

Milton

C.W. McCall

Now, I'll tell ya a tale that'll bust yer heart
That only a few people knew, ta start
It all took place when our concert tour was booked at the SeaTac Hilton?
I'll guarantee ev'ry word's the Gospel truth
Got witnesses ta prove it, too,
'Cause we all toured with a fella by the name a' Milton
Now Milton was o-fficial tour director,
Electrical piano-playin' plug connector
An' the slave-drivin'-est travel conductor
That we ever seen in our lives
He'd say "Whaddya mean, ya need more rest?
"The world don't care whether ya look yer best!
"Simply show up promptly at six A.M. with your instruments ...and your wives
!"

Shall we gather at the airport?
He'd always arrive in the nick a' time
A good five minutes ahead a' flight time
A-lookin' like he'd been drug through a needle's eye
He'd stand there, stoned and about ta choke
On his Egg McMuffin an' his giant Coke
An' then he'd throw all the tickets on the counter and say
"Check the bags and let's fly!"
"Well, whaddya mean, this is too much weight?
"We only got forty-six pieces a' freight!
"And if it don't go, who's gonna explain it to our fan club in Tacoma?"
We'd all get embarrassed an' head for the plane
While Milton stood there, bein' profane
But somehow he always managed ta get on board ...in sort of a coma

When the drinks were served up yonder...
Well, we deplaned at th' other end
All the trouble seemed to commence again
Though Milton had ordered three station wagons, a pickup truck and a limo
And though he'd phoned ahead to that Number Two
Cussin' an' fussin' an' turnin' blue
We'd always end up with two Datsoons and a Pinto
Now Milton took all a' that stuff in stride
Laid on the floor, an' kicked an' cried
But we always looked up to him for hope and salvation
But we'd sink to the bottom a' trav'lers hell
When he'd check us in a remote motel
And he'd grab the clerk by his shirt an' tie an' say
"Whaddya mean, ¿no reservaci'@nes?"

Milton's getting bolder...
He'd shut himself in room one-oh-four
Let nobody in 'til he swept the floor
Adjusted the lampshade, aligned the TV, fixed the faucet, called the promote
r
"Well, whaddya mean we're the warmup show?
"You're puttin' me on! We're stars, ya know!
"And this ain't the way we was treated last summer at Six Flags Over Dakota!
"Now we gotta have a hunnert percent top billing,
"Two-thirds in advance, a' course, you silly!
"I'm sure we prefer a chauffeured limosine and two air-
conditioned dressing rooms, please.

"I'm what? Well, so's your wife! She's not? Well, to each his own.
"Beg pardon, stick it in my what? Well, really, Merle who?"

William Morris, keep us working...

Now, Milton was a real good friend a' mine

An' we'd stuck together on down that line

But there was one or two points over which we just had to dee-bate

Like takin'-your-clothes-off-an'-hangin'-from-a-cross-in-front-a'-the-Tri-County-Fairgrounds

Is not necessarily an assurance that the crowd ain't gonna start throwin' to matas

An' when ya arrive at four for a five o'clock show

An' the stage ain't built an' there's no electricity

About all ya could do is sit on yer butt an' cut bait

However, you give ol' Milton four strong bodies, a nine-foot grand, a beer and a cigarette

An' you just knew that show was gonna be ...outta state

Bringing in the bread

Bringing in the bread...

Now one night up there in Washington

We didn't get paid for a show we'd done

An' poor ol' Milton couldn't live with that; his brain just shorted out.

Well, he locked himself in the bathroom

An' then when he didn't come out for an hour an' a half

We figgered that somethin' was wrong, but we had to remove all doubt

We stood transfixed in shock and horror

When we busted down that there bathroom door

And I hope I never see a sight like that again; no, I don't

There was nothin' to do but close our eyes, an' bow our heads, an' vocalize

With a silent five-part acapella hymn, for him

What a friend we had in Milton...

Now we're gettin' ready, come next December

To put another concert tour together

And I'm sad to say ol' Milton ain't a-gonna be with us

No, it ain't gonna be exactly the same

When they introduce us without his name

So Milton, wherever you are, we hope you miss us!

See, Milton has moved on down the road

Over the rainbow, lookin' for gold

Yeah, he's up there where the stage lights is always on

But we can't forget that curly hair

When last we saw him a-settin' there

Holdin' his tambourine, suckin' his thumb, an' sound asleep on the john