

ELVIS SIGHTINGS

By Lewis Routh

CHARACTERS

Voice -- an unseen voice, soothing, mellow, calming, amplified.

Loxley Doogan – Winfield -- she wears a hospital gown, appears frightened, her hair looks as if it's not seen a comb in weeks, she is from the South and peppers her speech with slang.

Elvis, the King, this actor also portrays Beau Doogan, and other Elvis impersonators

SCENE: an empty stage with a scrim upstage. On the scrim is a "gobo" reading "ELVIS." Loxley stands at center, facing the audience with her eyes closed. There is a scrim behind her which is the entire backdrop of the play. As needed, a slide projector projects images on this scrim. If there were an image on the scrim at the beginning of the play it would be some desolate place.

Voice

Loxley?

(Waits patiently.)

Loxley?

(After a moment.)

Loxley Doogan?

Loxley

(Eyes closed.)

I don't go by my married name no more. I done told you that. I go by "real" name: Winfield. Loxley Alma Winfield. L.A.W. That's the first letters of my name, Loxley Alma Winfield, law. If it was my married name, it'd be "Lad." Ain't that a kick in the head?

Voice

Loxley?

Loxley

(Petulantly, like a child. Her eyes are still closed.)

What?

Voice

Loxley, can you hear me okay?

Loxley

Yeah, I hear ya.

Voice

Loxley, can you open your eyes?

Loxley

(Her eyes remain closed.)

I ain't a re-tard. Of course I can open my eyes.

Voice

Loxley, open your eyes, please.

Loxley

Now?

Voice

Yes, right now, open your eyes and tell me what you see.

Loxley

(Reluctantly, she opens her eyes and is startled by the audience.)

Good Gawd-a-mighty.

Voice

What's the matter, Loxley?

Loxley

Sometimes, I think the cheese has done slid right off my cracker. Like right now for instance. I look around and I see people ever'wheres.

Voice

You see people?

Loxley

Yeah, ever'wheres.

Voice

What kind of people?

Loxley

Reg'lar people. Normal lookin'. Well there is ONE wearin'...

(Describe the attire of someone in the audience.)

I guess that's not really weird; but it ain't normal either; is it?

Voice

And what are these people doing, Loxley?

(Loxley studies the audience for a moment.)

Loxley

They're just looking right back at me as if they're waitin' for me to say somethin'.

Voice

Do you know what the "something" IS that they are waiting to hear?

Loxley

(She thinks a moment, as if this might be a test question she must get correct.)

Somethin' they can take with them when they leave?

Voice

Something profound?

Loxley

Yeah, that's the word. "Pro-Found." You sure got yourself some ten dollars words. "Pro-Found." That there is a ten dollar word for true.

(She looks at the audience, as if they might harm her in some way.)

That's what's got me so worried.

Voice

Why does that worry you, Loxley?

Loxley

(Excitedly, as if this is wonderful news.)

There was a full moon last night! And it lit up the sky like a spot light!

(Looks at the audience as if she's awaiting an answer.)

People say a full moon makes folks crazy;

(Forceful, tearfully, angst ridden.)

... but that ain't true!

Voice

It isn't?

Loxley

(Angrily.)

No, it ain't! It don't matter if the moon is full or not! People is crazy because... because they's nuts – period! The moon ain't got nothin' to do with it! They say the moon controls the tides of the ocean, too!

Voice

Yes, that's true.

Loxley

(Skeptical.)

Yes, it's true that the moon controls the ocean tide, or yes it's true that people say it does?

Voice

The moon DOES control the tides.

Loxley

(Voice is pulling her leg, she grins knowing this.)

It don't neither!

(There is a doubt within her.)

How's it do that?

Voice

Gravity. The gravitational pull of the moon affects the tidal ebb and flow.

Loxley

(To the audience.)

Well, hell's bells, if that ain't pro-found nothin' is!

Voice

Loxley? Why don't you tell them about HIM?

Loxley

(She frets over this, as if she might begin to cry.)

I don't know nothing "pro-found," about HIM, I only remember regular stuff.

Voice

What regular stuff?

Loxley

(Reluctant.)

You know the kind-a regular stuff I know. His stuff. Don't make me say it in front-a them!

Voice

Why don't you want to talk about Him in front of the people, Loxley?

Loxley

'Cause they'll think I'm plumb bumfuzzled... off-my-rocker... crazy-as-a-bed-bug.

Voice

Oh, I don't believe they'd think that, Loxley. Tell them some of the "regular stuff" you know.

Loxley

Ya mean Elvis stuff?

Voice

If you'd like.

Loxley

(She thinks for a moment, then the realization arrives!)

Oh, I just remembered somethin' PRO-FOUND! Somethin' Elvis said once-t! Can I tell 'em that?

Voice

Certainly you may.

Loxley

(Proudly.)

"Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it's not going to go away." Elvis said that.

(She is scanning the faces of the audience, do they understand it, do they hear her, are they laughing at her?)

I think they want somethin' else. Somethin' more; but maybe... not so pro-found.

(Her own quote.)

"The truth by moonlight is just as true as the truth in daylight." You know who said that? Me! I just made it up. I do that sometimes... things just pop into my head and fall right outta my mouth before I can stop it!

(Fear returns. She thinks for a moment. This is the first time we see her actually excited about something.)

Elvis Aaron Presley had a twin brother that was stillborn and at the age of ten, dressed in a cowboy suit, and standing on a chair to reach the microphone, Elvis sang Red Foley's "Old Shep" at the county fair – right outside-a Tupelo -- and won second place: a \$5 prize and a free ticket to all the rides.

(She reverts back to her "scared self" backs away from the dangerous audience.)

That's the kind of regular stuff I know. Stuff like that there.

Voice

So, "regular stuff" means information about Elvis Presley?

Loxley

(Afraid she's answered incorrectly.)

Yeah. I know a heap-a stuff about Elvis. Ain't that regular?

Voice

Perfectly regular.

Loxley

For me, you mean.

(Smiling, happy about this.)

I know I ain't the only person that loves The King – but I think I must love him more-an anybody else. At least that's the way it seems to me. I know everything about him... he was just eighteen when he recorded *My Happiness*. He recorded that for his...

Voice

(Interrupting her reverie.)

What are the people doing, Loxley?

Loxley

(Points at the audience.)

You mean them?

Voice

Yes, Loxley. The people that are watching you, what are they doing?

Loxley

(Studies the audience before answering.)

Some of them are laughin', which is kind-a rude. I keep checking to make certain-sure I ain't nekkid again. You know I keep having that dream about being nekkid in front of a whole-bunch-a folks and they're just laughing away?

Voice

But you're not naked now are you?

Loxley

(She looks at the way she is dressed.)

No... I ain't nekkid.

Voice

What are you wearing right now?

Loxley

I don't know; but it sure is ugly. Shapeless – like a old sack. You know what I think? I think I got on one-a them hospital gowns.

(She checks the back of the hospital gown and is alarmed.)

Good gravy!

Voice

What's the matter, Loxley?

Loxley

It's one-a them kind that's open in the back and shows my underwear.

Voice

That's okay, Loxley.

Loxley

It might be "okay" where you come from; but my Mama will have herself a hissy-fit if'n she finds out I was showin' my underwear to a bunch-a dang strangers. Good gravy! I can hear her now, "Loxley Alma Winfield, hadn't you got no up-bringin'? What was you thinkin'?"

(Laughing at this)

Ya know, that's just plumb stupid. Mama always said that, "What was you thinkin'?" Whenever she was mad at me for doin' somethin' dumb. "Loxley Alma Winfield, get outta that mud-puddle, Girl! What was you thinkin'?" An' I always wanted to answer her – real smart-mouth, you know? Real sassy! "Well, Mama, I was thinkin' I might like to be filthy dirty!" But I knew my Pa would whollop me good if I ever...

(Her voice trails off, remembering the beatings. Fear returns.)

Voice

Is that all you're wearing, Loxley? Just a hospital gown?

Loxley

And shoes. I got on shoes. Runnin' shoes. I'm glad I'm wearing shoes.

Voice

Why are you glad you're wearing shoes?

Loxley

In case I have to run. So many times I have to run, you know? And if I'm wearing shoes, I can run faster. I wasn't wearin' shoes – that night – and I cut my foot runnin'. That's where all the blood come from. That... and the other...

Voice

Do you believe these people that you see are real, Loxley?

Loxley

(Study the audience for a beat.)

I don't know. They ain't really there; are they? But, hells-bells, I feel like I can just reach right out and touch 'em.

(She does reach out and places her hand on someone's arm.)

And when I do, I can feel the warmth of their skin...

(She places her hand on their face.)

...and the softness of their face.

(Speaking gently to the person she is touching.)

What's your name?

(She waits for an answer. NOTE: The person may or may not say their name, it is irrelevant.)

Voice

Does this person answer you?

Loxley

I cain't hear 'em. Sometimes I can see their lips moving; but I cain't hear 'em. It's like they're trapped inside some kind of freaky-decky silent movie with me.

Voice

Do you think the people will go away?

Loxley

Yeah. Eventually.

Voice

Can you make them go away?

Loxley

No, they got to decide when they'll leave on their own.

Voice

Do you know when they will leave?

Loxley

(She studies the faces of the audience before answering.)

They won't leave right away. They got to get their money's-worth first.

Voice

Their "money's-worth?"

Loxley

Yeah, it's like they had to pay to see me. Like I'm an exhibit at the County Fair and they won't leave 'til they get what they come for... or maybe they'll leave when I win the second place red ribbon and \$5 and a ticket to all the rides. That'd be something; wouldn't it?

Voice

And that's what these people have come for?

Loxley

Naw, they come for somethin' better than that. Somethin' only I can tell 'em.

Voice

And what they've come for is something profound?

Loxley

Yeah; or maybe just something... I don't know... entertaining. I mean, look at 'em! Can you see the expression on their faces? They's so excited! Like they cain't wait for it to happen! You know that feeling when you go someplace for the first time... someplace real exciting? It's like the whole time you're going there the anticipation of it has this kind-a grip on your heart and you feel like you just might explode. I felt like that the first time I went to Graceland. That's the kind-a feelin' they seem to have.

Voice

Have you had this feeling before?

Loxley

You mean before I ever set a foot into Graceland?

Voice

Yes.

Loxley

Yeah. I felt that-a way the first time I went out with Beau. Beauregard Doogan. He was workin' at the Phillips 66 Station and he was all greasy and he reminded me of Elvis and I snuck out one night to meet him. There was a full moon... an that moon was bigger than any other moon I'd ever seen! Beau was real nice to me then. Bless his little cotton socks. This was before we got married. He took me to the Dixie Drive-In to see *King Creole* and he kissed me on my neck. I'd never had nobody kiss my neck before. I thought he couldn't aim good. But then I found out he always starts by kissin' the neck, then he moves on up. Beau was kind-a rough... most times. But anyways, that's the feelin' I got then – like I just might bust – and that's the way them people out there look – like they might explode.

Voice

So, you think they're going to explode?

Loxley

Good gravy, I hope not. I just think they're excited about being here.

Voice

And where is "here," Loxley?

Loxley

Here. Where I am right now. Here.

Voice

Can you describe this place?

Loxley

(Looks around.)

It's kind-a empty. A stage? That's it, I'm on a stage. It's kind-a little. It's so dad-gum small, you couldn't cuss a cat without gettin' hair in your teeth.

(She is startled at their laughter and freezes where she is.)

Voice

What's the matter, Loxley?

Loxley

Nothin'. They just all of a sudden laughed right out loud!

Voice

What are the people doing now?

Loxley

Sittin' at tables. Teeny little tables. They're drinkin'. There's a bar somewhere, probably with a waitress. The waitress looks like she wishes the show would hurry up and get over with.

Voice

Have you ever been in this bar before today?

Loxley

It seems familiar. But I doubt it. It's too nice. The bars Beau used to take me to were kind-a rough, dirty places, with lots-a pool tables and people cussin' and loud music blarin' from the jukebox. Beau would always get mad at me, 'cause I didn't want to drink nothin'; but I wasn't bein' an old party-poop, it's just that I didn't want to have to set my behind down on some filthy toilet seat.

Voice

Is Beau there now?

Loxley

(She looks around nervous, she may even leave the stage if there is a big crowd. She is relieved that Beau is not there.)

No. I don't see nobody I know. And I sure as heck don't see Beau. Anyway, Beau cain't be here. Beau's in the boneyard. He ain't here. But they's here! Just the people. The audience.

Voice

Are the people enjoying themselves?

Loxley

I think so; but it may just be the alcohol. I don't think it's me.

Voice

But they're all watching you?

Loxley

Yeah.

(She looks out at the audience, taking them all in, slowly – she tries an experiment, takes the bottom hem of her hospital gown and “flashes” the audience quickly.)

Yep, they're all watching me. I can make 'em laugh.

Voice

So, you have control over them?

Loxley

Kind-a. The way a full moon affects the tides. You know, grave-a-ta-shun...

(She makes a weird face.)

It's kind-a fun.

Voice

Do you think you're an actor on a stage?

Loxley

Good gravy, I hope not!

Voice

Why do you hope you're not an actor on a stage, Loxley?

Loxley

(Thinks about this, trying to remember what she'd read.)

Well, it's like – it's like what Elvis said one time, in an interview, "I don't want to read about some of these actresses who are around today. They sound like my niece in Scarsdale. Now, I love my niece in Scarsdale, but I wouldn't buy tickets to see her act."

Voice

And that's how you feel?

Loxley

Yeah, like I'm going to disappoint them somehow.

Voice

And why do you think you'll disappoint them?

Loxley

'Cause I'm just kind-a normal. I ain't that interesting. Unless you count all the times I seen Elvis. I guess that's something.

Voice

Do you think the people in the audience want to hear about Him?

Loxley

(She studies them.)

I don't know. There's one or two that look like they might stand in line in front of Graceland for two hours, just to see inside. The rest of 'em look like they're just glad this place sells alcohol.

Voice

Do you want to tell them about your Elvis sightings?

Loxley

No.

Voice

Why not?

Loxley

They're... they're unbelievers.

Voice

What do you mean?

Loxley

It's like... it's like trying to talk about Jesus to a bunch of heathens.

Voice

So, Elvis is like Jesus?

Loxley

(Tearfully angry.)

I didn't say that. Why do you always put words in my mouth? Beau did that, too! I wouldn't take it from Beau and I sure as hell ain't gonna take it from you.

Voice

Close your eyes, Loxley.

(Loxley closes her eyes.)

Calm yourself.

Loxley

I'm trying.

(Fearful. Alarmed.)

I've forgotten how. I've forgot how to calm myself.

Voice

You must picture – in your mind – a place of rest. A place that you find comfort. A place where you feel safe.

Loxley

That's right. I remember now.

(She concentrates on the image.)

Voice

Do you have a restful place in your mind, Loxley?

Loxley

(Smiles at the image.)

Yeah, it's a real pretty garden.

Voice

Picture the tranquil garden. Do you see it?

Loxley

Yeah.

Voice

Would you describe it for me?

Loxley

(Smiling with her eyes closed, content with this peaceful image.)

It's Elvis' Meditation Garden at Graceland.

Voice

And this calms you?

Loxley

(Her eyes remain closed through this; but she moves her head as if she sees it.)

Oh, yeah. It always does. I'm standin' alone on the stone steps in front of the brick wall, with its 19th-century Spanish-style stained glass windows, that curves around the graves and the circular fountain right in the center. I look over ... and there's Elvis' grave... lit by the light of a full moon! It's beautiful!

Voice

And what do you feel when you see that grave?

Loxley

I think, "What a wasted life." And then, I hear a voice, that is absolutely Elvis' voice... it truly WAS... and it says to me.

(Elvis says this with her from behind the scrim.)

"What about your life, Loxley? Take a close look at that, why don't you? Then come back and tell me, what's a wasted life."

Voice

Do you see Elvis?

Loxley

(With eyes closed, she scans the room for his image.)

No. Not this time. I just hear his voice.

Voice

Are you calm now?

Loxley

Yeah.

Voice

Can you open your eyes?

Loxley

Yeah.

Voice

Open your eyes, Loxley.

(She does.)

Are the people still there?

Loxley

Yeah, they're still here. Is that okay?

Voice

Are they still waiting for something profound?

Loxley

(She studies them before answering.)

I think they'd just like to order another drink.

(She smiles at the audience.)

Y'all can order another drink if you want one.

(She smiles at the audience.)

That seemed to make 'em happy.

(She is glad that the audience is happy.)

Voice

Would you like to tell them about your Elvis sightings now?

Loxley

(This concerns her.)

I don't know.

Voice

Does this worry you?

Loxley

Yeah.

Voice

Why does this worry you?

Loxley

I'm afraid they'll think I'm... you know... kind-a boogery.

Voice

Do you think it will help them?

Loxley

Yeah.

Voice

Do you think it will help them understand you better?

Loxley

No; but it'll help them.

Voice

You don't think it'll help them to understand you?

Loxley

No. But it'll help 'em to understand Elvis.

Voice

What do they need to know about Elvis?

Loxley

That he's The King.

Voice

Why don't you tell them about the first time you saw Elvis?

Loxley

(She takes her time, analyzing the crowd, before she begins. Once she begins, this was a monumental event for her.)

He was in the freezer in our kitchen. No, really! For true! He was! Sure as shootin' he was!

(She scans the audience for their reaction.)

I was little – maybe eight or nine. I was in the kitchen with my Mama. It was August 17, 1977. Early morning. Mama had just brought in the paper and she seen the headline – the one about Elvis dyin' – and it was like the wind got knocked out of her.

(She is now re-living the scene, taking the roles of Mama and herself.)

What's the matter Mama?

(Tearfully but softly – not hysterical -- as her Mama.)

Elvis is dead. Elvis Presley died.

(As herself.)

No. He cain't be. He just cain't be dead! And when Mama left the kitchen – to go tell the news to my Daddy – the freezer door opened, and I seen him inside.

(The scrim dissolves to show a refrigerator with the freezer door open and Elvis's head inside.)

And I kind-a screamed a little bit.

(She emits a soft, quick, jolt of a scream. Then she studies his face. Elvis looks back at her.)

Elvis?

Elvis

Yeah, little missy?

Loxley

Are you okay?

Elvis

It's cold as Christmas in here.

Loxley

(The scrim fades and we are back to the present.)

And that's all he said, "It's cold as Christmas in here." The radio played nothin' but Elvis' songs all day long, as if that might somehow bring him back – but all that did was make the people cry all the more. But I wasn't sad, 'cause I KNEW he wasn't dead.

Voice

You think Elvis is still alive?

Loxley

Sort-a. You know? The way Jesus rose from the dead and sort-a told the people what they had to do – to be true to His memory.

Voice

Did Elvis tell you what you should do?

Loxley

Not that first day, but later on. He told me to live.

Voice

To live?

Loxley

Yes. Elvis knew I was thinking about suicide – 'cause things between me and Beau had gotten kind-a loopy. I mean, Beau had started holdin' a gun to my head to make me do stuff... and one day, after Beau went off to work, I got that gun... But then Elvis said, "Don't do it Loxley, you'll..."

Elvis

(The scrim fades up and Elvis is visible, he picks up Loxley's speech.)

Don't do it Loxley, you'll break your Mama and Daddy's heart. Life is God's gift and you don't ever throw a gift away. You might get a gift you don't want sometimes; but it is still a gift. Don't ever throw away a gift, Loxley, just hang on to it and someday you can put it in a Garage Sale.

(The scrim fades. Elvis disappears.)

Loxley

And so I didn't... kill myself.

Voice

What made you consider suicide as your only option, Loxley?

Loxley

I don't know... I guess I was feelin' trapped.

Voice

Trapped?

Loxley

Trapped in my marriage – my life. Every single day was just a repeat of the lousy day before! Beau and me had a lot-a laughs at first -- when we was first married. We'd go places and do stuff together and people would always smile when they seen us together. And some times people even asked for his autograph – 'cause they thought he was Elvis. And he'd sign Elvis' name and we'd just laugh, 'cause Elvis was dead, ya know? And then one day Beau just sort-a turned ugly. Not in the face. He still looked like Elvis, especially late at night, when the lights is turned down low... or by the light... of a full moon. But I mean ugly in his soul. Like he was mad at the world and blamed me for his misery.

Voice

And this made you feel trapped?

Loxley

Yeah, I couldn't get out of it. Beau and me used to... make-love.

(She looks awkward, bewildered.)

Can I tell this in front of them?

Voice

Certainly. They won't mind a bit.

Loxley

When Beau and me "made love" – he was my first... and my last. I never "did it" with nobody else. But – in the beginning – when me and Beau "made love" it was special. Sweet and gentle. And slow. He took his time. He was so kind and I loved feelin' his hands on my body and I loved lookin' up at his face. It was like he was explorin' – always checkin' my expression and sayin' things like, "Is that okay?" And "I ain't hurtin' ya, am I?" Things like that. Like he cared. But then – after a time -- it got sort-a fast and rough. He'd just grab me and hold me down and he'd push hisself onto me without so much as a "Good mornin'" And once, when I told him I didn't like it so much – done like that – he slapped me – hard. Right across my face and he said, "A husband don't like it when a wife criticizes him." Right after that was when he started... holdin' a gun to my head. Not every time... just once in a while... and makin' me do... other stuff. So, from then on I just laid there quiet-like and took it. It was usually over pretty quick; but afterwards, I'd lay there and wished I was dead. And I thought I could do it; ya know? Kill myself. And that's when Elvis come to me and saved me.

Voice

How did that make you feel, Loxley?

Loxley

How did I feel about not killing myself?

Voice

Yes.

Loxley

Oh, I was so glad. That's when I knew that Elvis was really The King. He saved me.

Voice

And this made you glad?

Loxley

Oh, yeah! 'Cause I finally understood.

Voice

What did you understand, Loxley?

Loxley

I understood what I had to do.

Voice

And what was that, Loxley?

Loxley

I had to go to Graceland. It was the 25th anniversary of Elvis' death. August 16th, 2002. Elvis died in 1977. Beau and me was married by then and our love had kind-a soured -- and Beau didn't want to go.

Voice

Why didn't Beau want to go?

Loxley

'Cause he's a non-believer. He don't understand that Elvis is King.

Voice

But you went anyway?

Loxley

Oh, yes. I was... I don't know the word... but I HAD to go!

Voice

You were compelled?

Loxley

Yeah, that's the word, "compelled." I was compelled to go to Graceland.

Voice

Did Beau relent?

Loxley

Well, I told him either he and I was goin' or I was goin' alone.

(Proudly.)

So, he came, too.

Voice

What was that like?

Elvis

(As Beau, wearing a white T-shirt and jeans. No Elvis accent here.)

I ain't goin', Loxley.

Loxley

Fine. Don't go. I'll go by myself.

Elvis

You ain't goin' all the way to Memphis, Tennessee by yourself.

Loxley

Listen here Beauregard-kiss-my-back-cheeks-Doogan, I'm goin' with or without you!

Voice

(As the scrim fades on Elvis)

And what did Beau think of this?

Loxley

He liked to pass-a-brick! I'd never stuck-up for myself before. But I guess he could tell that I meant business. He decided he'd go, too. The ceremony was beautiful!

Voice

The ceremony?

Loxley

The candle-light procession in front of Graceland.

Voice

Can you tell them about it?

Loxley

(Pointing at the audience.)

Them?

(Loxley is proud to share this with the audience, she tells them this as if they were her best friend.)

It was beautiful. Y'all would-a loved it! There was 100,000 people there. Can you imagine? A hundred thousand holdin' candles! It was so bright -- it was brighter than the neon at the Heartbreak Hotel across the street, brighter than the full moon, too! Lisa Marie was there -- that's Elvis' daughter -- she was so pretty and gracious. And I heard that his wife, Pricilla was there, but I never seen her. It was rainin' real light. It was like heaven couldn't hold back the tears. And the candle-light, and the moonlight, and the light from the neon made that rain shine like ti was lighted-up from the inside! And even though it was rainin', nobody left -- they all just stayed -- like me they was "compelled" to honor His memory. There was lots of Elvis impersonators -- some good and some... that wasn't so good. There was young Elvises and old Elvises. Fat Elvises in white jumpsuits with big-old-gawdy-buckles and thin Elvises in just jeans and T-shirts. There was even quite a few oriental Elvises -- Elvis is real big in Japan.

Elvis

(The scrim lights come up to reveal an Oriental Elvis.)

You ain't nothing but hound dog!

Loxley

(laughing)

Them Oriental Elvises made me laugh!

(The scrim fades. She seems embarrassed.)

The King would-a liked it... I guess. They all had the long sideburns and most of 'em wore them big sunglasses. And everyone was crying. It was so odd – even though it'd been twenty-five years – their tears was new, as if he'd just died. And there was a very quiet, slow movin', candle-light procession that went right through them big gates and up through the meditation garden to his grave. But even with all them tacky Elvis impersonators standing in the light from the full moon, there was a...

(She searches for the proper word.)

...a respectability in the crowd. As if this was something sacred – something... I don't know... like church. Yeah, that's it, like church – Elvis was the sacrament and the people stood in the rain, and trekked to the grave to pay their respects. I read somethin' at the time, that I memorized -- "August 16 not only marked the 25th anniversary of Elvis' death but also his transformation--from kitsch to classic, from crass to cultivated."

Voice

What did Beau think of the procession?

Loxley

(Disgusted.)

Beau stayed at the motel watching *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* on TV. It was so disrespectful; but Beau couldn't see that. Beau said, "I ain't getting' soaked in the rain, just so's I can see some dead guy's grave."

(The rapture of the moment takes over, feeding her enthusiasm of the memory.)

But those – like me – were on a pilgrimage... a quest... we were compelled to show our compassion for Him. To honor his memory and to thank Him – in our silent prayers – for leaving us the legacy of His memory.

Voice

Was that your favorite part? The candle-light procession?

Loxley

No. I... I don't know why... but I liked the grave the best. Ain't that weird? Boy, these folks are gonna think I'm boogery for certain-sure now.

Voice

What was it about the grave which made you like it the best?

Loxley

It was big... and brass. It looked like a real heavy door. I kept thinkin' if I was strong... like Superman or somethin'... I could take hold of that there door and open it and go inside there and be with Elvis for eternity. I could-a stood there and looked at that door forever; but there was these big security men there that made the folks keep on movin'. When we filed past the grave, we all just moved on out to the street and people just held onto each other and cried. I bet I hugged a million people that night. Total strangers sharin' a bone-chillin' sadness. On my way back to the motel – where me and Beau was stayin' – I bought me one of them postcards that shows his grave, and the picture is so good, you can read the words on that big brass door.

(She closes her eyes and recites the words. It is eloquent and tender, filled with passion.)

“Elvis Aaron Presley -- January 8th, 1935 to August 16, 1977 -- Son of Vernon Elvis Presley and Gladys Love Presley; father of Lisa Marie Presley. He was a precious gift from God we cherished and loved dearly. He had a God-given talent that he shared with the world, and without a doubt he became most widely acclaimed. Capturing the hearts of young and old alike. He was admired not only as an entertainer but as the great humanitarian that he was. For his generosity and his kind feelings for his fellow man. He revolutionized the field of music and received the highest awards. He became a living legend in his own time. Earning the respect and love of millions. God saw that he needed some rest and called him Home to be with Him. We miss you, Son and Daddy, I thank God that he gave us you as our son. Signed Vernon Presley.”

Voice

Did you have one of your sightings? Did you see Elvis at Graceland?

Loxley

I never seen Him at Graceland; but I felt Him! His presence was everywhere! There was this one moment, at a 7-11 store, when this really good impersonator came in and was buying lots of moonpies and a Coakie-Cola, and – just for a moment – I thought he was Elvis. But, when he spoke...

Elvis

(The scrim lights come up and we see a Mexican Elvis – one of the impersonators, he looks great, but his accent isn't Elvis, it's Mexican.)

We don' hab deez moonpie in Nogales. They're good!

Loxley

(The scrim fades and once again she is embarrassed.)

He was from... like... Mexico or somewheres. I read somewheres that Elvis loves his fans... even the impersonators;

(She appears angry, fists at her sides, ready for a fight.)

...but they make me kind-a mad.

Voice

Why?

Loxley

It just ain't right. I don't know why; but it just ain't right. It's like dressin' up like Jesus. It's... sinful.

Voice

(Gently, this is fragile territory.)

And you wanted to kill him because he dressed like Elvis?

Loxley

(Laughing at the very idea of it.)

No. Good gravy, I'd-a had to have a Uzi to kill all them impersonators. I got nothin' against them people that dress-up like Elvis, they do it 'cause they admire Him so much they want – just for a moment – to BE The King. They love Him! They understand that no one has the talent that Elvis had; but it's their way of showin' Him they love Him. I just don't like it when they do it. It just don't seem right.

Voice

What about Beau?

Loxley

What about him?

Voice

How did you feel when Beau dressed up like Elvis?

Loxley

That was different. Beau was just bein' mean. Beau didn't love Elvis.

Elvis

(The scrim lights come up on Beau as Elvis, he is leering at Loxley.)

Hey, Baby.

Loxley

(Thrilled.)

Hey yourself.

(To the crowd.)

At the very first... when I first seen him in that motel room, I thought it was one of my Elvis sightin's. He looked so real. And he said stuff that Elvis would-a said.

Elvis

You only pass through this life once, you don't come back for an encore.

Loxley

I'm certain-sure I heard Elvis say that... or read it somewheres... or somethin'; but it made me BELIEVE... it made me believe that Beau was Elvis.

Elvis

(Beau, as Elvis enters the stage from behind the scrim, he wears a short sleeve shirt, jeans and cowboy boots. Elvis crosses to Loxley.)

You sure are pretty tonight, Loxley.

Loxley

(Demurely, she is reliving this moment.)

Thank you, Elvis.

Elvis

Do you recognize this costume?

Loxley

(Looks at his clothes.)

I don't think so.

Elvis

And you claim to be a fan? I thought you'd seen all my movies?

Loxley

I have; but I... I don't remember when you wore this.

Elvis

I wore this in my first film *Love Me Tender*.

Loxley

(Looks at his shirt, bewildered.)

Is this some sort of trick?

Elvis

No, Honey. This is what I wore in *Love Me Tender* starring me, Elvis Presley!

Loxley

(Laughing.)

It IS a trick! You're tryin' to trick me, Elvis! To see just how much of a fan I really am! You never wore no short-sleeved shirt in that movie!

Elvis

Sure I did.

Loxley

No, you didn't. And you didn't have "star billin'" – Richard Egan was the star! It's the only Elvis movie that didn't star Elvis.

Elvis

Well, well... you just got yourself a prize, little missy. You get to be laid by the King.

(Elvis kisses her neck, then starts to kiss her on the mouth.)

Loxley

(Afraid.)

Who are you?

Elvis

I'm Elvis, Honey and you're about to go to heaven!

Loxley

Beau? I should-a knowed it was you when you kissed my neck. You always start by kissin' my neck. Beau, what are you doin'?

Elvis

I'm makin' my little wife's fantasies come true. Come on and love me tender!

(A gun shot reports loud and Elvis staggers back, freezing in horror.)

Loxley

And that's when I shot him.

Voice

Where did the gun come from?

Loxley

I think... I think Elvis gave it to me... so I could protect myself from Beau.

Voice

So, you had one of your sightings? You saw Elvis?

Loxley

Yeah. He was so sweet. He come to me.

(Elvis comes to Loxley, holding her in his arms.)

And he held me. Kind-a rocking me back and forth, like my Daddy used to do when I was a little girl. And I knew it wasn't Beau! It was Elvis! 'Cause The King was so tender and Beau was never tender like that. Well, he was in the beginnin' but not in the end.

Elvis

(As he holds Loxley.)

Truth is like the sun. You can shut it out for a time, but it ain't goin' away.

Loxley

And I told Elvis that everything would be okay now.

(She is now back in the motel room, being held by Elvis.)

Everything's gonna be okay now, Elvis. God saw that Beau needed some rest, too, and called him Home to be with Him.

(Elvis kisses her neck.)

And then Elvis kissed me on the neck – real tender like – 'cause he wanted me to remember how sweet Beau used to be... in the beginning... and then I seen the full moon peekin' through them venetian blinds. The full moon don't make people crazy, ya know? It don't have nothin' to do with the moon. People is crazy because... because they's nuts – period! The moon ain't got nothin' to do with it!

(The lights fade leaving Loxley in the light of a full moon. FADE OUT.)