



Bud & Lou: The Abbott & Costello story

Bob Thomas

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A bewildered little fat man with sad, winning eyes and a tall, slick sharpie with a brass heart and a rapid-fire tongue have entertained three generations of Americans. Bud & Lou is the hilarious, moving, and finally tragic story of one of the greatest movie comedy teams of all time: Abbott and Costello. In the lively, anecdotal style that has become his hallmark, Bob Thomas tells the very American story of Bud and Lou's long climb to stardom, from burlesque to Broadway, then radio and, finally, the movies. He describes the heady success of their first film, *Buck Privates*; their struggles to establish their place in a Hollywood which still considered the comic an outsider; and the antics on and off set that made them infamous among directors. He also takes us behind the scenes to the intriguing drama of the private personalities ... the tragedy that nearly destroyed Lou, Bud's alcoholism and epilepsy, the compulsive gambling, and, above all, the overriding sense of competition that would eventually destroy their partnership and their careers. Although they had earned an income of as much as two million dollars annually and rescued Universal Pictures from bankruptcy during lean times, they died penniless. Yet they bequeathed the American public a rich inheritance -- remembrance of the splendidly vulgar, innocently raucous, sensible nonsense of burlesque. Profusely illustrated with photographs, *Bud & Lou* is written with the close cooperation of Eddie Sherman, their manager and lifelong friend, and with the help of colleagues and members of the Abbott and Costello families. It provides both an intimate glimpse of two complex and enduring personalities and an inside look at Hollywood during its heyday.

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