

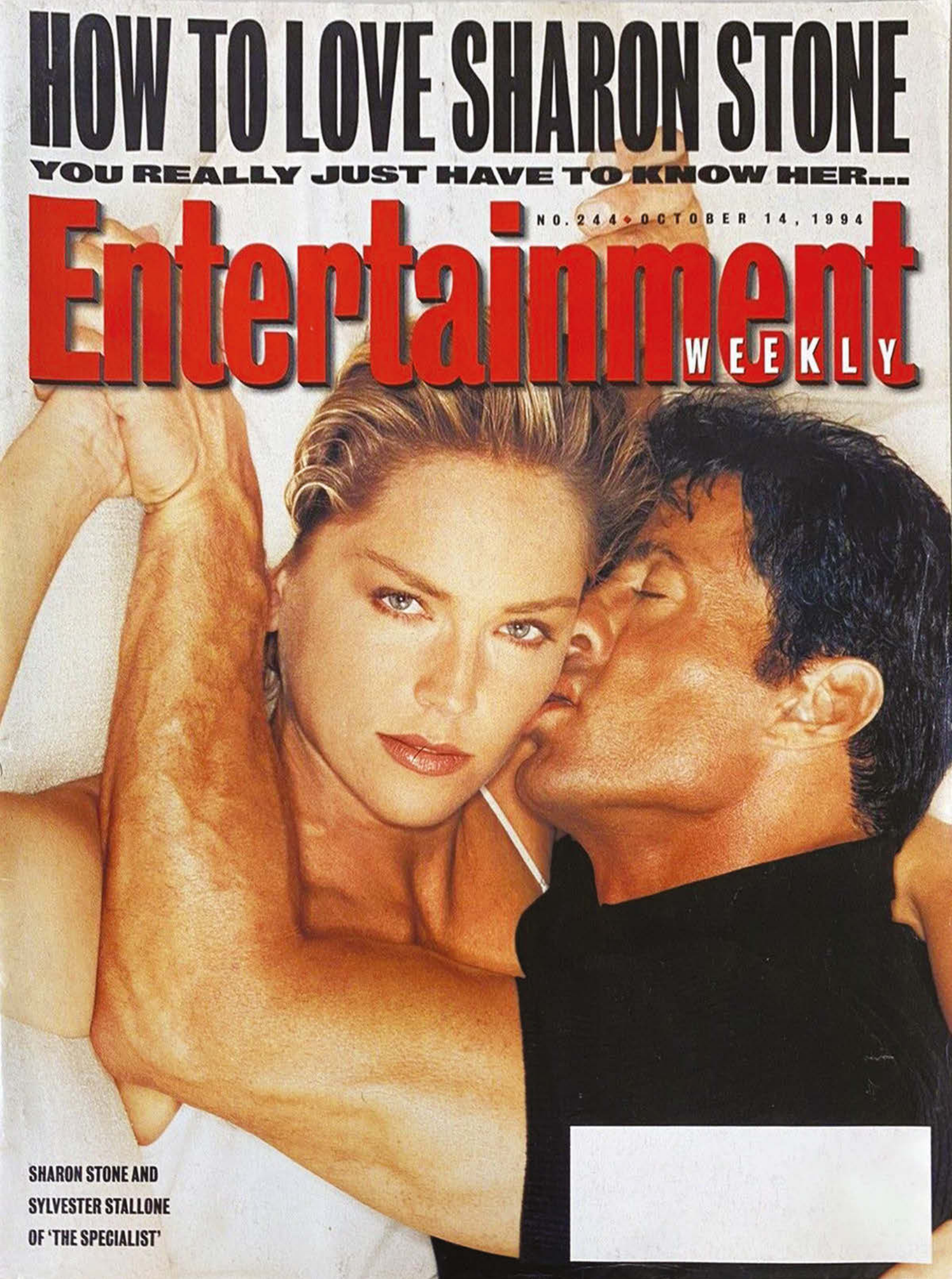
HOW TO LOVE SHARON STONE

YOU REALLY JUST HAVE TO KNOW HER...

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SHARON STONE AND
SYLVESTER STALLONE
OF 'THE SPECIALIST'

SYMPATHY FOR THE NEW

GLENN DANZIG DOESN'T seem that weird. Swathed in regulation black—boots, jeans, Wolverine T-shirt, and curtain of hair—the short, barrel-chested frontman for the death-metal group that bears his name pontificates with the assurance of a TV pitchman, punctuating his long sentences with brief, shy smiles. “America was founded on satanism,” he says earnestly, tracing a skull inside a black heart on a Post-It. “Thomas Jefferson? He was a satanist. And the flag? Did you ever wonder why it had 13 stars?” ♦ Um, to

symbolize the 13 original states? ♦ “No,” Danzig whispers ominously. “Thirteen members to a coven.” ♦ Witness the face of heavy metal, circa 1994. If Kurt Cobain clipped the hair bands that dominated the late '80s, Glenn Danzig, 35, has positioned himself to recapture what's left of the head-banger army. Stints with the seminal horror-punk band the Misfits (composers of such peppy anthems as “Mommy, Can I Go Out and Kill Tonight”) and the more baroque metal group Samhain lend him the neces-

**GLENN DANZIG'S SATANIC VERSES BROUGHT HIM TO
THE TOP—BUT DOES HE REALLY BELIEVE THAT STUFF?**

B Y N I S I D H A J A R I

sary indie credentials. And for the last six years he's tilled the killing fields as leader of his eponymous band, churning out bluesy dirges heavy on riffs and references to incubi. Cultural cognoscenti Beavis and Butt-head finally blew the coffin lid off the band last spring, sending a live version of Danzig's single "Mother" into the Buzz Bin and up the charts. Now, with the release of the band's long-delayed album *4*, The Box's most-requested metal act faces the glare of Top 40 exposure head-on.

The band's prospects, however, are clouded by Glenn's well-known preoccupations—although that's precisely

couldn't tell him the way it really is if you tried all f—ing day."

Of course, Biscuits has cause for rancor: A founding member of Danzig in 1988, Biscuits either quit or was canned over the summer—depending on whom you talk to. "He opted to leave the band on the Metallica tour," insists Danzig, claiming that Biscuits refused to sign both an employment contract and a no-drug agreement. "Our problems with Chuck getting his life together go back over two years.... The band was tired of being his nanny." Biscuits denies all drug allegations; he claims he finished the tour and says he rejected the contract because it would have made him, in ef-

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what first won Danzig its cult following. "We're one of the only bands that get censored for theological commentary," the singer complains after learning that MTV's standards and practices department rejected the video for *4*'s first single, "Until You Call On the Dark," probably due to lyrics like, "I wanna be the God who kills/I wanna be the Christ who dies/Upon the fires/Of infamy."

While he consistently denies bowing before Beelzebub, Danzig (who has written songs for Johnny Cash and Roy Orbison, among others) only mildly disguises his taste for brimstone: Elaborate demons-and-dragons sagas unspool in his lyrics; his band revels in gothic spectacles; and he resides in a forbidding 1905 mansion that his L.A. neighbors have dubbed "the Addams Family house."

The roots of Danzig's preoccupation lie in the working-class suburb of Lodi, N.J., where he marked time with a boredom-killing brew of music, comic books, and delinquency ("You know, lighting buildings on fire—stuff like that"). A gig as a drum roadie at age 11 led to singing for a local Black Sabbath cover band two years later; in 1976 he founded the Misfits, where he and his bandmates honed the clownishly malevolent persona that distinguished them from the rest of America's punk-rock pioneers.

"Sometimes it's cynical," Danzig admits of his public fascination with occult imagery. "But none of it is intended as camp. Unfortunately, some people...because they've never heard of it before, they find it silly—'Oh, this could never happen.'" Disdain swells his distinctive basso as he insistently, if cryptically, adds, "It is happening. And just because someone else wants to fool themselves into believing in this false sense of security doesn't mean I need to."

"Glenn gets a certain idea in his head and that's it, it's the truth," says ex-Danzig drummer Chuck Biscuits. "You



THEY PAINT IT BLACK: From left, Biscuits, Danzig, Eerie Von, and John Christ

fect, Glenn Danzig's employee. He is preparing to file suit against the band.

By all accounts, Danzig's nose (usually used to sniff out conspiracies—"Every assassination of a U.S. President was committed by the U.S. government") hardens when it comes to business negotiations. He says he threatened to leave American Recordings after the company postponed *4*'s release twice; since the mid-'80s, he's managed his own label, Plan 9, named for director Ed Wood's *Plan 9 From Outer Space*; and he recently formed a publishing company, Verotik, to in-

dulge another passion: adult comic books. He eagerly describes a new, sexually graphic comic about a character named Satanika as "a cross between Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *The Fugitive*, and a demonology kind of thing."

Such fervor helps explain the popularity Danzig enjoys among the wispy-mustache set—a suburban demographic united not by animal sacrifice but by a passion for the lurid and transgressive. "I don't know about you, but I couldn't exactly feel like a badass jamming [to] Pearl Jam," says Rob Zombie, frontman for fellow *Beavis and Butt-head* mascots White Zombie. "You can pretty much be assured that anyone sitting at home listening to Danzig reads comics, watches horror movies, plays *Mortal Kombat*—anything they can get their hands on with that same violent imagery."

So, Glenn Danzig knows, selling records doesn't require selling out to darker powers. "If I were really in Satan's service," he points out, "I would sweet-talk whoever I had to, subvert whoever I had to...to get my end result, and the dead bodies would be lying in piles everywhere. Okay? Let's get real." Danzig slouches low in his armchair, an impish smile crossing from one fuzzy sideburn to the other. "You know, anybody who would even f— with Satan would be dead in their tracks, without a thought. Without a thought." ♦