that anymore. However, the sales of the tour program exceeded even my own expectations and showed me that I needed to continue producing more of them.

This little break from the tour also gave me time to begin to prepare for Paul's planned return to Croatia for further treatments in April. I started researching and contacting everyone I needed to make those arrangements. At the same time, my friend Andy Brown, who I had met before once in Croatia, reached out to me and proposed a collaboration on booking Paul's upcoming UK tour for 2023. From the very beginning, Andy struck me as a highly professional individual, and on the flip side, he was also a big fan. As someone living in the UK, he knew many reputable promoters who were genuinely honest and would put on a good show. This greatly reduced the risk of me encountering disreputable promoters who might fail to do a good job for Paul. It seems my intuition was correct in this case, as the tour we organized together went flawlessly (100% sold out) and resulted in a new, larger tour with the same team planned for 2024.

As the successes began to stack up on the tour in Brazil, it did not go unnoticed in Europe. I was completely convinced this would happen. Everyone was waiting to see what would happen with Paul in Brazil, and when they realized they might miss out on something very hot and profitable, suddenly everyone began calling. The first to reach out was the Leyendas del Rock Festival in Spain, which contacted me around that time, followed closely by the Metal Italia festival. My predictions that Europe, which had mocked Paul just a year earlier, would be the first to make such offers once they saw what was happening in South America was only a matter of time. I already knew that these shows would generate tremendous demand, so I began, much like in a reality show, to post several photos or videos on social media every day. The dominant images of the beautiful branded tour bus also helped create the impression of great success. When we announced the first UK shows, they sold out within just a few hours. After that, all the other promoters went into a frenzy...



Even though my schedule was packed with obligations, it was still Rio and I would have been crazy to miss the chance to visit the attractions of this magical city. Copacabana, Ipanema, attending a match at Maracanã, climbing to the Christ the Redeemer statue and Sugarloaf with Violeta and Iris were

some of the most beautiful family moments of our lives. As a little boy, I had gazed at the Iron Maiden 'Live After Death' album sleeve countless times, filled with pictures from travels around the world or watched the video for the song 'Wasted Years' and imagined what a fantastic life it would be. I would have loved to live like that someday. Suddenly, unprepared, I found myself right in the middle of it all. Crazy and incredible. I was living my dream. But all good things come to an end, and so did our little break in Rio.

We went to join Paul for the last four shows in northern Brazil: Natal, João Pessoa, Maceió, and Aracaju. Happily, they are all northern coastal cities with beautiful beaches.

Natal is a picturesque city. Its unusual beach, with dramatic changes between high and low tide, was fantastic, as were the large sand dunes for which the area is known. This was one of those rare moments when we all truly enjoyed the whole day and night together. The terrace of the Natal Dunnas Hotel was stunning, resembling a jungle with a large outdoor pool where we all swam and had fun, while Paul joined us for cocktails. As usual, I was also immediately tasked with resolving small issues for Paul. So 'Agent Juras' (along with Violeta) was sent to the shopping mall to buy a new suitcase for Paul since his old one had fallen apart. The trip to the shopping centre was quite long, so we took a taxi. After wandering through countless stores and video calling Paul from the room while selecting the exact suitcase he wanted, we finally brought it back to the hotel room, only for him to send us back to the store, concluding that the suitcase he had chosen was too small after all. For those who don't know, suitcase sizes are generally divided into cabin size, medium and large. Paul strictly requested a medium one, only to decide when we delivered it that it was too small and sent us to get a large one. This story itself may seem trivial but I've written it to give you an idea of how stressful our daily tasks were. Moreover, on the same day, Paul suddenly decided he wanted to work out more intensely and gain muscle mass, sending us back to the store again to buy a large bag of whey protein powder. When we bought it, we found that with its enormous packaging, it didn't fit in our already full suitcases. We had to make up excuses at the airports each time because we had this one extra item that we weren't allowed to bring. We lugged that whey protein powder with us from Brazil through Paraguay, Argentina and all the way to Chile. It was only when we were set to leave Chile for Mexico that Paul decided he didn't want the whey and wanted to throw it away or give it to the promoter. Do I need to mention that during all that time, he not only didn't work out, but he never even opened the whey? We were hauling it around for nothing and encountering problems at airports over something completely unnecessary. But it wasn't just the whey. There were the Crocs shoes that he was adamant we buy, but only wore once.

The walking frame that I already mentioned previously was also used only once. There was the portable toilet for disabled people and many other things that we had to purchase at his command, which were rarely if ever used..

After our day off, we arrived in João Pessoa, another coastal city. The beautiful Hardman Praia Hotel was right next to a large beach. As the end of the tour in Brazil approached, the shows kept getting better and better, as Paul was in increasingly improving in health. The distances between the cities were shorter, and we were practically moving down the coast of Brazil from north to south, enjoying beautiful cities along the way with stunning beaches. There wasn't enough space in the tour mini-bus, so Violeta, Iris and I had to travel by public bus for those last four Brazilian cities, which wasn't exactly a joy when traveling with a one-year-old child. Yet somehow, we managed to endure it all. The next city was Maceió, yet another beautiful city on the ocean, with gorgeous beaches and a multitude of palm trees. I'll skip the daily complaints that occurred in every city because aside from those, during these last few shows, everyone seemed to draw closer together and the chemistry among everyone improved significantly. The audience felt this too and, in my opinion, the atmosphere in the last few days was the most relaxed and Paul had the best shows of the whole tour.



And so, we slowly made our way to the final show in the city of Aracaju, where we spent two days, giving us enough time to relax and explore this lovely city. In Aracaju, we even took the opportunity for little Iris to get on stage and take a photo. That last show of the Brazilian tour fell significantly on March 12, so Paul remembered Steve Harris during the show and wished him a happy birthday along with all the fans. He also honoured his late friend Clive Burr on the anniversary of his

death, dedicating the song 'Remember Tomorrow' to him throughout the entire tour. Knowing that this was the end of the tour and that we would be saying goodbye to the guys in Electric Gypsy and Noturnall, the entire night was filled with emotion. The party in the club and at the hotel lasted late into the night. We promised each other that this was definitely not the end of our collaboration.

The last day was also marked by an incident involving Paul's therapist and nurse. Eliel, who had been distancing himself from everything since the cooling of his relationship with Paul, had started to disappear even more as the tour came to a close. Initially, the plan was for him to travel with us almost all the time, but now he was communicating with hardly anyone, except for me. Although my deal with him was strictly about Paul (Eliel had separate private deals with the bands and the crew members), that didn't mean I wasn't a buffer zone between him and everyone else. They would always complain to me when something wasn't working, hoping I would negotiate it with Eliel for them. This time, the issue was the backlog of unpaid wages for the physiotherapist and nurse, who both threatened to leave before the end of the tour. To save the situation and prevent Paul from finding out and getting even angrier, I ended up assuring them that I would pay for their remaining days in Brazil with my own money, which I did. Paul, Violeta, Iris, Beto and myself left Aracaju the day after the final show. We would fly to São Paulo and then transfer to a flight to the capital of Paraguay, Asunción. I must admit, it was a somewhat scary feeling. The large tour machine had now been reduced to just us five and an unknown new backing band and crew in each upcoming country.

When we arrived at the airport, a new drama was looming. During our stay in Rio, Eliel had told us that we might need proof of vaccination against yellow fever to enter Paraguay. Paul had been vaccinated earlier, as had Beto, but we were just getting ours now. The problem was that we were vaccinated just 9 days before our flight to Asunción, and for entry Paraguay, it is officially required that at least 10 days pass since vaccination. At the airport, Paul's carer Beto made a rookie mistake by asking an airline employee if this would be a problem instead of just keeping quiet.

In my experience, I've found that if you don't mention such things, quite often no one will ask you about them either. But now, what seemed like an innocent legitimate question to the airline staff turned into a nightmare in an instant. Violeta, Iris and I were called aside by airport officials and informed that we couldn't board the flight. Any attempts at persuasion, including puppy dog eyes and using the child as an excuse ("What about the child? We have nowhere to sleep, we have connecting flights, what will happen to us?") were in vain, as the answer was always a loud and firm "NO!" It didn't help that almost all the staff, except for one, spoke only Portuguese. I clung to that one English-speaking employee, seeing him as our potential saviour. Instead of making things easier for me, Paul sided with the officials and scolded me in front of them, saying that it was all my fault. He insisted loudly that I shouldn't bother the staff anymore. "You can't do anything, rules are rules," he said, "Stay here, and I'll see you after the South American part of the tour." To be honest, I had the feeling that he truly wanted that. It had always seemed he didn't want me on the tour at all and was almost waiting for something like this to happen.

The situation became desperate as Paul, Beto and all the other passengers boarded the plane. The flight status was changing to closed and I was left completely alone with my little family at the gates. I feverishly searched the Internet for any clause that could save me and amazingly found an article on Paraguayan law stating that the vaccination requirement for yellow fever applied to all regions of Paraguay unless travellers were solely going to stay in Asunción and leave the country afterward. I quickly ran over to the English-speaking staff member and showed him the article. He carefully read it and said, "Sir, after reading this, I have no choice but to let you through. I apologize for the inconvenience." In that moment, I truly felt a taste of real triumph. The plane ended up taking off at least twenty minutes late, and when I finally boarded, I strutted past Paul, who was looking at me with question marks above his head. "How the hell did you pull this off?" he seemed to be saying. I thought to myself, "You have no idea, Paul; you don't know even a fraction of what I can really do."



The flight to Paraguay went as smoothly as possible, and upon arriving at the airport, no one even asked us if we were vaccinated against yellow fever. It seemed that this was merely a formality, a bureaucratic detail that could be exploited to complicate someone's life when convenient. Instead, we received a warm welcome from the fans at the airport. We stayed at the truly beautiful Hotel Guarani, and the venue was just a few dozen metres from there. Promoter, Ariel Ramirez did an excellent job as did Susana Alvarado, representing the Paraguayan Iron Maiden fan club, by rallying the fans and preparing the backing band. Everything pointed to this being an ideal day, and it mostly was. However, for me personally, it was one of those days when I felt the most pathetic and completely helpless to influence anything. Paul had insisted that some of his 'friends' come into the dressing room, and from the moment of their arrival, I felt uncomfortable in their company. This became especially clear when one of them leaned back in a chair and his shirt accidentally rode up, revealing an old-school Colt revolver tucked in his waistband. The entire conversation in the dressing room was strange, filled with (for me) negative energy and not related to Paul's music, the show or the usual topics you hear in dressing rooms. Dark jokes were being made and the terminology used created a sense of unease in my heart, but Paul clearly enjoyed it immensely. At one point, Paul shouted, "Come on, all of you who don't belong here, I want you to leave this room and leave me with my brothers for ten minutes." This didn't just apply to some VIP fans and people Paul didn't know; it included me, Beto, the promoter, the band and crew.

Everyone had to leave except for him and his ‘friends’. We were all ushered out and banned from re-entering. Although I knew what could potentially happen, I really didn’t want to create a scene in front of someone with a Colt at his waist. Once outside, I felt miserable and humiliated; not because I was thrown out but because I felt betrayed on behalf of all those who had fought alongside me over the years to help Paul, raise money and try to save his life. Even though I wasn’t a direct witness to anything that happened inside the room, I had a strong suspicion and felt like I was dying from the anguish that night. The situation was made worse by the scene I encountered when I entered the dressing room while Paul was on stage. Two young girls who usually hung out with that crowd came in and sat down next to me. They unwrapped a small piece of paper and began casually snorting something from it without any regard for who was watching them. I must confess something to you; I have been a metalhead for almost my life and have experienced all sorts of things but when it comes to any form of drugs, I am completely a stranger to that world and reject any thought of it. At that moment, I didn’t know what to do or how to react. I simply closed my eyes to ignore what was happening and pretended like nothing was going on. Deep down, however, I felt very sad.

The concert itself was on top form. Paul (under the influence of...) was making political incorrect jokes throughout the show, some about the football rivalry between Paraguay and Argentina, others more political; for example, he dedicated the song ‘Killers’ to the FBI. But ultimately another show was successfully completed and we got ready for the journey to Argentina.

Buenos Aires as a city amazed me. I had the opportunity to stroll around with Violeta and Iris the day before the show, trying their fantastic steak and meeting plenty of fans who even recognised us on the street. It’s really strange to be walking in the city centre and hear someone calling out from a distance, “Violeta, Stjepan, nice to see you here. Welcome to Argentina!” But we also faced a series of problems there, from coordinating the arrival of the physio therapist and nurse to making the hotel room functional. On the day of the show, we had a significant issue regarding bathroom access. It’s not exactly pleasant to write about, but Paul often shares these things on his social media anyway, and I want to clarify for everyone to give a

glimpse into how challenging it is to work with disabled individuals and how much dedication and care they always require, whether it's Paul or anybody else. Since you never know when the urge to defecate might strike (while Paul is on a plane, in a moving vehicle, on stage or somewhere where we wouldn't be able to respond quickly, Paul was in the habit of taking a medication called Imodium or other similar drugs. This helped him postpone the urge to go to the toilet. In this way, he managed to save himself from some potentially very awkward situations. However, aside from the health risks associated with long-term use of such medications, this practice carried another risk. As the accumulation of waste in the intestines grew, there would come a point where the body, despite the medication, can no longer endure it. When that happens, a true explosion occurs. If at that exact moment there isn't a professional nearby (or at least someone familiar with working with Paul) to help him get to the toilet urgently, it leads to an absolute catastrophe. That's exactly what happened in Argentina, and although Beto and I ran urgently to his room, were just a few seconds too late. I don't want to describe the scene we encountered or the process of cleaning up after Paul, but these were our everyday realities on tour. These are the things that no one in the outside world sees and that are not discussed. They see only the triumphs as on the picture below.



Before the show, we encountered yet another small problem. The street in front of the club was dug up due to construction work that week. This posed no issue for the regular attendees but it was a significant problem for Paul with his wheelchair. However, we found a quick solution and the show could go ahead. From the beginning of this tour in Latin America, I can confidently say that this show was the best up to that point. Everything aligned perfectly: a fantastic audience, a sold-out venue, and Paul's inspired and motivated performance. All the elements came together to make it a great night. Paul was in such a good mood after the show that he dedicated a full two hours in the hotel lobby to meet all the fans who wanted to take photos and create lifelong memories with him. That evening, I met a beautiful girl from Peru, Fiorella Rosa, with whom I later developed a close friendship.

Unfortunately, checking out of the hotel the next morning left a slight taste of bitterness over the entire fantastic experience in Buenos Aires. Paul left for the airport first in an adapted car, while I stayed behind with my family, waiting for another car. Since I was responsible for covering costs incurred if Paul used the hotel minibar or ordered room service, I went to reception to settle them up. I was surprised however, when the reception charged me a large penalty because Paul had been smoking in his expensive room and the cleaning staff found numerous cigarette butts in the carpet. I had no choice but to pay them and remain silent.

Argentina had generally turned out great and I began to believe that our small team could somehow see the rest of the tour through without any additional crew personnel, as we only had three more dates left in Chile and three in Mexico. This was our first trip to Chile, while Paul was already a veteran there. We landed in Santiago in the afternoon and there was no time to waste. We headed straight to a sold-out club where all the fans were waiting. Promoter Luis Blu was fantastic and provided everything we needed and even though the club was in the basement, it didn't bother Paul at all because the atmosphere was unbeatable. I experienced Santiago as a beautiful city, truly more reminiscent of European cities than what I had expected to see in South America. But we only had a few short hours to take it all in. The NH Plaza hotel was fantastic and Paul had no complaints whatsoever, except for the fact that we had to get up very early the following morning, missing breakfast, to make it to the flight that would take us to the seaside city of La Serena.



The events that transpired on March 19 at La Serena, were some of the most surreal experiences of my life. La Serena itself, is a small tourist city on the Pacific coast; and the luxurious EnJoy Hotel where we stayed was actually a vast casino resort. The weather was calm and perfect and my little family took the opportunity to stroll along the vast beach in front of the hotel. Later, I went with Paul's carer Beto to a restaurant to discuss some details about working with Paul, and it seemed that everything was going perfectly to plan that day. One worry we had was that Paul was starting to struggle with constipation, as he hadn't been to the toilet properly since the incident in Argentina. After taking a significant amount of Imodium again, he didn't feel the physical urge to go to the bathroom, but each day he was anxious about not having gone and that it might happen onstage during the show when his abdomen would be under the most strain from singing. His biggest nightmare was that he might accidentally soil himself in front of the fans. The hotel, as I mentioned, was a massive casino resort and looked very fancy, so it was strange to see large video screens in front of the hotel advertising Paul's show and the enormous lines of fans waiting to enter the hotel conference room where the concert was being held. This was definitely not a rock and roll place; however, once everything filled up and the show began, the atmosphere exploded and it was a truly fantastic show. At one point, Paul interrupted the performance in the middle of a song. He had noticed that a girl in the front row had injured her head on the crowd barrier, and he

refused to continue the show until an ambulance was called, even though the girl insisted that she was fine and that it was just a scratch. Paul signalled to me to call for the ambulance and told the audience to clear space for the girl to exit. I approached her and she waved me off, saying she was OK, that nothing had happened. She thanked Paul but insisted that it was just a panic over nothing. The show eventually carried on and ended successfully. After the concert, the promoter had prepared an impressive catering spread in the dressing room and Paul was there with the bands and some friends who had come to visit him. On my way out of the hotel, I spotted the girl for whom Paul had stopped the show. I invited her to join us backstage and express her gratitude to Paul personally, which she gladly accepted. However, when we reached Paul, similar to the case with the friends of Linda Harris, he changed his demeanour and began shouting and asking why my friends should have priority over his. He sent the poor girl away and yelled at me to stop bringing my people into the dressing room. I would like to clarify here that throughout my time with Paul, I never brought someone into the dressing room or to meet Paul simply because they were my friend or for some trivial reason. These were always very deserving individuals, like Vinicius in São Paulo, who rented the wheelchair for Paul in his own name, the police officer Alan from Brasília, who helped us with everything Paul wanted there or Rodrigo, who gave us a free stay at the beautiful hotel in Timóteo. I very rarely invited anyone backstage at all; only those who had truly helped Paul and the tour. It may well be that Paul didn't even know who I had brought in and began yelling before he heard the explanation.

The atmosphere took a turn for the worse late when Paul went outside with Beto to a spot where he could smoke. I thought this would be the ideal opportunity to approach him and explain who the girl was and discuss a few other things. However, as soon as Paul saw me approaching, he began to hysterically shout again about how I just brought my people around and how he saw no purpose for my presence on this tour and that everyone cared for him except me. I responded that what he was saying wasn't fair and that if he didn't feel I was doing anything for him on this tour, it was only because he didn't see the bigger picture and how much 'crap' I had to endure to make sure that he had everything he needed. To clarify; I didn't have to be the one lifting him out of bed or helping him onto the toilet, changing his bandages and catheter and more (even though I did all of that), because those duties should be handled by a qualified professional. When

one of these paid professionals did these tasks, Paul deemed them a "hero", though never mentioning me or Violeta in that way. My job was officially only to anticipate and solve numerous problems on the tour and to ensure he had the means to live and survive from his shows by promoting him. As I filmed and photographed events for social media, which he deemed nonsense, he failed to recognise that my regular updates about the tour's success paved the way for the sold-out UK tour, as well as future European and Australian tours. Paul coldly snapped, "You're not doing anything for me! While I was bleeding to get through shows in northern Brazil, you and your wife were enjoying yourselves on Copacabana." At first, I managed to stay composed enough to try and explain how staying in Rio at Eliel's request was actually what had saved the tour from cancellation. However, Paul turned his back on me in his wheelchair and said, "I don't care about your excuses," as he wheeled himself toward the dressing room. At that moment, I felt a dark cloud descend over me. In front of a large crowd including Violeta and Iris, who were all frozen in shock, I told him to "Fuck off!" to which he retorted for me to, "Fuck off!" too and continued to insult me in every way he knew. Although Paul can be loud, this time I was louder. I stood in front of him and told him, "This is how you treat the person who literally saved your life and brought you back among the living on stage? You ungrateful bastard, nothing is sacred to you. You trample over everyone around you, betraying your friends for your petty interests. When I'm trying to tell you something, don't turn your back on me; listen to me," While I was speaking up close to him, he reached up and violently pulled me down by my hair, clenching his fist as if to hit me in the face. Beto jumped in and separated us. There were various other heated words exchanged but, in the end, I simply said, "Gentlemen, the tour is over, the party is over, go home." Everyone was silent and stared at me in shock. "Promoters, if you incur losses from tomorrow's show, send me the bill. I will pay it out of my pocket, but the tour is finished." People didn't know what to say and left in silence. Beto took Paul back to his room, while Violeta, little Iris and I went to ours.

When I woke up the following morning, I fully believed that the tour was over and so I told Violeta to start packing our bags as we would be leaving for São Paulo, from where our flight to Europe would depart in about ten days. I truly regretted putting the promoters in such a situation and that we

wouldn't be visiting Mexico, but some things need to be cut at the root. "And Paul, who will take care of him?" Violeta asked me timidly, to which I replied, "I don't care. He can go wherever he wants and with whoever he wants. He has enough money from the tour now and can't say that I just left him like a dog. I've done my bit." I was just about to write a big Facebook post to notify people about the end of my collaboration with Paul and send a notice to all the promoters with whom I had arranged future shows, letting them know I would no longer be working with Paul and that I wasn't sure if those shows would happen now. However, before I posted it, I received a call from some Chilean fans asking me to come down to the lobby because there was a previously arranged meet and greet with Paul, and they wanted me to be there. I decided to go down simply to inform them that my work with Paul was over. A minute after I walked into the large hotel lobby, Paul came in from the other side. I didn't even look at him. I was just mingling with the fans. However, at one point, the wall of fans surrounding us parted, and Paul and I found ourselves facing each other, just a few metres apart.



Paul raised his hand, waving as if he were beckoning me, and shouted, "Hey you, come here!" I looked at him, confused, unsure whether he was talking to me someone behind me. "You, Stjepan, yes, you, come here." I approached him and he suddenly lunged forward, grabbed me firmly, hugged me tightly and started shaking with tears, saying, "Please don't go! Can you forgive me for all of this? You and I are an unbeatable team. Let's not destroy what we've built. Please Stay!" I could have been petty and told him to, "Fuck off," again but as much as Paul could be difficult, I was primarily his friend and a fan. I couldn't turn my back on anybody, let alone him. I squeezed his hand and whispered, "Yes, I'm staying."



After a day off in the same hotel, we flew to Puerto Montt. Although we didn't make it to the very bottom of the continent, the colder climate and the appearance of the city indicated that we region close to Antarctica. It was Paul's carer Beto's last day with us, and being from sunny Brazil, he kept saying how he was freezing and couldn't wait to get home. Us Europeans found it quite pleasant and refreshingly cool. The show was fantastic and our hosts at the hotel were very welcoming. However, Paul was increasingly struggling with constipation and hadn't had a bowel movement in days. On the other hand, he

was afraid to take a laxative in case it all let loose at the worst time. That nerve-racking game was truly uncomfortable for both him and us. Violeta, Iris and I had the opportunity to visit a fishing village where we could observe and feed sea lions. It was actually wonderful and we genuinely regretted that our stay in Chile was coming to an end. We met many friends, some of whom travelled with us to all three shows and were sad to leave so quickly. Maiden Chile FC had really gone out of their way to make our stay in Chile enjoyable, and we received numerous gifts. Before we left, we said goodbye to Beto and he gave us instructions on how to handle Paul most easily. On the way to Mexico, it was just Paul, Violeta, Iris and me left. Since there were now only three of us adults travelling, we couldn't drag along his portable toilet, walking frame, still unpacked whey powder and all the other things that Paul had collected along the way. So, he simply decided to leave them all behind, abandoned in Chile

The journey to our next show in to Chihuahua, Mexico was an arduous one. Our afternoon flight from Puerto Montt to Mexico had a layover in Santiago, where we arrived around 10 pm and then had to wait ten hours overnight at the airport 8 am the next morning. Unfortunately, that was the only possible flight and the best connection we could manage. Violeta and I tried everything we could to keep Paul engaged so that the wait at the airport wouldn't turn into a catastrophe. As midnight passed, it felt like we were practically the last people left at the airport.



It was eerily empty. Violeta and Iris were sleeping on a bench and in the stroller, Paul was dozing in his wheelchair and I was barely able to keep awake to watch that nothing went missing. Completely exhausted, after an additional nine hours of flight, we finally arrived in Mexico City, where we had organized accommodation. However, since the flight from there to Chihuahua was in the early morning hours, we had to leave the hotel in the middle of the night. This meant that after leaving Puerto Montt, spending the night at the airport and a few hours at the hotel, none of us had slept more than two or three hours at a

time. Throughout the journey to Mexico, Paul was an airport attraction. A huge number of flight attendants, pilots, security personnel and other staff came to take photos with him, as everyone recognised him there.



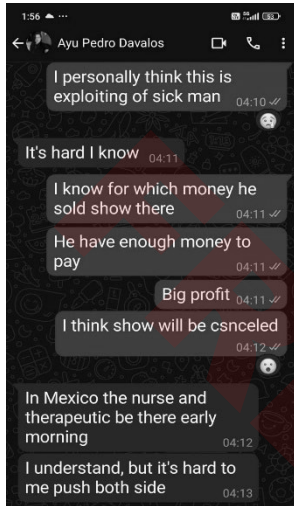
The welcome in Chihuahua was excellent and the promoter took us straight to lunch before we even had a chance to settle into the hotel, leaving no time for rest or sleep. First, we had the drama of needing to repurchase some of the things that Paul had left in Chile. Then we had to get allergy tablets and laxatives, as his constipation had now become unbearable and he felt significant bloating. Chihuahua seems calm place, but danger is lurking around every

corner. Hidden eyes were following the movements of everyone on the street, but we were just naive tourists walking and taking photos. However, the locals have discovered many things about this transit city, the gateway to the USA.

In Mexico, we met many good people, but Ayu Davalos was of special help as he was now Paul's carer and assistant, just as Beto had been until then. Ayu was a great guy and Paul quickly took a liking to him. Although many trivial situations occurred that day, the local promoter personally welcomed Violeta, Iris and I into his home, later taking us for a sightseeing tour of the city to explain its history as we took photographs. He even welcomed us at his home and we met his family.

The show was excellent but Paul had to take a few short breaks during due to breathing difficulties from exhaustion and the altitude (Chihuahua is more than 1,400 metres above sea level). However, all the fans left satisfied and happy and good reports were shared by the media. Paul showed Mexico that he was in full form and that they could rely on him. We returned to the hotel late that night after meeting numerous fans and signing records and memorabilia.

The next show was the very next day in Mexico City (March 25) with a flight there in the early morning, which meant that there was again no sleep that night. Bear in mind of course that since leaving the cold winter climate of Puerto Montt to the oppressive heat of Mexico a few days before, none of us had had a night's sleep, just catching a couple of hours rest here and there in hotels, airport benches or in Paul's case dozing in his wheelchair. We'd done hours of exhausting flights and transfers, were now in high altitude cities and Paul had three shows in row to perform. When you put all this together, it's a recipe for disaster. Unfortunately, before arriving in Mexico, I only received the itinerary for the international flights, not for the internal ones each day. As soon as I saw the schedule, I said, "There's no way Paul can withstand this. You're going to kill him!" My words are corroborated by extensive email and WhatsApp communications, where I clearly expressed that they would only have themselves to blame if something happened. I urged Paul not to agree to this and to insist on a later flight. There was in fact, a later flight from Chihuahua to Mexico City, but it was more expensive, so the promoter insisted on the morning flight to save money. However, as argumentative as Paul can sometimes be, here he didn't want to complicate matters. Even though he was in extremely poor condition, he decided to go through with the show and not disappoint the fans or request new flights.

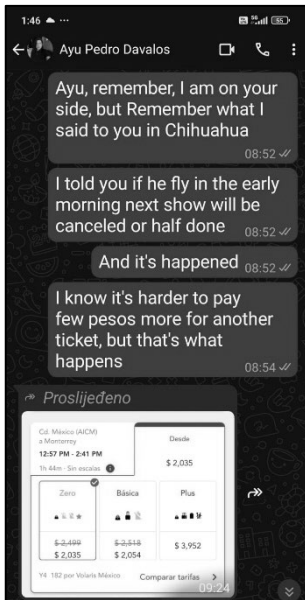


As I write these lines, I'm looking at the WhatsApp communication with Ayu, in which I'm asking him to urge the promoter to pay for Paul's afternoon flight. I sent a similar email to the promoter, but they all played dumb and insisted that this was option was fine. I told them that they were exploiting a sick man. To give you context about what is happening in this communication, I'm asking Ayu to push the promoter (whom I hadn't met yet) to take action. I mentioned that I found out how much he had sold the show for to the local promoter in Chihuahua (he told me actually) and that he had already made enough profit to buy Paul's afternoon flight. Ayu is a good guy but he was reluctant to contradict the promoter, Carlos Guzman, and kept reassuring me that a nurse and physical therapist would be waiting for Paul first thing in the morning. However, what Paul needed was rest and a

bit of sleep, and I felt they were taking advantage of his good nature here. And of course, Paul collapsed after a few songs at the concert in Mexico City and

couldn't go on. Since it was the capital city, all the national newspapers widely reported on it. Paul was kind enough to offer all the disappointed fans a chance to come to the meet and greet and take photos with him, attempting to salvage the situation a bit. He also promised them a free show to make it up to them. However, in all of this, Paul was the least to blame. He had been pushed to this breaking point by the promoters and as you can see in the screenshots, I immediately wrote to Ayu clearly and bluntly about what I had predicted would happen and what ultimately did happen.

It didn't take long for the promoter's narrative to emerge both publicly and to us, claiming that Paul was to blame for all and that he needed to perform a free show to compensate for the damage. It's not difficult to accuse Paul of being at fault for something when he isn't, and some people eagerly seized upon that. He actually played replacement show for free and he shouldn't have.



Even though the Mexican schedule was tight with three shows on three consecutive days, we tried to make the last night of the Latin American tour in Monterrey striking and unforgettable. Paul was still recovering from the previous day's breakdown, and the promoter had learned his lesson not to exploit him heartlessly. This time, he had everything he wanted. When we



arrived in Monterrey at the beautiful Crowne Plaza hotel, I received a phone call. The manager of KK's Priest had found my number and decided to call me to offer a joint show in Wolverhampton. It would be Paul's first concert back in the UK, and I concluded that such an event could be truly beneficial for Paul. Thus, our negotiations began from that day. Paul merely said, "Let's do this," but he was actually much more focused on the problems he was having with a bowel movement. He hadn't been able to go since Argentina a week before and he was now very concerned.

He felt a lot of pressure but even after taking a large dose of laxatives, nothing was coming out. We had a whole group of staff (see the picture) on duty around the clock outside his room in all three cities, even sleeping in front of the door with the sole task of waiting to help him in the bathroom when the moment came. There were nurses and two strong security personnel to assist him onto the toilet, along with Ayu and they all worked in shifts. Everyone had to be well-coordinated and act quickly. That's why they brought their blankets to nap in front of Paul's room. There were a few false alarms when everyone reacted but unfortunately, Paul could not push anything out. Everyone was scared that it would happen during the show, and when it finally did happen in the hotel, everyone jumped for joy, hugged and kissed, congratulating each other as if they were celebrating the New Year, when in reality, Paul had just managed to relieve himself successfully.



Although the final shows of any tour are often free from stress, I was under significant pressure because when the tour ended the process of treatment for Paul would begin again. My thoughts on the last evening weren't focused on the show; they were concentrated on hospitals

and clinics far away in Croatia. I was already planning in my head on how to transfer him back to Croatia, then on organising a van with a driver and making sure he would have a good reception at a care home. This was the grand finale of everything we wanted for Paul; to finally see him walk again.

As I sat in the hotel room sending emails to clinics, care homes, and others, Paul had already left for the club. I arrived there, just in time to see Paul being hauled onto the stage right in front of the audience. It was a very high stage with a ramp at a 45-degree angle, and several people had to push Paul up it while others pulled him up with a steel cable, which looked extremely dangerous. If anything had gone wrong, Paul could have been seriously injured or worse. However, he had agreed to this before I even arrived. Paul was unusually calm and patient about it. To him, all this seemed fun rather than scary. The packed club was full of passionate, incredibly loud fans who had come to see their hero. It clearly indicated that Paul had a large fan base in Mexico, and that we needed to return here as soon as possible. The concert in Monterrey was a really good one. Paul delivered an outstanding show and even dedicated the song 'Phantom of the Opera' to me. I honestly didn't think that would ever happen. It was with a feeling of pride that I managed to capture the moment in a video and share it with the fans, and I thanked Paul for that. But upon reflection, was it done to appease me before what he intended to tell me later that night?

After the show, while Paul greeted all the fans and well-wishers who came to shake his hand, I approached him and said, "Paul, you're flying to London tomorrow morning by yourself, so please don't stay too long with the fans. The

vehicle will be waiting for you as arranged, Violeta will pack your bags and the staff will take you to the airport. We're flying to Mexico City, then to São Paulo and three days later, we're returning to Croatia. Everything is prepared for you over there. I have spoken to the clinic and the care home and everything is ready for you..." But Paul grabbed my hand and said, "Oh, you don't know. I probably didn't get a chance to tell you. Listen, I'm not flying anywhere. I'm staying here. The hotel I'm in is great and it turns out that the physio therapist you hired today is a huge fan and has his own clinic with advanced equipment. Thank you for everything you've done for me but don't try to persuade me. I've made my final decision." "But, but..." I tried to say something, but I couldn't find the words. I was in shock, left speechless. "But you can't... the flight is paid for. Everything is arranged. I can't leave you alone here, I have a responsibility towards you. Don't do this, you'll only regret it." But whatever I said, it was too late and my words fell on deaf ears. At that moment, a fan approached Paul asking for a photo together, and I simply turned and started heading back to the hotel, hoping that Ayu would take care of Paul and his safe return.

As I walked toward the hotel, my feelings were in turmoil. I couldn't decide whether I was angry at Paul for what he had done or grateful to him for giving me such a nice gift by allowing me to distance myself from him for a few months. I had become too entangled to free myself from him. When I arrived at the hotel, my girls were already asleep. I kissed them and whispered, "Girls, we're finally free!"

When I woke up the following morning in Monterrey, everything felt strange, like some sort of dream. Was it really possible that we were going home without Paul and how the hell did all this happen? I quickly contacted the Brazilian promoter Eliel, who had organized the entire tour and booked Paul's flights for Europe, to see if there was any way to salvage the cost of the tickets. However, he told me that the ticket was now non-refundable and that if Paul decided to stay in Mexico, he would personally lose around 1,000 Euros unnecessarily. Until the very last moment, Paul hadn't told anyone that he was going to stay in Mexico. Even at the last concert, I had no idea he was planning to stay until he told me after the show. During the tour, he had often told fans from the stage that he was staying in Brazil and wouldn't be returning to Croatia but no one took him seriously. He also mentioned that he was going to live in Greece, so if he had announced his

decision about Mexico earlier, nobody would have taken it seriously either. But as this decision was made suddenly at the last minute, we had no opportunity to discuss with British Airways about a possible date change or anything else. And for Paul, having someone else lose money out of their own pocket for a ticket that wouldn't be used was no concern of his. "He's made enough money off me, he'll manage," he said when I told him this wasn't fair. He told me, "I made this decision for my own good. I'm not staying here on vacation but for treatment because I found the perfect person to help me, who owns a very modern clinic. And while you're whining about that lost money for an unused flight, whose side are you on, his or mine?"

What else could I do but bite my tongue? I was also in a difficult position now. While I was "on vacation with my wife in Rio," as Paul called it, instead of using my time for walks along the beach, I spent most of my time behind my computer preparing Paul's stay in Croatia. I had found and reserved the perfect place for his accommodation, which required pulling some strings to ensure that a person from a single room would move to another, to make space for Paul. It took me days of tough negotiations. Then, I organized the treatment schedules, meetings with doctors, transport arrangements with an accessible van and every other possible detail to ensure everything would be ready immediately upon his arrival. Yet, he dismissed all of that with a single move, putting me in the really awkward position where I now had to apologise to all these people and come up with excuses (like saying Paul fell ill and had to stay in Mexico) just to justify his actions in wasting both my time and theirs. But what else could I do but accept the fact that we were going, while Paul was staying. Moreover, although Paul had only informed me of his decision at the last minute, I was sure that it was a well-thought-out move on his part as it would give me no time to react. If he had told me a few days earlier, he knew I would have immediately gone to Kastro, Cliff and others, and we probably all would have tried to pressure him into returning to Europe as planned. Instead, he said it late in the evening with no time for anyone to talk him out of it. "A clever move," I thought to myself.

Once he had driven me to this point of no return, the only condition I set before leaving was that I needed to speak to the therapist with whom he

had arranged his stay and treatments in Mexico. When I spoke with him, Alan Vielma struck me as a genuinely pleasant and reasonable person. I knew that at first glance, Paul might appear to him as a reasonable patient who genuinely wanted to get better and that Alan would probably swallow his story about wanting to work hard, fight and be persistent on the road to recovery. However, while Paul might be able to deceive fans on Facebook and even doctors sometimes, he couldn't fool me. Therefore, I warned Alan about all the possible difficulties he might face in his work with Paul. I didn't need to brief him on Paul's health condition, as he was a professional and knew his job but I definitely made him aware of all the various excuses for not exercising and taking his treatments. I have the impression that Alan didn't take me too seriously on this point because he told me he had dealt with such people before and knew how to handle them quite easily. The key thing was that Paul wasn't just any other patient, and Alan had not experienced him yet.

As we were about to leave the hotel to catch our flight to Mexico City, we passed Paul's room and I noticed police and emergency medical staff there. "OMG, what has happened now?" I thought. I secretly filmed a short video because everything I was seeing felt surreal. I introduced myself and requested to enter the room. Once I got in, I was met with a shocking sight. The floor was covered in blood and Paul was sitting in his wheelchair surrounded by the paramedics. For a moment, I went pale and feared he might have attempted suicide. I was informed that a cleaning staff member had entered the room, seen the blood, run out and called the police. They arrived quickly, thinking they were at a potential crime scene. But Paul's public post on Facebook had shown the world what had actually happened. A part of the catheter had shifted and scraped against his penis. The picture he posted online was truly disturbing; instead of urine, the catheter tube was filled with blood. We later discovered that it was just a minor scratch but the flow of blood through the catheter could have indicated that Paul could die in a very short time if left untreated. Emergency treatment was needed. Ayu got into the ambulance with Paul and the emergency staff to the hospital, while I quickly took the first available taxi there as well.

After wandering the hospital hallways and trying to explain who I was looking for, I managed to arrive just in time to see Paul being wheeled into the emergency room. I caught a glimpse of him and barely managed to wave and shout, "Good luck," before the ominous doors closed behind him. A million thoughts raced through my mind in that moment. Why now at the end of the tour? What if he doesn't come of that room alive? What happens next? I was extremely agitated, pacing up and down the hospital corridors. However, it turned out that Paul had once again been very lucky. During the last change of the catheter, the tube had shifted awkwardly scratching him and causing blood to flow through the tube instead of urine for a while. The doctors were able to clean him up and soon discharged Paul from the hospital to return to his hotel room. I breathed a huge sigh of relief. That day, I was incredibly worried.



After this last adventure at the hospital, I went to Paul's room to say goodbye before leaving. The farewell didn't last long. We wished him all the best on his road to recovery and headed for the taxi that was waiting for us. Regardless of how angry I was at Paul for deciding to stay and not come with us, at the same time a huge weight lifted off my chest knowing that, at least for a while, he wouldn't be in our lives anymore. Some readers may not approve of my thoughts but as I've already said, I decided to write this book completely

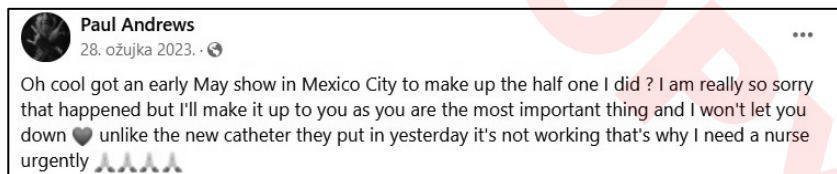
honestly, and I will convey my feelings sincerely. Inside, part of me was screaming and dancing, "Yes, I'm finally free!" That feeling of happiness was so intense that for a moment, I was so caught up in it that I forgot that Paul even existed. It's incredible how, when you want to forget something, you can do so in an instant. In that moment, Paul was entirely removed our thoughts. We returned to Mexico City to stay for a day before our flight back to Brazil. Violeta, Iris and I had a great time in Mexico, visiting the pyramids and the largest Mexican Santa Muerte temple. Standing with my child in front of the pyramid, I remembered the album cover of 'The Best of Bruce Dickinson' and thought 'wow Stjepan, enjoy the moment'. Of course, it was just a small breather we allowed ourselves after the immense stress of the entire tour.



It's incredible how, when you want to forget something, you can do so in an instant. In that moment, Paul was so far removed from our thoughts. Of course, it was just a small breather we allowed ourselves after the immense stress of the entire tour. Once in São Paulo, we had a meeting with Eliel to settle all the accounts from this tour and make plans another tour the following year. We also needed to meet with the producer of Paul's action figures to take some of

them to Europe for all those fans who had ordered them. Naturally, when we returned home, we were once again focused on Paul, keeping up with his plans for recovery while maintaining daily contact with him. However, when he wasn't actually with us, everything felt much easier. For the first time in my life, I was actually able to fully dedicate my time to my wife and my little daughter and those moments are truly precious. During those days, I found myself questioning whether I had perhaps over-exerted myself in helping Paul, while forgetting that I should prioritise my own family?

Since Paul only performed a partial show in Mexico City, the promoter conceived the idea that he might organise another show for Paul to redeem himself with the fans, especially since he had now decided to stay in Mexico. I still maintained that the premature ending of the show was the promoter's fault for pushing Paul too far and that Paul owed him nothing. Instead, the promoter owed us the unpaid fee for that show. The promoter argued that as Paul hadn't completed the show, the fans were demanding refunds which they were entitled to. To save the situation and avoid having to return the money, he decided to offer fans a free show by Paul as a special guest for the Spanish band Tierra Santa. In this way, the promoter avoided paying for the venue again, the technical crew, people and everything else, while getting Paul for free. When it came to his fans, Paul was indeed a kind person who genuinely cared about them and he accepted the offer to play the show with the deal that he would be paid for that show instead of the first interrupted one. He immediately shared the news on Facebook.

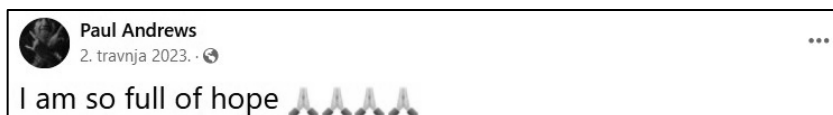
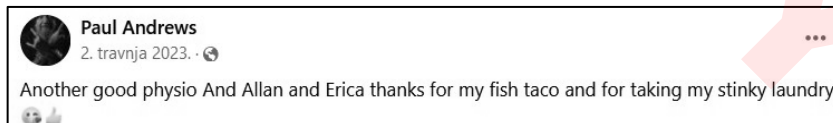


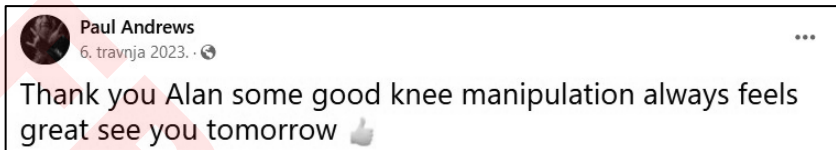
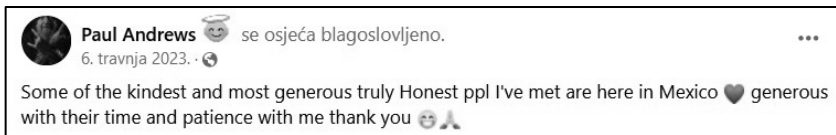
This now meant that Paul would be in Mexico at least until the beginning of May when he would perform that show and then go to Croatia for treatments. By the end of March, Alan's treatments with Paul began to intensify and become quite rigorous, as there was little time and much work to be done. As always happens at first when working with any doctor or therapist, Alan was a perfect match for Paul and the best person he could have chosen. His words of praise on Facebook were truly flattering.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

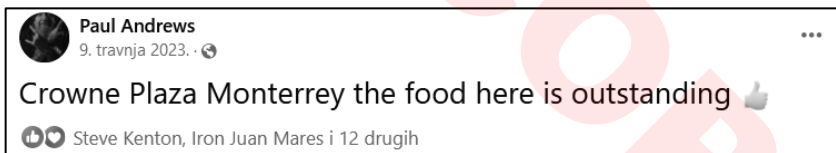
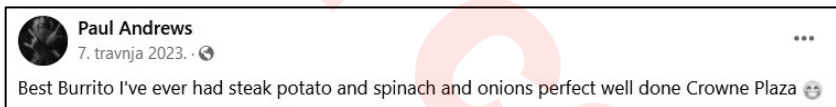


Paul usually posts a whole series of enthusiastic reactions regarding some new doctor or carer, which I had no doubt would happen too. Alan became the new hero, the treatments were excellent and Paul was filled with hope, and of course Paul's Facebook friends were thrilled for him too.





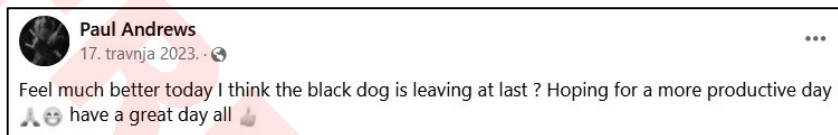
Paul quickly began to relax more and more in Mexico. He posted daily about the meals and delicious treats from the luxurious Crown Plaza Hotel where he was staying. While he did get some discount for the price of his room as he was staying for so long, he never got discounts on room service which had become almost a daily routine. I had stayed in that hotel for a few days and paid for my food there, so I was well aware of how expensive their menu was. I foresaw that such a situation would become unsustainable and that by staying there, the money he earned would quickly start to dwindle.



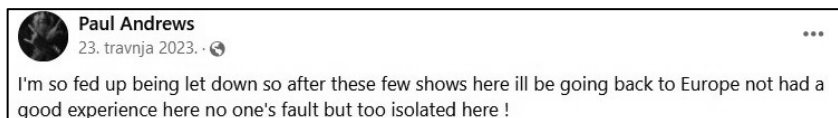
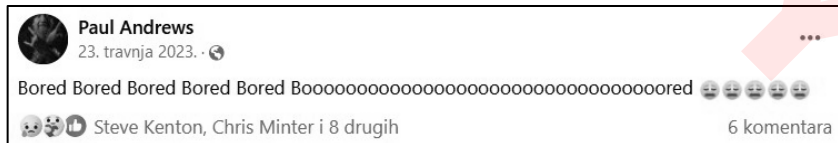
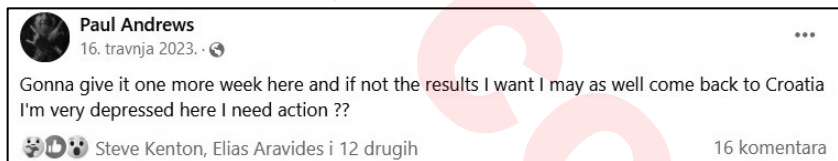
And then it began. After a couple of idyllic weeks came the days of depression as his dissatisfaction with the progress started to set in. Very soon, Paul fell back into his typical negative rut.

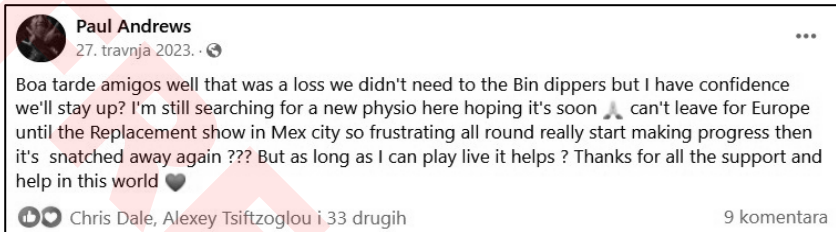
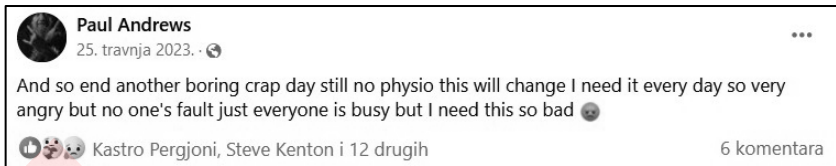


After this post, he wrote several similar ones and it slowly became apparent that things wouldn't end up as perhaps anticipated by those who weren't familiar with this situation. Again and again, the same pattern repeated itself, and it was just a matter of time before it would happen here as well. It might. In principle, I wasn't too worried because I already knew that sooner or later, it would happen, and that depression would come and then pass, just as he described in this screenshot.



What worried me the most was that he was already subtly trying to shift the blame onto the therapists, although he knew that no significant results could be expected in just the two weeks he had been there. I knew what was coming and that there would be no turning back from this round of negativity. I urgently began searching for a new available care home in Zagreb, preparing for his inevitable return.





After the last post, where on April 27 he wrote that he was looking for a new physio therapist, I decided to take radical action. I wrote an email to Alan, asking him what was going on and who was to blame for this, since Paul had started to say that Alan was busy and didn't have time for him.

Hello Alan

What's going on with Paul? I see he said you are busy and you can't work with him. How is this possible? We talked before and you said you have a schedule for him and he canceled his flights and changed his plans just to work and be better. And now I see he doesn't have treatment? Please let me know what's happening?

I didn't have to wait long for Alan's response, and it was completely honest and straightforward. I had already suspected this, but I needed an answer in black and white so that I could show it to others if necessary.

Hello,

I believe there is misinformation regarding my professional physiotherapy services. It is a misunderstanding what is being communicated, I am going to inform you and I hope it will be the last time that I clarify this type of thing, since with all due respect I do not have to give explanations to a third person.

Paul's situation is complicated by his bipolarity and depression that he has, in recent weeks we were on spring break and in fact I offered to take his

therapy at his hotel but on those days only, you may not know it but I am a well-known physiotherapist in the locality and my schedule is full every day. I have a clinic to run and staff under my charge that I must supervise, I cannot be separated from my clinic to go visit to Paul.

He never stopped going, but situations that he does, he not notifies us without reason for cancellations. He cancels because he pooped, he cancels because he has allergies, he cancels because he does not feel well 'mentally' and so on. I stop doing things, driving my car 1 hour to go there and do not notify his cancellations in time, we are not the problem, it's Paul. Many times he cancels us and it should be said that he still owes us money for the therapies since his payments have not been complete. I also have needs, I invest my time, transfers and leave my clinic and my fees have not been reflected as they should be. THIS, OF COURSE, I DON'T HAVE TO GIVE SOMETHING FOR FREE.

We left therapy equipment in his room for exercises and I explained to him how to do them while he was not in therapy, and thus continue things. I just want it to be clear that I am not the problem and with all due respect I tell you, you have nothing to complain to me since you are a third person. I hope please do not write me more for something like this, since my work and reputation is proven and if it is annoying that you write to me to ask me what is happening when I do not have to report to you. I would appreciate everything through Paul what you want to know about him, not me. Thank you.

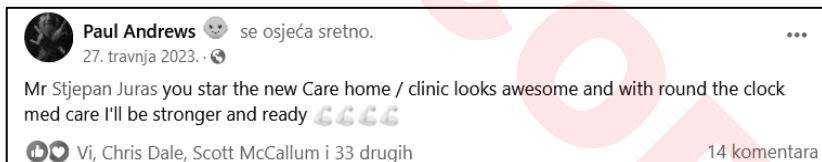
Alan's English, like mine, isn't the best but despite that I didn't edit the content of the email to make it clearer for you. I left all the correspondence intact in its original form. Naturally, I responded to Alan's email as well.

Hello Alan

Sorry if this email sounds a bit harsh to you. At the beginning, I want you to know right away that no one is blaming you, but that was my intention, even though the tone of the message may have been harsh. I'll explain it to you. The fact is that Paul publicly writes on Facebook that he will return to Croatia (where I live) to his Croatian team because he cannot find a physiotherapist in Mexico because you are very busy, which automatically implies that you rejected him, even though you had an agreed schedule. I believe you remember what I told you when we talked in the hotel, just the night before I

left for Croatia, and when I told you where I see the problem and how the most important thing, above all else, is Paul's motivation for exercise. I follow his posts every day, where he writes that he does not see progress and that he wants to return to Croatia. Look at my comments where I defend your work and told him that what he wants doesn't happen overnight and that he has to be patient. This tone of the email was written precisely from the point of view of people who read his posts and who are not familiar with the situation only for the reason that it provoked the answer you gave me and which, unfortunately, I have known for a long time. Therefore, I would ask you to ignore my email as such, because I really have nothing against you. You do your job well, and I believe you did it well with Paul as well. I hope that Paul has made at least some progress in the meantime.

This correspondence took place at the end of April, just a few days before Paul's May 5 replacement concert in Mexico City, after which he was supposedly supposed to return to Croatia. Meanwhile, concerts in the UK had already been announced in April, and they began selling out quickly, one after the other, including the one at Cart and Horses. In the meantime, Paul's Croatian band Warhorse published the track list for their upcoming album. In advance of Paul's return to Croatia, I once again found an ideal care home and presented it to Paul, after which he posted the following.



But then things in Mexico suddenly changed. The promoter had the opportunity to organise another show in Monterrey just a day before the replacement show in Mexico City, and he asked me if I could authorise it. Since I wasn't with Paul and couldn't influence it too much, I suggested that they speak to Paul directly to see how he was feeling and if he could handle it. Paul never turned down an opportunity for a show. At that moment, money wasn't even his main motivation. Shows were his only escape from routine and depression, and the only place where he didn't feel lonely or a burden to everyone. On stage, he was a king and he missed that feeling dearly. I had the impression he would agree to anything just to perform

onstage, even if it was sometimes to his detriment. So, another concert in Mexico the day before the replacement show, why not?

Both shows that Paul performed during that time were top-notch. Mexico City finally received an excellent show and Paul sang phenomenally. This news quickly spread throughout Mexico. It took just one day for all the local promoters to go crazy for Paul and to rush to book him. In the following days, offers came in not for one or two, but for as many as eight additional shows in Mexico. However, the problem was that most of them were scheduled for June, which would mean Paul would have to spend the entire months of April and May in an expensive hotel waiting for the shows. Coming back to Croatia would have been a much better plan for his treatments but as the last Mexican show was scheduled for June 30, in San Luis Potosí, Paul at least had some time to return to the UK and rest from the jet lag, before making make a triumphant comeback in the UK as special guest for KK's Priest in Wolverhampton.

The problem that now emerged was finding a physiotherapist and a nurse in Mexico to help Paul at least maintain some semblance of stability with his leg. Since Alan dropped out of the picture, I lost all hope that Paul would stand on his feet in Mexico, as he had first expected. I would be happy now if everything remained as it was with his leg when I last saw him. The following two months of Paul's extended stay in Mexico are something I cannot write about from firsthand experience because I wasn't there to witness the events. Given that his friends and carers, Marko Alvarado and Ayu Davalos, were with him in Mexico, and they were great guys who truly cared for Paul, I wasn't worried about whether people would take good care of him during the shows. However, I was concerned about something else. The money Paul was supposed to receive for the shows was coming in less frequently and the payments were increasingly delayed. When the excuses started piling up, my alarm bells were ringing. Firstly, we were supposed to receive payment for the replacement show in Mexico City, as the promoter had arranged with us a month earlier. What's the point of doing a show if the promoter isn't willing to pay? Their explanation was that most of the ticket money for the first show in Mexico City had to be refunded, meaning that the ticketing company refused to the promoter the proceeds from the ticket sales and held onto the money to refund the fans, while the promoter still had to cover the costs of the venue rental, sound and lighting

equipment along with the relevant technical crew. They claimed that Paul put them in the red and that with this replacement show, he merely redeemed himself financially. But I clearly remembered all the correspondence (which I still have), where the promoters insisted on the very same day Paul decided to stay in Mexico that we confirm he would perform at the rescheduled concert. They explained to me that if the show was announced immediately, the ticketing company would pay them for the first show, which Paul would then receive when he completed the replacement show. But after Paul's success at the replacement show, the excuses continued to come in from the promoter.

All raised alarms, and rightly so. By the time of writing this book, the last few shows in Mexico have still been only partially paid. Out of all the 130 shows or more that Paul has performed recently, only these few Mexican shows remain unpaid in full (along with three and a half concerts in Argentina in 2024. However, that is a long, complex and quite incredible story that I will share with you in the second volume of this book).



Unlike the Argentine promoter from 2024, the Mexican promoter is still saying he will settle the outstanding payments soon, so in good faith, I decided to omit the details and our correspondence until the writing of the second book to avoid putting anyone in an awkward situation. The shows in Mexico went exceptionally well, and Paul truly developed a great friendship with the guys from the band Iron What? and the Mexican crew, who threw him an unforgettable birthday party. From my personal experience I have to say that Paul's Mexican band was fantastic and they are wonderful people. They were professional and understanding of

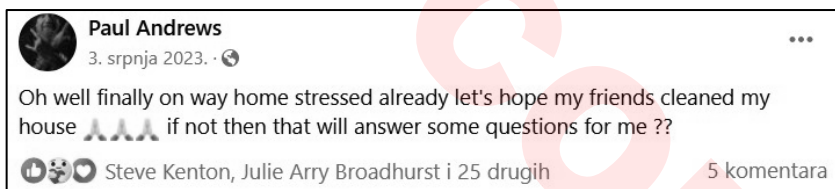
Paul, as was the crew. Paul had a hard time parting with them and he stayed in constant contact. But the three months in Mexico flew by quickly, and it was soon time for Paul to fly back to Europe from the Mexican heat to the rainy British summer.

WELCOME HOME (SANATARIUM)

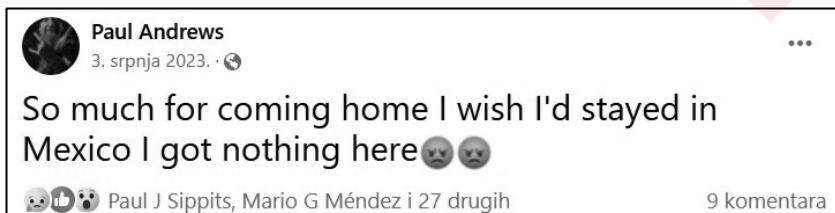
I followed Paul's flight online from Mexico to London with a sense of dread. After the experience of his arrival in Brazil, I didn't want to feel secure about his boarding until he had landed in London and I could see his typical grumpy Facebook posts directed at Heathrow Terminal 3 and their staff (of mostly foreigners), for whom he had a particular disdain. And sure enough, I didn't have to wait long.



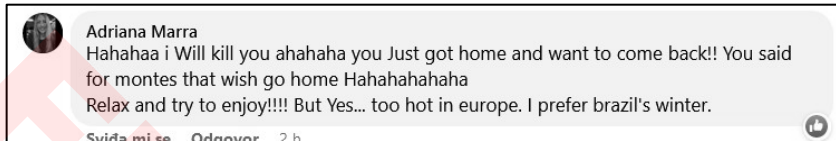
Now I was completely certain that Paul had finally landed in the UK. I waited for him to get home and settle in before calling him to check how he was doing and to discuss the next gig in Wolverhampton and his return to Croatia after that. In the meantime, he was writing new statuses on his way home.



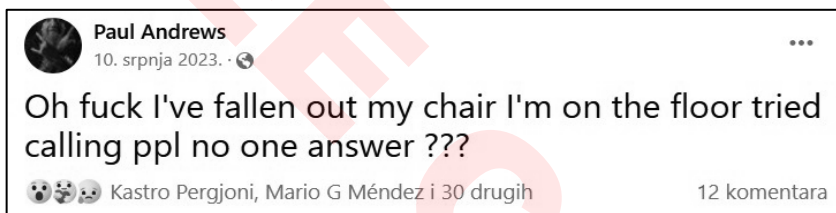
His excitement about returning home that he had been pouring out on Facebook over recent days, saying how happy he was to finally be going home and that he never wanted to be apart from his beloved UK for so long again, suddenly fizzled out when he opened the door to his apartment. I didn't really expect anything different from him.



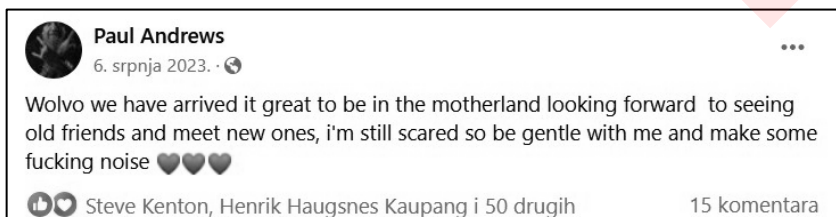
I don't know why, but as soon as I saw that post, the intro of Metallica's song 'Welcome Home (Sanitarium)' began playing in my head. Reading the comments, I saw that many other fans shared my thoughts.



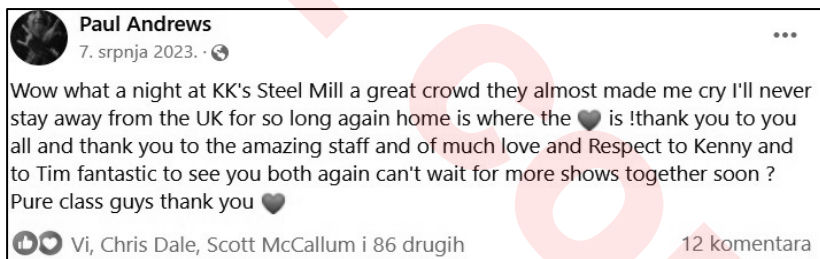
But that's Paul, whether you love him or hate him. Finally back home in the UK, which he had longed for and the very next day he was crying for Mexico. Life in a 5-star hotel with room service and friends around him is much more enjoyable than being alone in his home, almost abandoned by everyone. Paul quickly realised this further just a week later, when he posted the following in a panic on Facebook.



Despite the fact that just four days earlier in Wolverhampton, he had been a star, He now found himself with no one to help him, not even for the most basic things like this. Where had all those friends he used to call upon suddenly gone? This was and remained Paul's brutal reality, one he needed to become aware of sooner or later. Paul had arrived in the UK a few days before his first big UK comeback show scheduled for July 6 in Wolverhampton at the legendary Steel Mill venue. KK Downing was re-launching his career from there, and this show was incredibly important for him. He wisely knew that by inviting Paul on the bill, he would generate additional interest from both the media and fans. Paul too wisely accepted the challenge.



I couldn't attend the Wolverhampton show due to previously scheduled personal and business commitments. It was only European concert of Paul's that I missed. However, his friend Mark Inman, with whom I had arranged everything earlier, went there with Paul and helped him throughout the day, for which Paul publicly thanked him after the show. Linda Harris and Mimi Burr were also there, and Paul expressed gratitude to Mimi for helping him apply cream to his legs. Blaze Bayley came by to greet an old friend as well. Paul also thanked him publicly, suggesting that it would be cool to revive their collaboration and go on tour together again. My friend Andy Brown, who was also my partner in booking the UK tour, was present, as was Cliff Evans, Paul's manager. Along with Paul's friends, numerous fans from all over the world attended the show, as the ongoing Iron Maiden tour was also passing through the UK at that time, so many fans were already in the country. The show went exceptionally well, and the reaction from the local fans was incredible, causing all of Paul's pre-show nerves to quickly dissipate. Although the upcoming joint tour with KK had not been officially announced anywhere yet, Paul jumped the gun a little with this post.



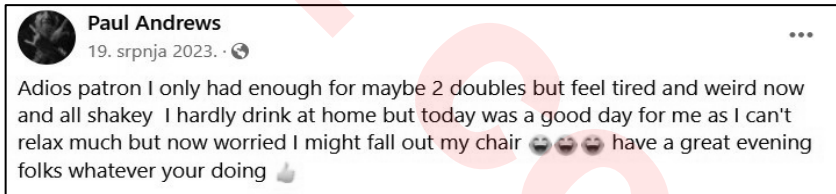
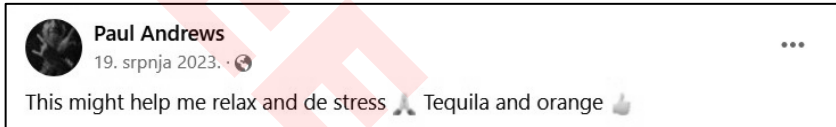
The reactions to the show were fantastic, and the reviews couldn't have been better if we'd written them ourselves. Everything that night was charged with energy and very emotional. Just as the photo with Steve Harris had made waves around the world a year earlier, this summer the photo with KK became an absolute hit. Paul not only did a favour for KK Downing, but KK also did one for him, as those who doubted that Paul could shake up the UK again finally saw that they could be in for a nasty surprise. Admittedly, there were still sceptics around who argued that the tour schedule was overly tight and that Paul wouldn't be able to handle it, but there was no doubt that Paul was definitely back.



After the show, Paul posted a plethora of thank you messages on Facebook, expressing gratitude to everyone from the Hells Angels to KK and Tim Owens. However, the moment of glory passes quickly after exiting the stage. Paul returned to his usual rut at home. Tales of falling from his wheelchair with no one there to help him, were just one example of how his life wasn't so easy. Not all 'friends' are true friends. In most cases, they are merely acquaintances who are impressed by the fact that they associate with a rockstar and nothing more. Paul realized this truth the hard way, but every action has its reaction.

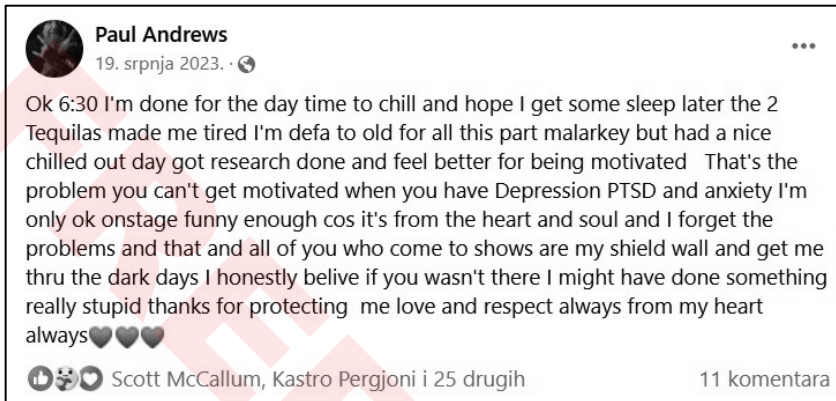


It soon became evident from his Facebook posts that Paul was back drinking tequila nearly every day. Here was a man still in rehabilitation sinking deeper and deeper into waters he shouldn't be swimming in. I know he would say it was just a little drink here and there and that I was making a mountain out of a molehill, but from what I witnessed on the tour, it was not as innocent as that. His friends who did visit him at home in Salisbury also confirmed this to me.



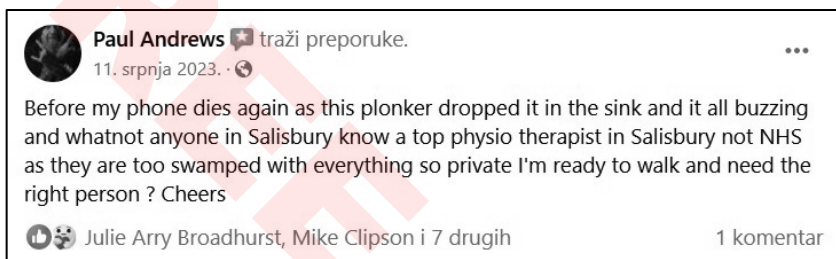
In the screenshot on the next page, Paul tried to find justification for all of this. I agree that he is too old for such things and it's also true that given his health situation, in the midst of severe depression, PTSD and anxiety disorders; it was challenging to find motivation. For that reason, Paul wrote what he has been saying repeatedly for the past few years. *"I'm only OK onstage, funny enough, because it's from the heart and soul and I forget the problems and that... and all of you who come to my shows are my shield wall and get me through the dark days. I honestly believe, if you wasn't there, I might have done something really stupid. Thanks for protecting me. Love and respect always from my heart always."* I witnessed him in this condition several times, and while it might be difficult for some people to understand why Paul would go on tour in such a state, the real question is whether we would ever see him alive again if the shows hadn't happened. Paul had

previously hinted at his suicidal thoughts, but here he stated it completely openly and honestly for the first time.



What people on the Facebook couldn't see, and what I also didn't know, was that after the show in Wolverhampton, Paul was left without a manager. This was told to me by his Norwegian band, who were present when Paul had an argument with Cliff that ended in some very harsh words. The next day, Paul told me the same thing, casually asking if I wanted to be his manager. "Do I want what?" I nearly choked. Everything that had been happening until that moment all felt like a dream. But to be his manager? I thought I wasn't worthy of it. I was just ordinary Stjepan Juras, a fan who was excited at everything like a child. How could I possibly be a manager? I told Paul I appreciated the offer but that it was a significant responsibility and I wasn't the kind of person who would just step into someone else's shoes. I said I would only agree if I could call Cliff first to see if he was OK with it or if he thought the argument with Paul was a temporary issue (like happened so often). Cliff turned out to be extremely courteous, unexpectedly so, in fact. When I called him and explained that I didn't want to take his job, he told me not to worry; I had shown that I could handle things and that the fact was he hadn't done much for Paul recently and he completely authorized me to take his position. I promised him that we would remain good friends and collaborators, and if he ever wanted to work in the same capacity again, my door would always be open to him. During those days, my little family was very active. The day after Wolverhampton,

we were in London to see Maiden performing at the O2 Arena. The day after that, I organized a meeting for fans with Neal Kay at the in Cart & Horses. Just a few days later, we flew to Milan to British Lion and Iron Maiden, where we had a meeting with the band Airforce, who also wanted me to be their manager. Suddenly, it felt like the whole world had opened up. After that, we went Wacken Open Air Festival in Germany, where I was a long-time collaborator (Wacken Metal Battle promoter) and a fan eager to see many great concerts, including Iron Maiden again.



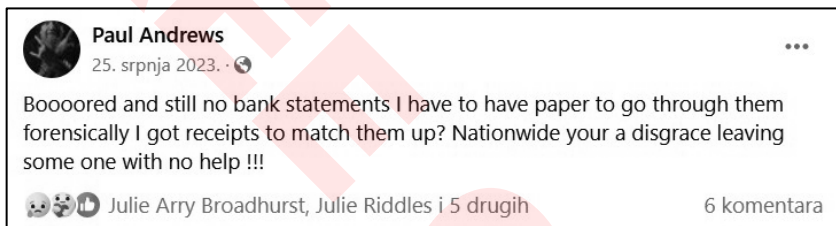
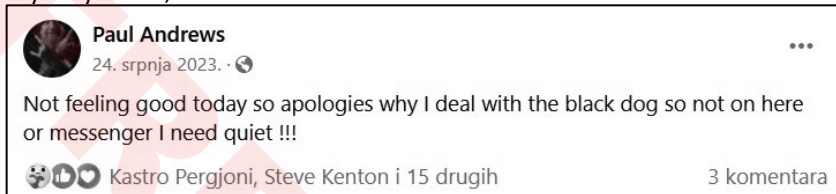
Meanwhile, on Paul's side, the situation was changing drastically. After he decided not to return to Croatia until September, he posted on his Facebook profile asking if anyone could recommend a good physical therapist. I don't know if this request was just for show but after that, there was never again any talk of exercise or therapy in the UK..

The following day a new drama erupted that took on dangerous proportions. On July 12th, he called me and asked if all the money from the shows had been deposited to him. I replied that everything had been paid except for the last few shows in Mexico. I sent him screenshots of the payments and advised him to check at the ATM. He responded that this was precisely the problem, that the ATM showed he had nothing in his account. Unfortunately, he didn't have online banking installed on his phone, which would have allowed him to easily track everything. Instead, he had to send someone else to the ATM while telling them his PIN and was now stuck looking at the ATM receipt. However, he had earned enough money from the South American tour that he surely couldn't have spent it all already? In the following days, a series of panicked posts followed.

Stjepan Juras - 666 Days With the Beast

- **Paul Andrews**
12. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
Ffs my account is empty wtf this ain't right ??? Fkn very depressed now what's the point I think I've been ripped off? Ok won't be on here for a while ?
🙄🙄🙄 Julie Arry Broadhurst, Mike Clipson i 13 drugih 6 komentara
- **Paul Andrews**
13. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
Yep definitely been ripped off no money in my account at all so no food no rent I'm fucked and I hope you cunts who have done this are fkn happy 🙄🙄🙄
🙄🙄🙄 Kastro Pergjoni, Mario G Méndez i 25 drugih 7 komentara
- **Paul Andrews**
13. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
Fkn starving no money 🙄
🙄🙄🙄 Mario G Méndez, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 9 drugih 1 komentar
- **Paul Andrews**
15. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
So bored going mental can't go anywhere as got no money while waiting for the bank etc I was so happy to come home but now ??
🙄🙄🙄 Mario G Méndez, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 15 drugih 7 komentara
- **Paul Andrews**
22. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
What a crappy depressing day was summer ever here in the uk , missing Mexico and Brasil !
👍🙄🙄 Julie Arry Broadhurst, James Allen i 13 drugih 9 komentara
- **Paul Andrews**
22. srpnja 2023. · 🌐
Super Steve Kenton to the rescue not all Heroes wear capes some drive Pink Taxis
🙄🙄🙄 cheers Bro 👍
👍🙄 Chris Dale, Steve Kenton i još jedna osoba

Everyone jumped in to help immediately. Paul's loyal friend, Steve Kenton assisted him by making a payment for Paul's rent, for which Paul publicly thanked him right away. Soon after, a payment from the show with KK Downing in Wolverhampton came through, and Paul was now in safe waters for the time being. Despite that however, this whole situation was a great mystery to me, and I tried to solve it.



Since Paul posted publicly on Facebook about this situation, I feel I should discuss my perspective on it. In his posts, which numbered in the hundreds, he sometimes dropped subtle insinuations about possible explanations for the missing money, which made me feel quite uncomfortable. Initially, the criticism



was directed at me, questioning whether those funds had ever been deposited into his account. When it was proven that they had been, the focus shifted to Mexico and the people to whom he had repeatedly entrusted his card to withdraw money from the ATM and shop for him. In many cases, people would just bring him cash without any

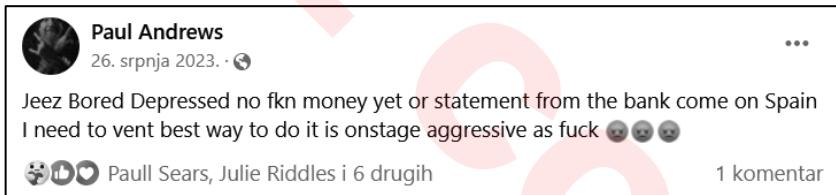
receipt at all often because some machines don't offer that service. Whenever he gave me his card during his stay in Croatia, I would always include a receipt or statement (even though Paul often didn't look at them and simply said, "I trust

you"). When it came to managing his money, Paul was quite disorganized and didn't monitor how much he had left. He would spend until it was gone and then lament, "Oh, poor me." He never knew how much was in his account and he definitely didn't know how much he was spending. He might have thought he was in control but he wasn't. On the other hand, if someone did decide to steal from his account, that person couldn't withdraw such large sums due to the daily ATM withdrawal limits, even if they attempted it several times because the amounts Paul received from the tour were not insignificant. I couldn't swear to it, as I didn't know them well enough, but his Mexican friends Marko Alvarado and Ayu Davalos, to whom he entrusted the ATM card, didn't seem to me like fraudsters. They appeared to be genuinely good people and friends of Paul's. As I was there, I don't know if he gave his card to anyone else during those three months in Mexico. As Paul was back on good terms with both Marko and Ayu just a few days later, the criticism now turned towards his bank, Nationwide, which he angrily criticised several times on Facebook.

There is of course the matter of Paul's expenses during his three-month stay at the beautiful Crowne Plaza hotel in Monterrey. The average price for that hotel per day on Booking.com is approximately €140, and even if we apply a discount that Paul received for his long-term stay, ninety days there is still going to cost a lot of money. In addition to that there was cost of treatments in Mexico, daily room service meals, cigarettes, Paul's drinks bill and other things he may have spent money on. All this potentially adds up to a very serious amount of money that makes your head spin. By contrast, had he come to Croatia his treatment, accommodation, food and drinks would have totalled around €2000 a month. When I wrote previously that the sum he received from the tour was too large to simply be spent in a careless manner, I was forgetting that Paul can always spend money as quickly as he gets it. Of course, all of this is speculation on my part based on the known facts. The true answer to the mystery of where the money went is known only to Paul himself.

What troubled me the most was why all this performance, the public whining, claiming he was hungry, blaming everyone and everything, including Nationwide for their laziness, inefficiency and lack of transparency? This entire case was shrouded in mystery. When the money first went missing, I and other friends even considered going to his house and accompanying him to the Nationwide bank to obtain his account statements and discover the truth. However, Paul

categorically our help in that way. A few days later, he didn't even mention publicly that he was out of money anymore, and he also never brought it up with me again. From his new Facebook posts, I got the impression that he wasn't overly concerned about it all of a sudden. He wrote a vague status seemingly addressing whoever had done this, saying, "Whoever you are, may that be on your conscience," and that was it. It was never mentioned again. Now if I had lost such a large sum due to a banking error or if someone had stolen it from me, I would turn the whole world upside down trying to find it. There was too much noise around everything with too little action, and his strange refusal to show us his Nationwide bank statements felt very suspicious. I decided that I wouldn't get involved any further unless asked, and Paul could continue fighting these invisible battles of his on his own. Honestly, many of his friends and associates told me it was crystal clear where all the money had gone, pointing their fingers at nostrils. I always categorically refused to believe that this had actually happened. However, there was still one remaining, completely lifesaving situation that offered an unexpected happy ending to come out of all this, but I will write about that in the second part of this story.



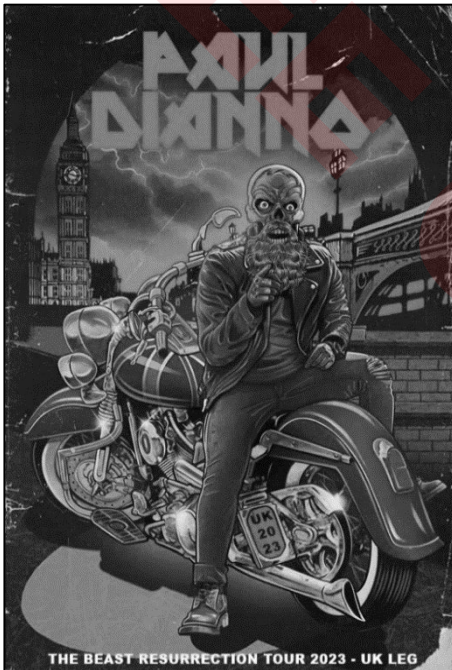
After this last post, Paul began to shift into festival mode, as he had an exciting show coming up in Spain. Meanwhile, after returning from Milan, I decided to relax at my home on the island of Ugljan with my guests from Sweden, mentally preparing for a week of work at Wacken Open Air. However, before I set out on my trip, I publicly released the latest illustration for the first time, which became Paul's new visual identity for the upcoming UK tour and would carry through to all other countries until mid-May of the following year. The conceptual idea depicted Paul sitting on a motorcycle, pointing his finger at the fans like Uncle Sam, inviting them to the show. Depending on which part of the world it was, the fuel tank would be coloured in the respective flag and the background would feature landscapes of the city or country we were visiting. It was perfect for event t-shirts, flyers and posters. I won't hide the fact that I learned this tactic directly from Iron Maiden and it worked remarkably well. Merchandise sales exploded.



Stjepan Juras je sa Henrikom Haugsnesom Kaupangom i 5 drugih.

25. srpnja 2023. · 🌐

The time has come for me to publicly present the new visual for the UK tour in 2023. Fans will be able to purchase tour programs with this design, tour posters, t-shirts, patches and postcards. All concertgoers will have the opportunity to get this fantastic package, and those who live far away and will not be able to attend the shows will have the opportunity for pre-sale with a limited number of memorabilia. The tour in Australia will have a completely different, specially prepared visual. Here you have the opportunity to see only a low res illustration, which in the final version will have a more advanced contrast and will come in a version with the old and new logo. I hope you like it and will continue to follow the development of Paul Di'Anno's visuals. The Author of this fantastic illustration is Brazilian artist Cristiano Suarez.

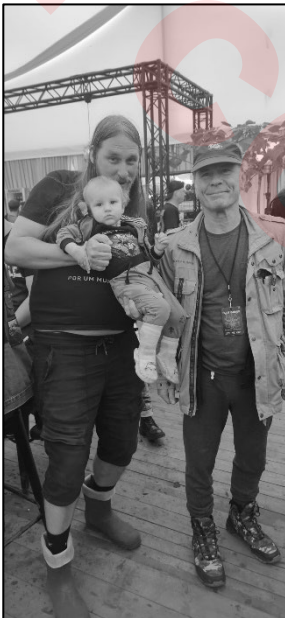


The marketing-driven approach to creating Paul's new visual identity (designed by Brazilian Cristiano Suarez) proved to be an absolute hit from the start. People embraced the new mascot, a skeleton resembling Paul almost as much as they did Eddie from Maiden. Merchandise sales significantly increased, media presence became constant and recognisable, and the venue and festival promoters welcomed this move, as it boosted ticket sales. With a new visual identity and logo (which we decided to use on the posters only from his 66th birthday in 2024), Paul's rebranding was nearly complete. What still needed to be done

was the release of the Warhorse album (which at that point had already been recorded) and the establishment of an official fan club, which I planned to launch on May 17 2024.

While Paul fussed over the mysterious disappearance of his money, Violeta and I were preparing to head to Wacken Open Air Festival. That year, heavy rain cast doubt on the festival's proceedings. At one point, everyone who had not yet arrived was ordered to turn around and go home but we managed to get in anyway. Iris was just a year and a month old and she was already at Wacken for the second time. This time she attended the Iron Maiden show and danced on her dad's back. After Steve Harris had met her mom while she was still pregnant the year before, this time fortune smiled upon us as little Iris not only got to meet Steve, but also Bruce Dickinson, Janick Gers, Rod Smallwood, Ville Valo, Schmier and many others. It was an excellent weekend of relaxation before reuniting with Paul.







The rainy, controversial Wacken with Maiden had come to an end and now we were headed straight from Germany to Spain. We drove to Frankfurt Hahn Airport, and then flew to Spain with Ryanair. We arrived at the hotel a day before Paul and his band. This turned out to be ideal, as we had some peace and tranquillity that day. The bands slowly began to arrive at the hotel. First came the crew from KK's Priest, followed by Megadeth and others. We took advantage of the day to wander the streets of the town where we were staying, which was about half an hour's drive from the festival. When we returned to the hotel in the evening, KK's Priest band and crew were sitting on the terrace of the hotel bar and invited us to join them. We couldn't refuse, especially since little Iris had another chance to take a photo with KK Downing, a great legend of rock and heavy metal music. KK listened intently to my stories about how Paul went from

being a lost cause to becoming a highly sought-after artist again. He admired the tour program and the high demand for Paul's merchandise. If I had the opportunity to open up some new perspectives for this legend with my advice, I would be very proud. However, our peace was short-lived.

The following day, the Norwegians arrived. I hadn't seen them in almost a year, since Paul's first comeback performance in Croatia. However, we had been in contact and frequently chatted on social media, so it felt like we hadn't missed a beat when we met again. Paul was the last to arrive, flying with Ryan Air, as that was the only available flight to this destination at the right time from the airport closest to him, Bournemouth. Now, let me explain a business matter. Sometimes promoters want to relieve themselves

of the burden of booking flights for the band and offer the band a fee increased by the approximate cost of the flights. In this case, the bands try to book the cheapest flights to save costs, allowing them to keep extra money on top of the paid fee. Because of this, we were carefully looking for ways to save money but more particularly trying to get the most efficient flight. While Bournemouth isn't exactly an internationally known airport, it is significantly closer to Salisbury, where Paul lives, than Heathrow, which at that time didn't have any suitable flights available anyway. For Paul to fly from Heathrow (as he prefers British Airways), we would only lose money on the more expensive flights, pay a higher price for an accessible taxi to and from Heathrow and Paul would have to fly in a day early. The promoter would be reluctant to pay for an accessible hotel room for an extra day when Paul had a perfectly good flight that arrived on the day of the show at ten in the morning and departed the following day around 7 pm. This arrangement was ideal for everyone, but not for Paul.

It's difficult to describe the level of intolerance that most Brits, not just Paul, have towards Ryan Air. Is it because they are Irish and not British? Probably, because there are many other budget airlines like EasyJet or Wizz Air, and I've never heard a Brit complain about them. Of course, because Ryan Air is a budget airline, the service is straightforward but when you compare all budget and non-budget airlines for flights within Europe, the overall service that passengers receive is actually quite similar. For example, some may offer free water and snacks but that drives the ticket price up by as much as €200, so it's up to you to decide if it's worth it. Additionally, all airlines charge extra for any baggage larger than a carry-on these days. As someone who flies frequently, I realize that the treatment in economy class is essentially the same everywhere across Europe. The average age of the Ryan Air fleet is below nine years, which is impressive and places it among the youngest fleets of major players in Europe. Honestly, I don't have much to complain about with Ryan Air.

However, when Paul heard that he would have to fly with them, he went into a fury. From the very moment of booking, all through arrival and departure, he complained about Ryan Air and their treatment of him. Yet when we indicated at booking that we had a disabled person, Ryan Air was the only airline so far to send an email with detailed information on 'what

and how' to assist, and they were very accommodating. Of course, everything went smoothly, as always and Paul flew in and out safely and without injuries (although he had been injured by the unprofessional handling of staff on some international non-budget flights). However, once Paul decides he doesn't like someone, he doesn't change his mind. So, Ryan Air received their fair share of curses from him.

**Paul Andrews**
10. kolovoza 2023. · 🌐

Ryan air can fuck off never again in so much pain !!!

 Kastro Pergjoni, Steve Kenton i 16 drugih

6 komentara

The entire next day, from morning until night, he continuously posted hateful messages about this company on Facebook. However, I would dare say that this was not really a reckoning with them but rather a reckoning with me, because I had the audacity to book it, justifying that it was indeed more economical, much simpler for him, that the timing was perfect, and that he wouldn't have to pay for a taxi all the way to London.

**Paul Andrews**
11. kolovoza 2023. · 🌐

Finally home after such bullshit from Ryanair what a joke of an airline how can they get away with all shit they do to passengers I'll never use them again EVER and they cost me double taxi fare ffs and it's the lies Ryanair spout out and it's just laziness I'm so stressed 🤔🤔🤔🤔

 Steve Kenton, Chris Minter i 17 drugih

2 komentara

**Paul Andrews**
11. kolovoza 2023. · 🌐

Morning all have a great day be safe , I'm having a recovery day after the Ryanair nightmare this will leave mental and Physical scars . Did I tell you how much I hate them !!!!! 🤔🤔🤔🤔

 Julie Arry Broadhurst, David Smith i 18 drugih

7 komentara

**Paul Andrews**
11. kolovoza 2023. · 🌐

I can't believe I actually asked the cops at border security to lock me up last night or I was going to go Rambo on Ryanair they were laughing but I was serious 🤔🤔

 Rob Festa, Julie Arry Broadhurst i 18 drugih

6 komentara

Of course, Paul would fly with Ryan Air again, just a month later to go to Italy (because again that flight was the only option that worked for everyone) but that's another different story. The Leyendas Del Rock Festival is a respectable mid-sized metal festival in Spain with loyal fans, and in that way, it reminded me of Wacken. But it was impossible to compare the damp and muddy environment of Wacken to the scorching plus 42 degrees of Spain. On the way to Wacken, while lifting a suitcase, I felt pain in my leg and I believe that was a sign to be cautious or I could end up with sciatica or something similar. I took as many precautions as I could at Wacken, though it wasn't entirely possible with all that mud but under the sun in Spain, I felt like I was reborn. I had first received an inquiry from this festival back in March, when the promoter saw through social media that Paul's live shows were experiencing a re-birth in Brazil. Around that time (as I mentioned earlier), I was also contacted by Metal Italia Festival, KK's Preist's agent and from promoters in the UK for an entire tour in his home country. I was pleased to see that others appreciated all our work, and now they wanted to do business with us. Just a year earlier, everyone laughed and shook their heads at the thought of booking Paul again.

I keenly made all the arrangements for the festival, and how could we not, especially since the promoter was also a big Maiden fan. I can only say the best about their work. Everything was perfect from the welcome at the airport to the excellent hotel, transportation to and from the festival, air-conditioned dressing rooms, endless catering, great backline and festival crew. Since they couldn't find a van with a ramp in the small town, the promoter sent a whole accessible bus with a hydraulic ramp for Paul, and he finally arrived in front of the hotel around 2 pm, which was more than enough time before the show time. His band members came to greet him and hug him while I waited outside the hotel. However, after the initial excitement came the first problem. Paul needed to be pushed about a hundred metres from the bus to the hotel, then another ten meters uphill to the entrance of the reception. Paul was surrounded by his band members and yet they were calling to me.

Instead of one of those four band members pushing Paul to the hotel, they were calling me to come to them and push Paul. What I am about to write, I hope will be understood as my defence of Paul's Norwegian band, not as an

attack on them, as I later perfectly understood why it had to be this way. You see, people from Southern Europe and the Mediterranean where I come from, resonate quite differently from Scandinavians. If we see someone in need of assistance, regardless of whether it's our business or if we are paid for it, we do it, no matter how much effort it may require. It's in our blood and that's how we are. If I had happened to be one of those four band members, I would have instantly grabbed the wheelchair and pushed Paul to the hotel without hesitation. However, each time Paul needed to be pushed, lifted from his wheelchair, transferred to a bed, changed or had his catheter bag replaced, the band would evaporate at lightning speed with the attitude of 'that's not our job,' and no one could find them until those tasks were completed. Initially, I was very angry with them. It genuinely bothered me and I had no problem mentioning it to them. However, their response was clear, "We're musicians. We're paid to play. If you need us for anything related to our performance, even carrying heavy equipment on and off the stage, we'll gladly do that. But we really don't want to get involved with Paul because we're not qualified for it and can't be responsible if something goes wrong. We have played with Paul for many years and we've seen it all. At first, we enthusiastically helped with everything, but we lost that enthusiasm over time. Paul either shouldn't be on tour or he needs to have at least one person who will look after him 24/7 and be properly paid for it."

Of course, Paul needed his own carers, and during the South American tour, he had not one but four people taking care of him at times (a physio therapist, a nurse, a security guard and a pusher). However, for this festival, due to the high cost of flights during the peak season, improvisation was necessary so that neither Paul nor the band's fees would be reduced. I fully understood the long-term necessity for Paul to have his personal crew. However, when I started working with Paul, I was told that he needed to receive a minimum fee from each show, and the band members a minimum wage. When all that was added up,

There was simply no money left to accommodate anybody else. Therefore, a revision of earnings was required. Paul's band showed their generous nature by voluntarily agreeing to slightly reduce their wages to ensure that Paul had

one or two crew members focused solely on his needs. From then on, this arrangement worked well at every show. At the festival in Italy, it was his trusted guy Dino from Zagreb, while for the show in the UK, it was Mark Inman and Max. For the remainder of the European tour, it was Max and Tomislav. In Australia, Chris Dale accompanied him and throughout the South American tour, he was with the Brazilian Beto. All of them contributed their knowledge, experience, strength and patience. It was incredibly difficult, but they succeeded.

The Norwegian band was completely right. When it comes to Paul and his health, there simply cannot be any improvisation at his shows, even for just one out of a hundred shows. Not a single detail can be left to chance because one small oversight can lead to a chain reaction of disasters. Paul's personality is such that you can do a hundred things right, but if a small, seemingly insignificant mistake occurs and Paul notices it, he will, in an instant, forget all the good that has been done. His mood will change and for the rest of the day, he'll be grumpy and complain based solely on that one minor issue that could have been quickly resolved. In this case, Paul's band held the opinion that it is better not to book a show than to leave anything to chance. I completely understood them now. I understood why they had insisted on top-notch backline equipment from the very first day of the show in Zagreb and why they wanted both their performance and Paul's to maintain a high and uniform standard. At the end of the day, let's be honest; how many top-tier Norwegian metal bands do we know today and conversely, how many Croatian ones. Perhaps I had viewed our Southern mentality of helping those in need as valid at that time, while perceiving the Northern approach as cold and inhumane. However, under certain circumstances, a line must be drawn, and one must say enough is enough. Otherwise, it's very easy to open Pandora's box. In this case, that box had long ago been opened. If I wanted to continue working with Paul, I needed to swallow my pride and focus solely on Paul's best interests (and thereby the band's and my own). That was the only way I would remain true to Paul, the band, the fans and even myself at the end of the day. My lesson was learned.

Furthermore, musicians are artists and we must understand them as such. Unnecessary physical and mental strain can only lead to poor performance

and that puts everyone at a disadvantage: Paul, the band, the promoter and the fans. Moreover, as Paul's manager, I should focus solely on management tasks and not take on the roles of pusher, nurse, runner and carer. That kind of over-work only leads to errors being made on one side or the other. When the band called me to come help Paul, I did so without hesitation. However, as we approached the hill leading to the reception, pushing Paul's weight up those last ten meters took all my effort. At one point, a sharp pain shot through my spine as if I had been struck by lightning. Nonetheless, in order to prevent Paul from rolling backward, I ignored the pain and managed to get him to the hotel reception. But in that instant, it all became clear to me. Although I had never experienced it before, I was sure I had sciatica. Throughout that festival, I somehow managed to walk around with a limp but as soon as I returned home, I had to spend the next three months on crutches in permanent pain. Paul's reaction to my pain was not one of any sympathy for me, rather he said, "Well, now you know what it feels like for me."



The gig in Spain went fantastically well and everyone enjoyed it. The fans were thrilled with the performance and the journalists wrote excellent reviews of it to follow. The meet-and-greet queue was enormous, so we had to split it into two sessions to satisfy everyone. Paul also managed to complete all his interviews that day. However, after the show, his tequila drinking quickly spiralled out of control. What was supposed to be "one or two shots" quickly turned into a whole bottle. Paul insists that each of his riders includes a bottle of Patron tequila. If it's not in the rider; he is grumpy all day and threatens not to perform. As his manager, I had to find some sort of compromise and try to monitor the situation, but in some instances, it was just impossible. That day, a little miracle occurred. Iris, who had been hanging out with us in the dressing room all afternoon and was just over a took her first

steps. Someone in the band found this amusing and commented, "Paul, Iris walked before you did," which Paul didn't find funny at all. At that moment, he asked me, "Did she just poop her pants?" and as if answering himself, he started making disgusted sounds as if he was about to vomit. Everyone around him scattered as he yelled, "Get her out of here. I hate the smell of baby poop. I hate kids!" and we had to clear the room immediately. This was obviously quite ironic as we and everyone around him had had to deal with the smell of Paul's toilet accidents so often before. Of course, Violeta started changing Iris' diaper straight away but when she took it off, she realised that our baby hadn't pooped at all. When we told Paul, he just murmured to himself, "Oh OK, maybe I just farted." When I posted a video of Iris walking on Facebook, many fans noticed Paul smoking next to the baby and criticized him for it. However, I knew he wasn't really aware of the situation and I didn't judge him for it, although it was clear that a small baby shouldn't be in that environment. Regardless, Paul seriously needed to think about his health and condition and he should quit smoking once and for all. Unfortunately, that will never happen.

Paul's gig in Spain was his first European open-air festival after the surgery, and we realized that he could pull it off really well if he wanted to. But, once he finished performing, the situation with drinking spiralled out of control. After Paul's show and meet-and-greet, I went out to see Ugly Kid Joe and KK's Priest, while he stayed in the dressing room drinking tequila and entertaining his friends. I returned to the dressing room only occasionally to grab some soft drinks. Paul and his friends moved to the courtyard area so he could hear Sepultura's show. In the backstage area, each band had its own cabin and the courtyard between them was like a working zone where everyone moved around, including forklifts and trucks. As the evening went on, Paul started to fade more and more from the tequila and eventually, he fell asleep. Those who were around him, his 'friends' simply abandoned him in the open, asleep in his wheelchair. When, after the gigs both the Norwegian band and I returned to the dressing room area we found that humiliating scene, we realized that things had gotten out of hand. We quickly ordered a vehicle to take Paul back to the hotel. At that moment, Surprisingly, as he saw how desperate the situation was, drummer Henrik helped in moving Paul this time. Paul by now was slowly coming to his senses, and along with a member of the

hotel reception staff, we managed to get Paul into bed. Paul's flight was scheduled for the next day in the late afternoon. The plan was for him to leave his room by 1 pm, have lunch at the hotel till 3 pm and then head to the airport. When we asked him when he wanted us to wake him up, he responded in a commanding tone, "8 am, not a minute before or a minute after. If it's not at that time, I'll be very upset and there will be big trouble." The problem was that the flight for Violeta, Iris and I was at around 6 am, meaning we had to leave the hotel just an hour after we had returned from the festival. Instead, we asked the staff at the hotel reception to make sure to wake Paul up at exactly 8 am and explained how important it was as we would already be in the air at that time, and if anything went wrong, no one would be able to reach us by phone. And, of course, things went wrong.

The poor receptionist didn't know what he was in for. When he went to wake Paul up at the exact time requested, Paul unloaded on him like a storm, berating him to the point that he was so scared he ran out of the room. When I landed in Zagreb, I found several missed calls from a number with a Spanish area code. First, it was the promoter and then it was the hotel. Paul not only hadn't woken up by 8 pm, but he didn't even wake up by 2 pm. Check-out time had long since passed and new guests were waiting to check into the room. When I called them back, the hotel informed me that if Paul didn't leave within 30 minutes, they would charge him for another day. Somehow, after a few calls, I managed to smooth things out with the festival organisers and the hotel and that particular nightmare finally came to an end.

After the upcoming shows, the plan was that Paul would return to Croatia to complete his treatments. While we were in Spain, Paul said to me, "Stjepan, just transfer half of my fee to my account and keep the other half in your account. That way, you can save it exclusively for my rehabilitation." "Great," I thought, "Paul is finally starting to think straight." I was actually very proud of him. But that lasted decision only about a week, until he sent me a message: "Hey, Stjepan, you know that money I left for my treatment..."

Now the reason why he requested the return of that money is anybody's guess and no longer important anyway, but the fact is that Paul could not be

relied upon to help himself. Despite his probably sincere desire to get better, in the end, the hopeless option always prevailed.

The trip to the Metal Italia Festival, which took place a little over a month later, was much more relaxed, except for the fact that my sciatica was at its worst and I arrived there on crutches. The promoter of this festival contacted us more than half a year earlier, and during that time, we managed to negotiate good terms. He allowed Paul to come to Milan a day earlier to relax in a hotel with all its benefits, as he had been complaining on his Facebook page all week before the festival about suffering at his home in the UK. This time, Dino, Paul's driver from Croatia, also joined us and proved to be an excellent crew member and whose assistance to Paul was fantastic as always. Hiring Dino was a great move, not only because Paul was much happier and received the constant assistance he needed, but also because I could focus on my role as tour manager (such as checking the conditions at the venue and how accessible they were for Paul, coordinating with the promoter, dealing with journalists, preparing the meet-and-greet and overseeing the merchandise). The band members also told me they would be happy if Dino could always be with us. Paul travelled with Ryan Air again because it was the only reasonable option but everything went smoothly this time with no major complaints. Paul's original agreed plan for the summer was that he would go for treatment in Croatia immediately after the Spanish festival, so I prepared three logical shows for him that would raise the necessary money. First, a gig in Zagreb, then one in Slovenia and after that the festival in Milan. The Norwegian band would fly to Croatia, where Paul would already be for his treatments and we would all travel together by van to Slovenia and Italy. However, when Paul cancelled his treatment in Croatia, the idea fell through. The Croatian and Slovenian dates had to be postponed for later, and we all flew straight in and out to Milan. The stay in Italy was mostly fine, although unfortunately, when Paul arrived at the hotel, the neighbourhood was experiencing a power cut. That day (and never again afterward), Paul arrived in an electric-powered wheelchair, one of whose batteries was working for a short while, while the other was broken. Now we couldn't charge either! Sometimes circumstances just align in such a way that cause problems that never could have been foreseen.



There were so many fans at the meet-and-greet that at one point, Paul felt weak and had to cut it short. After a break, he returned again later in the afternoon, much to everyone's delight. However, the organisers told me that when they saw his condition upon arriving, they doubted whether he would even be able to hold the gig. I completely understood them, as I too had the same thoughts when I saw the state he arrived in from his home in England but the show that day was fantastic and even worthy of a headliner (although he wasn't headlining this event).

The evening was truly memorable. Paul loves Italy and Italy has always loved Paul and that mutual affection continued. Paul flew back early the next day, while Dino, Violeta, and I returned to the festival, waiting for our evening flight. There were only two things that really bothered me that weekend. Firstly, Paul demolished the entire contents of the mini-bar in his hotel room and made several room service orders. Then at checkout he acted clueless, saying that the promoter should pay for everything, even though he knew very well that the promoter would only cover expenses specified in the rider, and that personal expenses were his responsibility. Such situations had already occurred before and of course, I had to cover them with my own money and blush in front of the promoters. The other issue was that he put both the promoter and the band members in an uncomfortable position at the show by asking in front of all of us for an increase in his fee, because it did not include the amount he paid for a taxi from his home to the airport and back. The fact is that I make an agreement with Paul and the promoter before a show and it is always respected on my part but Paul increasing his demands directly in front of the promoter seemed unprofessional to me, especially since he wanted the money in cash. Fortunately, the promoter

Alessandro Corno was very professional and completely understood the situation I was in, so we quickly forgot these little issues. And yes, I again paid this fee to him taking the money from Norwegian band, but promised them that I will give them money back in few days.

These three European gigs (Wolverhampton, Leyendas Del Rock and Metal Italia) now behind us. If we had ever been worried at the beginning about how the fans and the media would accept Paul's return to the stage and how he would handle it himself, there was no longer any doubt or obstacle for Paul to embark on a triumphant tour across Europe. However, before that, an important and emotional show needed to take place; Paul's debut performance at the now legendary Cart & Horses.

I arrived back in Zagreb from the Metal Italia Festival on September 18 and had just two days at home to finalise all the details for this next important step. There were to be two sold-out gigs at the place where Iron Maiden started their journey, and where Paul, who joined the band a few years later, had played his first show with them. The Cart & Horses is now owned by Kastro Pergjoni, the man who first initiated all of Paul's recovery and funding, and without whom none of this would have happened. It goes without saying that fans from all over the world came to these gigs, and it seemed that those two days would overflow with emotion. Many friends also attended, including Linda Harris and Mimi Burr (the wife of the, sadly passed Maiden drummer Clive Burr). Both shows would be unique with different setlists. One the first night, Paul's Norwegian band would back him and on the second he would perform with one of the best Maiden tribute bands, Hi-on Maiden. The plans for these shows had vaguely started to take shape from the very moment this whole endeavour began two years earlier. But it is a miracle that they even happened. Initially, Kastro didn't want these shows to take place at that time and in that way, and he had a good reason for it.

666TH DAY AT CART & HORSES

From the very beginning, as soon as it became clear that Paul would indeed return to the stage, both myself and many fans around the world (and, I believe, Kastro too), had a strong desire to see Paul make his way to the stage of the iconic Cart & Horses pub. There's no one familiar with the situation, who at some point didn't think about that kind of happy ending. After his first performance in Croatia, Paul often asked when I would book him for Cart & Horses. I kept telling him that everything would happen but only when the timing was right. For Kastro, it wasn't enough for Paul just to play a concert at the pub. He wanted more than that; he wanted to see Paul standing on that stage on his own two feet. He wanted to see a victory, not just for all of us who helped Paul, but for Paul himself to overcome all the difficulties of the last few years. That's why Kastro initially refused to book Paul's concert.

I also supported Kastro's stance because, it would hopefully serve as a motivation for Paul to get into his training by envisioning that moment as something worth striving for. Both Kastro and I naively believed that there was plenty of time for that. A year after the surgery should have been a reasonable period for his recovery even with the South American tour and other shows. The doctors and therapists in Croatia, Brazil, Chile and Mexico all asserted the same; if Paul truly committed to his exercises, three to four months of hard and consistent training would be enough for him to stand on his own two feet. After the South American tour, Paul had all of April, May, June, July, August and half of September for recovery in Croatia, with only the three concerts in Wolverhampton and Spain and Italy in that period. These shows would give him a short getaway and additional motivation to exercise. However, as you have already read; Paul had different plans. He skipped the anticipated return to Croatia in April to stay in Mexico, and then when he finally returned to the UK in July and performed with KK Priest, he postponed his second trip to Croatia and spent all the time leading up to the Cart & Horses show in the UK doing no training. Despite Kastro's opinion that Paul's show should not be booked at the Cart & Horses until he was fully on his feet; we slowly had to face

the reality of the situation. All those who have ever been involved in the music business know that shows of this type are usually arranged at least six months to a year in advance. The talks about the tour with KK's Priest and Paul's solo tour in the UK were already being finalised back in March, and at that time, we all believed that Paul's recovery would go as planned. He would return to Croatia, diligently train with doctors and that be ready and fully recovered before the shows. However, Kastro, knowing what was happening with Paul, was more sceptical and did not want to book the show based on assumptions, but purely on facts. "I will only be sure when I see him on his feet," he said. I, on the other hand, didn't have too many options. As you know, after Paul returned from Mexico, he urgently needed money for rent, for living expenses and most importantly for his treatments. If I didn't book these shows, Paul would be broke and that's when more troubles would start. He may even have been thrown out of his home onto the street, which would be a disaster. Everyone would wonder how Paul had ended up in such a situation. I was therefore forced to genuinely believe that Paul would exercise, that he would continue his recovery and that the concerts I had booked back in March could be held in the way everyone expected. Most of the shows had sold out in just one day, which further complicated the situation in case we wanted to cancel them. However, it soon became crystal clear that it wouldn't all go the way we had hoped.

If I had cancelled everything back then, Paul would have been left without any money by July, and that would have really opened the gates of hell. The cancellations in the UK and EU would resonate strongly among fans and in the media and likely forever seal his live reputation. In effect, it would have meant the end of his performing career. After that, no one would want to risk their money, reputation or anything else by booking Paul. With the cessation of income, Paul would be left without money for his home and living expenses and he could certainly forget about any treatment. This could very quickly mean death in his case. And no, I am not exaggerating at all when I analyse like this. Having considered all possible scenarios, I decided to keep all the booked shows and hope for the best. Among other cities, Paul would have two very important shows in London. One with KK's Priest at the prestigious Shepherd's Bush Empire, and the other a sold-out headline show at the iconic Underworld club in Camden. This actually put us

in a difficult situation. Even though Kastro didn't want to think about Paul's show until he was on his feet, in the meantime, he would be performing twice in London and yet not at the famous Cart & Horses. Both Paul and I were constantly being asked by fans in our inboxes why Paul was playing everywhere but the Cart & Horses.

It was very important to mention these things so that you can properly understand why Paul had to do shows and how we all found ourselves in a no-win situation. Kastro, myself and everyone else who was helping him hoped that Paul would decide to spend all the money he received on rehabilitation and worked hard for his recovery. After all, we all had our own lives and, to be honest, we would all finally benefit from a good rest from everything. However, the situation was what it was, and I was simply caught up in a whirlwind with no way out.

When it was announced at the end of March 2023 that Blaze Bayley had suffered a heart attack and was cancelling all his performances, Paul was still in Mexico. He made a Facebook post expressing his sympathy for Blaze and stating that he wanted to help him financially. His idea was to do a show at Cart & Horses, with the proceeds going to Blaze. That warm gesture from Paul resonated strongly among fans. I must clarify something here. Paul is a very warm-hearted and generous person, and when he says something of this nature, he truly means it. I had no doubt that he genuinely wanted to help Blaze, but at the same time, I knew that something like that would never happen. When it comes to money, Paul is the most peculiar person I have ever met in show business. Although some of his acquaintances and former collaborators told me money is the only thing that motivates him, I encountered a completely different side. He doesn't care about money at all. Often, he spends it as if there's no tomorrow and almost never monitors the flow of cash. Some artists keep track of every CD sold, every piece of merchandise and every possible revenue stream, while it seems to me that Paul doesn't care about any of it at all. I don't know if it's just because of the trust he has in me, but Paul has never asked to see accounts or anything. For example, he would send me to the store to buy something and when I brought it back to him, he never asked me for a receipt. He would just take the change without counting it and even when I tried to give him a receipt,

he would barely glance at it and throw it away right on the spot. When he sent me to the ATM, I would always get a balance statement after withdrawing cash and I give it to him. He would look at it vaguely, if at all, and then toss it aside. This behaviour genuinely made me uncomfortable because, while he approached everything so casually, it felt like a huge burden to me. Because of this, I obsessively collected and kept all the bills, slips, transaction statements and everything else. On the other hand, no matter how much money Paul earned from his shows, it always seemed to me that he was close to bankruptcy every single day. It was as if that money was simply thrown into a well. That's why I sincerely believed Paul when he announced that he would help Blaze, because he really wanted and intended to. However, I also knew that it wouldn't happen because, by then Paul wouldn't have any money.

His Norwegian band embraced the idea of helping Blaze and quickly expressing their desire to be part of it and, of course, to play completely free of charge. Kastro, however, wanted me to use the British band 'Hi-On Maiden,' a very good and well-known Maiden tribute band that regularly performed at the Cart & Horses, as that would save a lot of money on flights and hotels. If Kastro was to donate all proceeds to Blaze, it would be better to spend as little as possible on expenses so that more would remain for the donation. However, Paul was not interested in Hi-On Maiden at all at that point and insisted that if he was going to play for free in London, it would only be with his Norwegian band.

In the end, not only did he not play for free nor did he donate the proceeds, but a second night was added, on which Hi-On Maiden ended up playing, as the Norwegians were already busy that day. According to his Facebook post a few days before the show, Paul clearly wasn't feeling very well.



Paul Andrews

17. rujna 2023. · 🧑

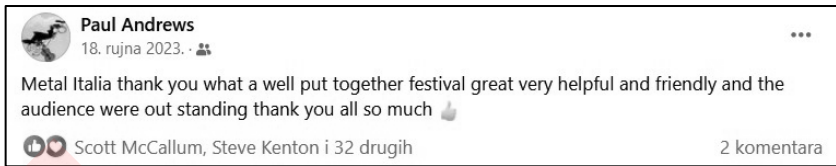


Have a good I'm home and I've had some really bad days but this is close to the top I'm over anxious and shakey can't eat or I'll puke so over and out 🤔

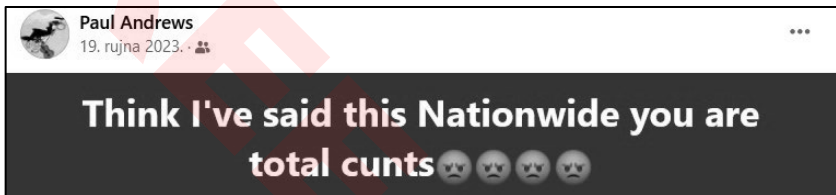


Henrik Haugsnes Kaupang, Nikos Falias i 30 drugih

9 komentara



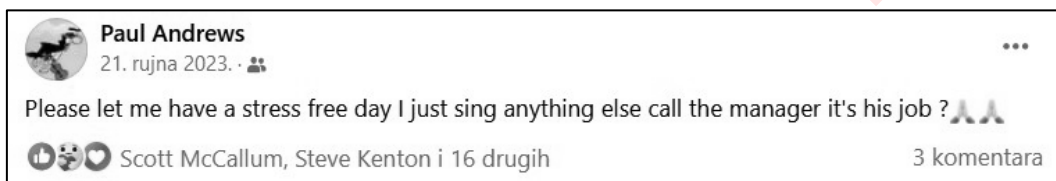
The next day, he praised the Metal Italia Festival, and deservedly so, as they were indeed excellent organisers with a great audience. Just a day later, he continued to fight his invisible battles with Nationwide, the bank he blamed for not being able to find out where his money had gone.



On the same day, he later posted a self-motivating message in which it was clear that he could hardly wait to finally return to London and perform in front of his most loyal fans and friends after many years.



As the shows approached, although he never mentioned to me what was going on, Paul was likely being bombarded by people asking for guest passes and who knows what else, so he posted an unusual message.



Mark Inman, Paul's friend, who in this case was also his assistant, was tasked with getting to Paul's home in Salisbury, taking a taxi with him to London and helping him with everything at the hotel and during the shows. Very commendably, Mark did this free of charge, as we all wanted to help out for these two shows. Personally, I paid for my own flights and hotel in London because I didn't want to take a single penny from this show. It was quite clear that in this very small club, the expenses were high and that every penny was important to help Paul. I arrived a day early to sort out the many invisible tasks that only tour managers and promoters know about. For example, Kastro didn't have a wireless Shure SM58 microphone, which Paul insisted on, so he had to buy a brand-new microphone specifically for this occasion, and it wasn't exactly cheap. Many things had to be arranged and resolved in advance for these shows to function, and practically everyone was running around to ensure everything was in place. Paul came to the club the day before, took some photos, and the images were shared around the world.





Paul Andrews

22. rujna 2023. · 🧑



Morning all well back in my manor and well happy the place is looking good and feels good and I'd be happy to come back , there's a good vibe here now? I'm knackered as had to sleep in my chair as had awful cramp last night and my poor crew Mark Inman ain't strong enough to keep getting me on and off the fkn bed poor Bugger 😞 anyway I'll get some rest some how before the show 🙏🙏 Kastro Pergjoni outstanding as always the man's a miracle and I'm really happy he's my mate , so see you tonight whose coming have a good day and well done Hammers last night and being right there was really great ❤️🔥🔥🔥

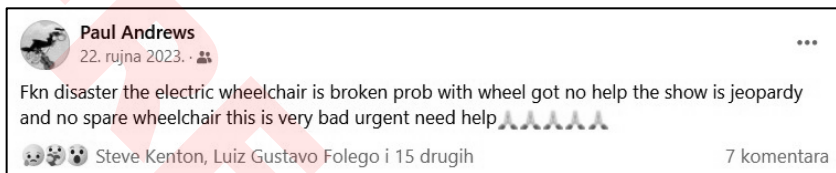


Scott McCallum, Kastro Pergjoni i 40 drugih

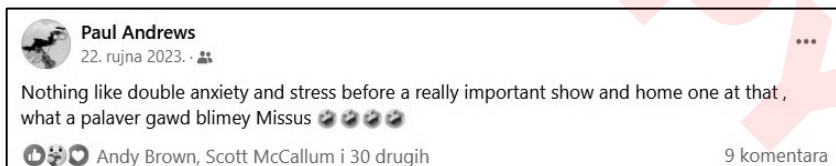
2 komentara

The next day when Paul woke up, he wrote a Facebook post thanking Mark and Kastro, even though we had all been working tirelessly to make everything perfect. I had booked all the hotels with my own money, which Kastro later covered from the proceeds, but booking hotels for Paul is a huge pain in the ass. This time, we had to ensure that we booked the closest possible hotel to the venue that had a fully adapted accessible room and bathroom, ideally within walking distance from the club, to avoid further use of accessible taxis, which are very expensive and must be ordered in advance. Since it was the weekend in London, it would have been quite a stroke of luck to get one on time when we needed it, especially after the show. Just that required numerous searches, calls to hotels and checking Google Street routes to the club. However, these organisational tasks are invisible, and some people probably think they just happen on their own. Considering that Paul wrote several messages on the same day addressing his manager (without mentioning his name) in a not-so-congratulatory tone, and that with a few rare exceptions when he expresses gratitude, he typically thanks everyone except me. I sometimes received messages from fans asking what was going on and why Paul was acting that way towards me. For my part, such things didn't bother me. I was just doing my job and fulfilling my duty as best as I could, helping the idol of my youth and whether he or anyone else, appreciated that or not didn't bother me much. In my heart, I knew I was doing a good thing and the results were more than tangible. People's memories aren't so short; everyone remembered what Paul's previous years of live performances were like when things got worse with his leg and he was forced to announce the end of his career. They also remembered what it was like when he was locked up in his apartment for years and his health worsened further, bringing him significantly closer to death. Paul had lost all will to live when he arrived in Zagreb. Although he

had a great chance to do so, Paul still doesn't walk yet he has recorded a new album, performed over 140 concerts, travelled to nearly all continents, received new teeth, new strength and a new desire for life. That's what makes me personally proud, not any thanks on Facebook. I was just glad that Paul woke up alive, happy and eager for this significant show to happen. The big day could begin. The hours until the show were counting down. The morning smelled like a good day. What could possibly go wrong?



Well, what wouldn't go wrong? Paul arrived in London with his wheelchair in a dilapidated condition, without warning anyone in advance of the problem. This is ultimately the fate of all his wheelchairs after several months of use, no matter how sturdy and designed for heavy-weight persons they might be. From the very first day of our collaboration, all the doctors, therapists and helpers had suggested to him that he was sitting incorrectly in his wheelchair, which is why he kept sliding down and falling out of them. Instead of sitting on his butt and upright, he was actually slumped in the chair, partially sitting on his butt and more on his back. This caused all the wheelchairs to be extremely difficult to manoeuvre; his legs would stick out too much and every standard leg extension was insufficient. Such unnatural weight distribution led to the breakdown of all the wheelchairs he used. During our collaboration, he had already changed them about ten times.



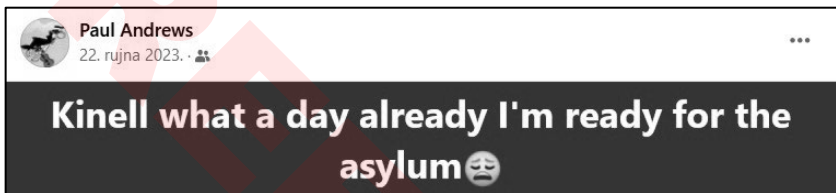
Paul continued with his posts about the catastrophic state he now found himself in, claiming that after everything that had happened to him, he felt ready for the loony bin. In every Facebook status, he didn't forget to emphasise himself as the victim of it all. Of course, he conveniently forgot to

mention that it was he who had put us in this situation. Bear in mind that Paul's first show at the Cart & Horses was on the Friday night and he had arrived the day before without complaining at all about his wheelchair. Around that time, I received an interesting email.

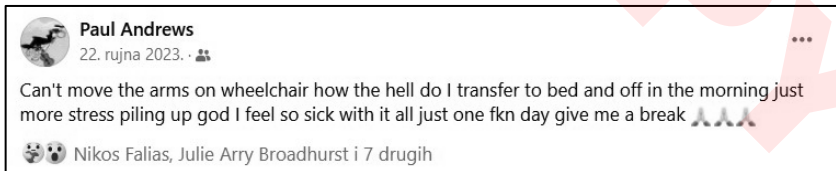
Hi, I'm a journalist and documentary filmmaker, and I'm currently working on a documentary about the New Wave of British Heavy Metal for the Franco-German channel, ARTE. It's a public channel, mainly interested in culture and history. The idea of the documentary is to show how this "musical movement" was born, what it says about England at that time and how it is at the origin of a real subculture, which has influenced new genres in metal well beyond its borders. I will be in London with a TV crew at the end of September and I've seen that Paul Di'Anno will play some gigs there. Would he be interested in participating and giving us an interview? Thanks for your help, Best Regards, Sophie Peyrard

Of course, I didn't want to miss this opportunity. Arte Channel is an extremely professional and widely recognised channel, and I thought it was an excellent idea for Paul to be involved. Once I persuaded him to do the interview, the question was only when it could be arranged. Their production team preferred the date of September 23, a date between the two shows at the Cart & Horses, so after a lot of back and forth, we settled on that date. At the same time as communicating with TV Arte, I was dedicated to organising the shows to ensure everything went perfectly. In addition to organising things for Paul, I also needed to pay for the flights of the Norwegians, book safe transportation for their instruments, arrange their transport from Stansted Airport to London and back and find them accommodation, while simultaneously arranging show number two with the English band. It required organising a team of responsible and trustworthy people to help transport Paul to the backstage area and back, along with a whole array of small details to ensure everything functioned flawlessly. No one had considered that on that day, we would also have to deal with the unforeseen problem of a broken wheelchair. A broken wheelchair, in practical terms, meant that the show would be cancelled. Paul informed us about this fairly late on Thursday, putting us a very precarious situation. Yes, London is indeed a big city, one of the largest in Europe; however, you need to consider that Cart & Horses is located in Maryland, quite far from the centre, and that all the companies that rent or sell wheelchairs were either far away, unwilling to

deliver, unable to sell immediately (they needed to be ordered and wouldn't arrive until Monday) or were just about to close. We were heading into the weekend and most of those shops were either already closed or operating on reduced hours. Kastro and I frantically called all the numbers we could find in the Greater London area, dialled hundreds of numbers and spent hours waiting for people to answer. Meanwhile, Paul was ranting on Facebook, insinuating that no one was doing anything and that he was again left at the mercy of circumstances before his most important show on his "home turf". This is one of his posts.



Imagine what would have happened if Kastro and I had also complained on Facebook about how we were put in a bind and how we were ready for the loony bin. I felt even more sorry for Mark, who was then in the hotel with Paul and had to endure all of this live. Considering that time was running out at the shops and that if we didn't find a suitable wheelchair both shows would have to be cancelled, we panicked and posted a Facebook appeal to any fans who might have a spare wheelchair or know someone who does. Surprisingly, help came but the wheelchair we received, while functional and a good temporary solution to save the shows, didn't have adjustable armrests. Paul rejected it with disgust and then wrote a new Facebook status, further portraying himself as a victim.



It's hard to describe the level of stress that all of us were experiencing at that time and Paul's posts only worsened the situation, misleading fans into thinking that nothing was being done. At one point, Kastro gave up and suggested that we cancel the first show and try to save at least the second one.

I strongly opposed this because the Norwegian band and fans from all over the world had already arrived and cancelling now would only complicate things for everyone. "What a hell of a day!" I thought and at that moment, for some reason, I began maniacally counting the days since Paul had arrived in Croatia up to that afternoon. I rubbed my eyes twice and started counting again but the result kept giving me the same total of 666. "Now it all makes sense," I thought and ironically laughed in my agony. At the very last minute, we found a store far away from the 'Cart' that provided wheelchair services and was still open. Kastro and I quickly jumped into a taxi during the city rush hour. We found the shop and bought what we thought was the best option for Paul. Of course, he wasn't happy with it either, but he did agree to do the show with it so we were saved.

Meanwhile, the Norwegians, still thinking that Paul was playing a benefit show, called Blaze's team to say how much they were looking forward to the show. They were met with confusion when they were asked, "Which show?" It was only then that they realised that the show that they had come to play for free for Blaze, was actually a standard show nothing different from the others, except that they were expected to perform without a fee. As soon as they arrived at Cart & Horses, they explained the situation and demanded to be paid for their performance. I agreed with them and thought this was perfectly reasonable but I didn't even consider mentioning it to Kastro. Instead, I told them, "Guys, I currently don't have the money, but I will pay you later from the earnings of the tour with KK's Priest tour. Of course, this wouldn't be from Paul's earnings but from my own percentage that I received as the tour manager and booking agent."

So, that is the truth about what happened that day. Fans on the internet could only see that Paul's wheelchair was broken, that he was under immense stress and on the verge of losing his mind, that someone had tried to steal his wheelchair from the hotel as a souvenir and that no one seemed to care about him. In reality, both Kastro and I, the Norwegians, Mark Inman and everyone else around him had been working hard, lost money and frayed their nerves just to ensure that the show took place. After all the crap and difficulties throughout the day and then in getting Paul inside the venue and onto the stage, the lights finally went out and history started to unfold before us.

Although I am a writer, it's hard to put into words what happened to me on that miraculous evening. When Paul was brought onto the stage, I backed

away to a corner of the club and began to cry, hoping that no one would see me. I don't know why. It just came over me and once it started, it didn't stop. There was so much built up inside, from the thoughts of those first heroic days of the seventies to Paul's arrival in Croatia, with all the ups and downs of the treatments and surgeries, and then countless shows on the other side of the world. The tears flowed freely, and I couldn't stop them. I felt so foolish and tried my best to remain unseen.

Everyone was there, all my friends or better to say my Maiden family. And they all sang the hits one after the other in a trance-like state. Even though Paul had never sung on this newly renovated stage before, watching him, I could clearly visualize how it had once been and how heavy metal was forged in East London. Everyone who came there contributed in some way, and it would truly be ungrateful to single anyone out. My heart was happy and full of pride, and I enjoyed every moment. I looked over at Kastro, who, despite being constantly busy in making sure everything went smoothly, was eventually much more relaxed in the end, with a smile on his face. Although Paul demanded his usual rider, including a bottle of Patron tequila, Kastro wisely kept him under control, doing his utmost to avoid the worst, as it was clear from previous experience that Paul had no boundaries when it came to drinking, especially with many friends and 'friends' around him. Despite the stresses of the day, Paul ultimately gave us a fantastic show and all the fans left very happy. After all of that, we were left with the arduous and extremely dangerous task of lifting Paul back up the club's stairs and a sleepless night, hoping that the next show would at least be a little easier.





Paul Andrews

23. rujna 2023. · 🧑

...

Thank you all who came last night it was awesome it has been an extremely trying and stressing few day where I was questioning my sanity? It's all stupid small things that always have to be checked but they are not and it all builds up, but seeing you all made it better for a few hours thank you ❤️



Vi, Andy Brown, Scott McCallum i 64 drugih

13 komentara

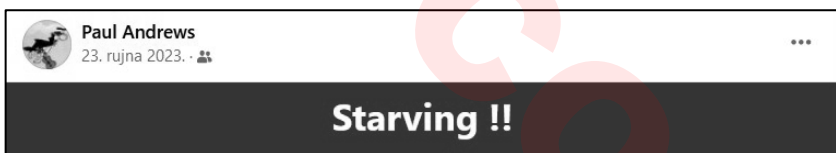
The day after the 666th day with Paul, I woke up exhausted and drained, unsure if I could even get out of bed and onto my crutches, due to the sciatica that was killing me. The story wasn't over yet either; we had another show at the Cart & Horses ahead of us, and all the struggles we faced the day before would have to be gone through again. I rubbed my eyes, intending to check social media for fans' reflections on the emotional show from the night before and everything that had happened, but I was met with this post. As I mentioned earlier, I never expected Paul to thank me for anything, however, I also didn't expect a public knife in the back. If only Paul knew what we all did for him that day and how much we destroyed ourselves in the process. Just for the taxi to find him suitable wheelchairs, I spent around £250 of my own money that day, not to mention that I literally walked half of London on crutches in pain to ensure he got everything he wanted. Mark Inman put his health at risk and literally broke himself trying to help him, while Kastro ended up as the biggest victim, enduring so much stress and spending so much of his own resources that I take my hat off to his patience. But in the end, it seems that everyone else is to blame, especially me, because as Paul says, "Many small things that should have been checked in advance were not". Thank you, Paul, thank you very much.

The fact that he came to London with a wheelchair that he must have known days was falling apart and staged the scene where it broke down right there, just to put us in an awkward situation, he certainly omitted to mention. Myself, Kastro and Mark, and all the fans who saw his and our panicked Facebook posts rushed around to find him a suitable wheelchair in a short amount of time. Then, the first one wasn't right because it didn't have good brakes, the second one wasn't good enough because it didn't have adjustable armrests and the third one eventually fell apart under his weight. And we all played into that farce, spending our own strength, money and health to help. Did he ever ask us how much it all cost and if he could pay for it? Of course, not.



At least Mark received a thank you from Paul, which he definitely deserved. However, by then it was clear that as Paul's personal carer, he was not a good or permanent solution (even though I had already made arrangements with him to be Paul's driver and helper on the upcoming UK tours). Castro, watching him struggle, commented, "Mark might be good as Paul's psychological support, and as a person with only one leg he can surely understand Paul in that way, but for him to push Paul around or move him in and out of the wheelchair doesn't make sense, no matter how much he wants to and thinks he can."

I knew Paul would be fine that day as soon as he posted a few minutes later saying he was, "dying of hunger" (his classic status that he has been posting all these years), as that was really the only thing he truly cared about.



What is "starving" supposed to mean? And who is this status directed at? Well Paul, you're hungry but you're in a hotel with a free breakfast. You got money from the show, so you can go to the hotel restaurant or order delivery food, or room service. So, order, brother! Buy, eat, buy more, overeat yourself if you want. Do whatever, but leave people alone and don't write that you're dying of hunger because it's not true. By doing so, you create the impression that no one cares about you and that you're always left alone, abandoned, hungry and thirsty. With your Facebook posts, you achieve just that. Fans who don't know you personally comment exactly that, "Poor Paul, he's left all alone AGAIN, no one cares about him." We don't NEED that!

OK, Stjepan Juras' rant, over and out! It's time to wrap up the first part of this grand story on a positive note. I couldn't hold back my tears as I watched videos from the Cart & Horses show and read the stories of the fans for whom the show was so special for many reasons. All the stress that had built up in me over the last few days faded away as I scrolled through all those videos, photos, and comments. It nourished my soul like a sponge in need of moisture. Pride radiated from every pore of my being as I hurriedly, yet awkwardly due to my pain, dressed to avoid being late for Paul's postponed interview with the French television channel Arte. Gliding through the streets of London in a taxi on my way to Maryland, I observed the buildings, parks and people of this magnificent city in a kind of trance, imagining what it all must have looked like back in the late seventies when Paul and Iron Maiden, with their wild and incredible energy, were creating the music that would forever change my life and the lives of millions around the world. As a small child in a distant communist country, I couldn't be there when that history was made, but now, I had the honour to do something so that the legacy of those legendary times would never die and that its path to eternity was paved in dignity.

Paul is an incredibly complex and completely unconventional person who defies all rules and pre-conceptions of rock star behaviour. You can love him or hate him but he is an undeniable legend. Those 666 days with him have permanently changed both my life and the life of my family, and it is something that no one can take away from me and that will go with me to the grave. In writing this book, I consciously decided to risk our friendship and trust because I believe that the publication of this book might be the last straw of salvation for Paul to hold onto. Although I haven't known him for very long, I've been around him long enough to realise that no one has ever told him straight to his face who he is today and what he is doing to himself and to others. If anyone dared to tell him, Paul would stop them, angrily shouting, waving his hands and claiming that his stress levels and depression had just increased. No one wanted to take responsibility for the potential consequences, and that's where the conversation would end. Once this book is published, it will be there for all time, standing silently and waiting to be read. If Paul wants to finally see the truth with his own eyes, he will have to read it. Even if he were to sue me, my mission would still have been achieved, because by stepping into the light, he would finally have to confront the shadow that has been walking in front of him for half a century.

This story continues in soon-to-be-completed trilogy, starting with the next day and everything that happened at the second show at the Cart & Horses. After that, Paul returned to Croatia and after a memorable show, created another scandal to remember. As if that wasn't enough, upon returning to the UK, his Facebook account was hacked and the new (fake) Paul was begging friends and fans for money, which many unfortunately believed, leaving them out of pocket. Once we managed to resolve that situation, Paul embarked on a journey through many prestigious UK venues with KK's Priest and Burning Witches. On that tour, incredible stories unfolded that have never been told before, and looking back on it now from a distance, I wonder how that tour even got to the end with Paul in the lineup. Not long after, Paul's comeback headline tour through the UK followed. It featured the classic tale of triumph and defeat, which provides first-hand answers to the question of how to completely sell out a long-awaited tour while simultaneously destroying the respect and trust of your close collaborators.

With great difficulty, Paul was persuaded to come back to Croatia again for his much-needed treatments, without which he surely wouldn't have seen Australia or EU. The tour through the EU began in Greece, where a fight occurred that nearly marked the end of our collaboration and significantly strained our relationship. Fortunately, everything calmed down before the shows in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, and France which also featured days filled with excess and even dangerous situations.

And then we set off on another adventure of a lifetime, a tour of Australia, which ended up filled with dramas and cinematic twists, that even made it to the Australian national news. From there, we travelled onto a new tour in South America, to Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay. On that tour, one of the biggest bust ups and conspiracies in rock history occurred, so scandalous that even the local media had to censor it to ensure that the 'Western world' would never find out. In the end, there was a story of redemption, worthy of a Hollywood script. In just a few months, so many insane stories unfolded that I sometimes wondered, "Did I just dream all of this?" But no, it all actually happened and left lasting consequences both on me and on the life of my family. This story continues in Volume 2, entitled 'To Hell and Back with the Beast (and Mini Beast)'. Are you brave enough to uncover the truth?

GOODBYE MY FRIEND

The day I heard the news of Paul's passing, I immediately called many good friends including Elias Aravides the promoter from Greece, whom Paul deeply respected and genuinely loved. I told him, "Elias, we have lost Paul." After a long pause, he replied, "It's true, my friend; we have lost Paul, but we have gained ourselves."

In that moment, Elias spoke one of the greatest truths about the enormity and strength behind the name Paul Di'Anno. Undoubtedly, during my professional collaboration with Paul, like everyone else, I earned a profit, as some of Paul's friends and fans later became my customers. However, the greatest wealth and legacy of Paul is the new world that materialized for all of us who worked with him, and the doors that opened without us even knocking on them. It's hard to imagine that without collaborating with Paul, today I would be managing the band Airforce, as well as two excellent Brazilian bands, Noturnall and Electric Gypsy. It's difficult to conceive that my small family would have had the opportunity to travel the world twice and meet so many good people across all continents. There is hardly a country in the world where, thanks to my collaboration with Paul, I don't have true friends whose homes are wide open to me, rather than mere acquaintances. Because of Paul, I share an unbreakable friendship with pilots, doctors, soldiers, lawyers, football players, musicians, promoters and writers around the world. Different profiles of people, different professions, but what we all have in common is an unbreakable friendship with Paul and admiration for his inexhaustible talent.

A few weeks after Paul passed, I sat in the lobby of a hotel in Marseille with Henrik, the drummer from his long-running Norwegian backing band. During a long night chat, we reminisced about all the funny and the sad stories. We both concluded that what Paul gave us all was priceless. After all, without him, it's hard to believe we two would have ever met and now we are friends discussing business collaborations. When I was a small and relatively unknown booking agent and manager trying to push my bands into the international market, many doors were closed to me in the early days.

However, now I've learned how to quickly put together a good tour; I now know what clubs in different countries have what conditions and equipment. Local promoters and club owners are no longer strangers but rather friends with whom I chat and even send birthdays online. My world has genuinely changed in these three years. Not all directly due to Paul, but my collaboration with him literally propelled me onto the global music stage like some sort of key that opens all locks. Walking through the VIP lounge at the Wacken festival this summer, several major players in the music industry who I didn't even know, approached me to shake hands and congratulate me, leaving me quite stunned. In a world I'd long tried to enter, I was already reserved a spot without even asking.

Paul was a man of a thousand faces and personalities, able to change into any of them in the blink of an eye. Yet, despite this, he was unique and irreplaceable, and anyone who genuinely knew him (which is a very rare number of people) would wholeheartedly agree. Paul was just Paul, and nothing can be compared to him.

In the days after he left us, I received thousands of messages of condolence (many times more than when my father passed away, also in 2024). Social media was flooded with Paul's photographs and videos for over a month, and there was hardly a corner of the world where I could hide from the news of Paul's absence. "Wow," I thought, "It wasn't even like this when Lemmy died or other true legends like Eddie Van Halen." Perhaps none of us are truly aware of how great Paul Di'Anno was and how much his singing and overall legacy were valued. Everyone bid him a fond farewell, even his beloved football clubs, West Ham United and Corinthians, and some of the biggest musicians in the world. I have never seen so many touching and emotional messages about anyone at a single event in my life.....

And I rightfully wondered why do all these things have to happen when someone dies? Why did almost every other person write that they would forever regret not going to see Paul when they had the chance? Why did we struggle to fill clubs of 500 people on the last tour, yet suddenly 50,000 people regret not seeing him when they could? This, my friends, is life and the only one we have. We take too much for granted and always think we'll

have time to enjoy later, continually postponing things instead of living life for the day and bravely inhaling every breath we're given.

Paul Di'Anno, we can confidently say, lived his life to the fullest. What he experienced (and survived) remains unimaginable and insurmountable for many of us, and surely many have wondered, "Well, is it finally time for him to calm down, take care of his health, and spend the rest of his life peacefully, in a manner befitting someone of his age?" Even while I was halfway through writing this question, a bold, capitalized answer appeared before my eyes: "**NO!**"

Paul was not the type to stop, to calm down, or to assess the situation and act rationally based on that. Paul was Paul, living without any rules, and that's precisely what gave his singing and presence a whole new dimension. This could always be felt in his voice, his rage, his vocal unpredictability, and, on the other hand, the lyrical impact that was always evident. Throughout all these years, Paul never lost himself. Many people have tried to sing and have executed songs like "Remember Tomorrow" or "Killers" excellently and skillfully, but Paul, even in his worst moments, backed by drugs and alcohol, still sounded more authentic than many. His performance could not be replaced in any way.

What he has left us must be cherished as the greatest treasure. We must preserve the memory of his character and his work, because as the years go by, there will be fewer and fewer of us here to be living witnesses to his unique presence. There can be thousands of such books; every friend of Paul could write numerous incredible stories. I have chosen to do the same, and I will complete my mission. Many of you have seen photos of the encounter between Bruce and Paul, but you don't know what lies behind that, how it came about, and what was attempted to be arranged there. Many have wondered whether Paul would step on the stage of West Ham stadium and sing at least one song at Maiden's major home concert in the summer of 2025, celebrating the band's 50th anniversary. We would get answers to all our questions very quickly, but now we never will, because, unfortunately, his heart, which had always been big for many friends and fans, ultimately could not endure. A part of me will never get over that, while another part takes comfort in the thought that Paul likely passed away in the most painless and instantaneous way possible, without prolonged suffering, as life had not spared him in recent years. However, one thing I am sure of is that Paul knew until the end of his life that he was not alone

and that there was always someone by his side to be there when needed. Even after touring the world once or even twice, he was assured of being a living legend, never forgotten by thousands of fans worldwide.

Although I never looked at it this way, the fact that he is no longer with us comforts me with the words of one of his, and my, friends, who advised me using musical terminology: "Don't be sad, Stjepan. This was expected and had to happen. Paul has already sung the concert of his life, and you brought him back to life. What you did, with the help of all of us, was just an encore of his life, where he stepped back into the spotlight one last time to say goodbye to fans all over the world in a long farewell. You shouldn't be sad; you should be proud, because Paul died loved, almost on stage, and what you did is a true miracle."

I am not a miracle worker because the miracle was created by all of us together. In this story, there is no unimportant person. Everyone contributed towards the same goal. I may have been a catalyst, but without all of you, every attempt I made would have been futile.

I never intended to write this book with such an ending and I am truly saddened that Paul was unable to read it, no matter how difficult it might have been for him. I dedicate it therefore, to all of you who helped. Our mission did not end with Paul's death. Continue to be kind, as there are many people in the world who need your help. Not all of them are legendary singers or famous celebrities. Many similar stories exist in homes around the world and remain hidden from the public eye. Both Paul and I would be happy if you continue to help those in need.

And to you, Paul, I wish you peaceful dreams. We showed the world what can happen when two madmen decide to move mountains and reach for the stars. I will never forget you, and I will proudly carry your name wherever I go and in whatever I do. Although the years spent with you were hard and demanding, they were also the most beautiful years of my life. We loved each other and we hated each other, but we always moved forward without looking back. I know how passionately you awaited the new leg of the tour and the return to Canada, the USA and Japan, but in life, sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. I believe there is a life in which we will meet again someday.

PHOTO CREDITS

Most of the photos in this book come from my private collection and the photographers were usually myself or Violeta. The book also contains screenshots of public Facebook posts by Paul, myself and others involved in this project. Also, in several places I used media articles reporting on the state of Paul's health and progress. Wherever it was possible, I always contacted the authors and asked them for permission to use their works. In rare cases, sometimes it was unclear who took the photo during a show or in a dressing room. In those cases, I have credited the owner of the photo to the best of my knowledge in good faith. I always aimed in this book to respect the photographer's intellectual property and state the true author. All of them gave me permission to use some of the images originally posted on their personal Facebook profiles. Huge thank you to all of them.

Page 28: Kastro Pergjoni.

Page 108: Željko Hladika for Pixel (published in Večerni List).

Page 150: Wes Orshoski.

Pages 143, 144, 145, 146, 147 and 165: Sanja Matić.

Page 148: Unknown photographer, courtesy of Mladen Mutak.

Page 183: Courtesy of Poliklinika Oxy.

Page 188: Unknown photographer, courtesy of KISS online team.

Page 214: Marino Grgurev.

Page 222: Dragan Krehula.

Page 257: Gus G.

Page 266: Courtesy of Warhorse band.

Page 367: Unknown photographer, courtesy of Paul Di'Anno Mexican team.

Page 371: Unknown photographer, courtesy of KK's Priest team.

Page 399: Unknown photographer, courtesy of Mark Inman.

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Finally, a big thank you to every member of Iron Maiden, past and present, and everyone who ever worked for the band. Keep doing the greatest job in the world. We, the fans, will always support you!



Croatian Iron Maiden fan club - www.maidencroatia.com