



Native State: A Memoir

Tony Cohan

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A captivating, deeply affecting memoir chronicling a journey from a Hollywood childhood as the son of a fading show business figure to a bohemian life in Europe and back to his native state of California, where the author must face the man who had driven him away.

Summoned from abroad to attend to the ninety-four-year-old father he's never been close to, writer and musician Tony Cohan finds himself reliving his own peripatetic life—a kaleidoscopic odyssey from California's sunny postwar promise through the burnt end of the 1960s to the final days of the last century. An engrossing investigation of memory and identity, love and desire, art and fate, *Native State* vividly portrays the author's attempts to escape the confines of a celebrity-filled, alcoholic family through music, writing, and travel. His descent into the colorful milieus of musical and literary geniuses and lowlifes, divas and crooks, fortune tellers and culture gods in Paris, Tangier, London, Copenhagen, Barcelona, San Francisco, Kyoto, and Los Angeles coalesces into a distinctive, intimate depiction of a pivotal cultural era. Throughout, Cohan brilliantly interweaves and contrasts his past experiences with his present-day reflections on the universal youthful desire to flee home and family, and the simultaneous “undertow of origins” urging a return. The result is a work that combines unusually rich storytelling with extraordinary literary quality. Poignant, elegantly crafted, and often funny, *Native State* is an indelible portrait of the artist as a young man, and—as son and dying father grope toward acceptance—a coming-to-terms with self, family, origins, and the elusive American idea of home.

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