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Roy Bentley
1954

Nineteen fifty-four was that kind of year. Breathless with The All-American Moment before the Moment.

Elvis had wandered into Sun Records to cut a second acetate disc, which would do nothing. He drove a truck.

He would say later, in the interviews, that he felt it coming—the Success—most days. Like it was a form of faith or hope,

holding on. Doing it again. Holding out hope for the best because it's America, after all. Land of that sort of thing.

The year before, my folks left Kentucky for work in Ohio. So, in 1954, I was born somewhere other than their home.

Individuals compelled to migrate for a job are like someone with one decent lung shouting at the world. Maybe shouts

are all they have. Maybe shouts turn to song, a good song, in the case of Elvis Aron Presley, and someone hears it.

My father used to say he swam the Ohio at flood stage, wading ashore near Cincinnati. And then he would wink.

Elvis and his parents had moved from Tupelo, Mississippi for a job in Memphis. For years, Elvis slept under a cotton

48-star Old Glory. He said he bedded down under the flag because he wanted to wake and be reminded of 1954 and

being poised on the cusp of something. Call it: *the year Elvis wolf-whistled Lady Luck to a reciprocated kiss.*