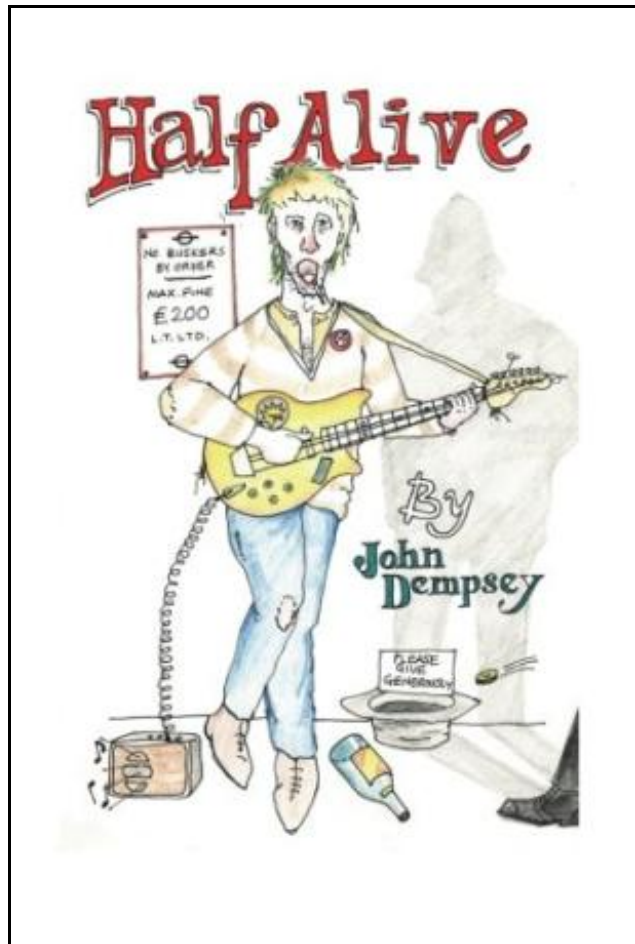


## Half Alive: A Manual for Busking in the London Underground - How Not to



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*(Damian Poulos)*

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Createspace, United States, 2012. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Professor of Tourism Culture and Development David Harrison (illustrator). 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.Riders shuffle into the London Tube more than four million times a day. Danny the Demon was among them, back in Maggie Thatcher s Brave New 1980s. Always late, he would race down the stairs, guitar banging his shoulder as he leapt off every third step, then jump the barrier without paying. He wasn t a rider, but a singer - begging for money from the commuting throng. Welcome to the punked-out world of the London Underground s music-making buskers. They could stop you in your tracks with delight - or revulsion. Not exactly savoury characters: drinking and drugging, squatting in abandoned houses, squabbling over prime spots, dodging the cops. They would wake up broke, earn enough to get brained, and wake up broke again. This slice of life below the streets wasn t in the London guidebooks, nor on your standard tour. There was Olga the Swedish Sorceress, turning tricks to forget. Shy Saxophone George, entranced by his own solos. Lora Buchanan, the voice of restraint - when sober. Skinhead Charlie, Beryl the Peril. All hoping for a state of ecstasy, mostly settling for a state of excess. Danny himself only wanted rock stardom. And the first thing I ll do, he promised himself, is get my teeth fixed. Not tripping out, not our Danny. Today buskers win licenses and book spots in advance, all very tidy. Back then, they balanced wit with delusion, community with desolation. Mrs. Thatcher promised opportunity for those who could seize it. But Danny and his mates in 1980s London - basically honorable but utterly debauched - could barely mind the gap.



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