

Eric's work experience



With raw talent like this, I don't need Eric

With raw talent like this, I don't need RALPH

**STREET BUSKER**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**DUTIES:** Singing; playing an instrument

**EQUIPMENT:** Whatever you think goes best with your voice. A cow bell, perhaps

**SKILLS:** Any talent you can display in public without getting arrested

**PAY:** Real buskers, \$20-\$40 per day; Eric, \$0

**PROSPECTS:** With Crap Elvis, none. Without him, there's still hope

he doesn't know any Elvis songs, and I do. When I'd been trying to talk him into busking, I offered him a guitar as a sweetener. He admitted he couldn't play one. Much. "We can do 'Hound Dog' and 'Heartbreak Hotel,'" he says firmly. "But it's all got to be in the key of E."

Christ, Elvis, I say. You really are crap. Elvis is determined to start in the park because there aren't many people here. I stand by a fountain, behind an empty red bucket, next to a musical idiot in a stupid suit.

We belt out "Hound Dog" – occasionally together, sometimes on-key. It sounds like a bulldozer changing gears. We ask a passing old woman if she'll donate, but she also finds a change of gear. At the end, our bucket is still empty.

Now we've rehearsed at an intimate venue, it's time to head down to Pitt St Mall. At lunchtime. There are hundreds of people here, but also many police.

Elvis seems concerned about jailhouse rock. "We haven't got a busking licence," he tells me. "I don't wanna get busted, man."

I convince him we should at least give it a go, so we bang out "Hound Dog" a couple more times before The King's spirit fails him completely. It doesn't matter, really; we've been completely ignored throughout. We turn over the bucket and nothing comes out.

On the way to the nearest burger joint, we spot a real busker: strumming quietly, money at his feet. We ask him his secret. He tells us to put our own money down at the start, so people assume we must be good. He also tells us to get a bloody licence.

■ NOW I know what it means to be famous. Well, now I know what it means to be next to someone who's famous. It means people say obvious things to you, all the time. As Crap Elvis and I walk through Sydney towards our Hyde Park gig, people shout, "Elvis!" or, "Hey, it's The King!"

Even though I am Crap Elvis's apprentice and supposed to be studying at his jump-suited knee, he is more nervous than I am. For a start,

Do these take the focus away from my shirt?

**TIGHTWAD TIP**



■ WHEN buying tomatoes from the supermarket, grab the expensive hydro (or organic) ones. By the time you get to the checkout, make sure all the little stickers and stems have somehow "accidentally" fallen off. Then you'll only be charged for the regular variety. – Matthew McAloon, Mt Lawley, WA

**BE CROWNED "TIGHTWAD OF THE MONTH"**  
PEEL an unfranked 50c stamp off an old envelope and use it to send us your very own Tightwad Tips. Keep them short and legal. We'll send the author of the best tip received each month a Coopers home-brewing kit, substantially reducing his bar bills. Write to: Tightwad Tips, **RALPH**, GPO Box 189, Sydney NSW 1028

**Obsessions**

**"I CAN DISLOCATE MY LIMBS WHENEVER I WANT" – Frodo**

**WHAT limbs can you dislocate?**  
My elbows, shoulders and hips.

**Does it hurt when they pop in and out?**  
No, it's more like a deep stretch. All my muscles get tight, and I get a sensation in the surrounding muscles.

**Have you ever had a problem popping a limb back in?**  
No, but if I leave it out for too long I get pins and needles.

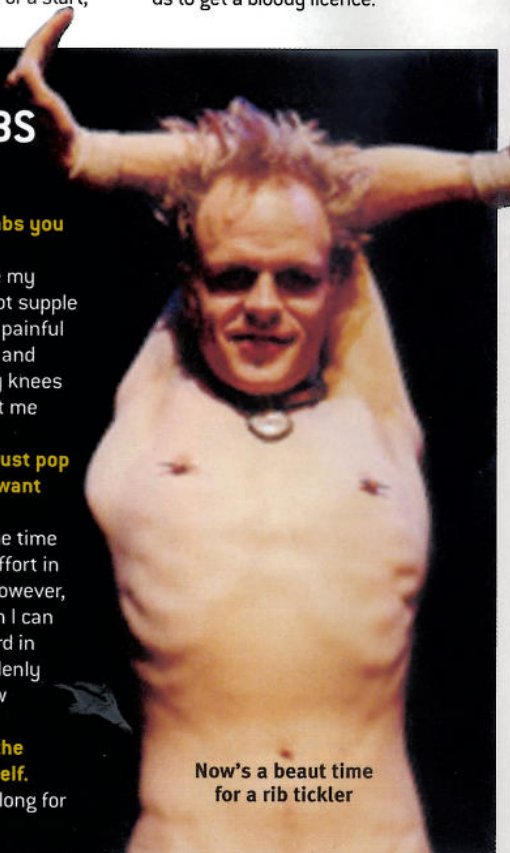
**Did you ever use your talent to get out of tests at school?**  
I only discovered I could do it after leaving school.

**What about to get out of unsuccessful dates that are going nowhere?**  
[Laughs] No, I've never done that, but it's a good idea.

**Do you have any limbs you can't dislocate?**  
I've tried to dislocate my knees, but they're not supple enough. It was quite painful the first time I did it, and now occasionally my knees will dislocate without me doing anything.

**Do any other limbs just pop out when you don't want them to?**  
Not really. Most of the time I need to put some effort in for that to happen. However, there are times when I can be dancing really hard in a nightclub and suddenly my shoulder or elbow will pop out.

**At least you'd have the dance floor to yourself.**  
Yeah, it doesn't take long for that to happen.



Now's a beaut time for a rib tickler