

*Gene Simmons*

# KISS

*Paul Stanley*

## TALKING WITH

By Douglas LeBow,  
Bobby LaLuna and Jamie Laboz  
Kidsday Staff Reporters

We interviewed Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley, two members of the rock group, Kiss. They not only answered our questions, but they discussed them and added some humor. They also looked good without their makeup. We talked to them in their manager's office in New York City.

**Q.** Do you have a [formal] musical background?

**A. Gene**—No, none at all. Never studied music. I don't think anybody in the band has ever studied music.

**Paul**—We were in bands.

**Gene**—Now that doesn't mean that you shouldn't go ahead and take music lessons. We still believe that the more you learn about anything, the better it is for you.

**Q.** Why do you dress up like you do when you're in concert.

**A. Gene**—Why do you dress up that way when you're here? The reason we dress up like that in concert is to give you a better show because the way I'm sitting here right now is not very interesting. We would rather dress up and look interesting, because it makes for a better show.

**Paul**—We want to entertain you . . . Everybody wants to see characters that are colorful, bigger than life.

**Q.** How does success change you?

**A. Paul**—You don't have much time, but you have freedom when you do have that time to do what you want to do. What's interesting is that when you first think about becoming famous, you think that you can stay exactly the way you are and the only difference will be that people will know who you are. But as soon as people know who you are they treat you differently, and your whole life changes.

**Gene**—You know, you guys, no matter how much money you've got, no matter how much success



Kidsday Illustrations by Bobby LaLuna

you have, you can only eat one meal at a time and you can only wear one set of clothes at a time.

**Q.** Do you think that if you were just you that would get the same respect as Kiss?

**A. Paul**—Well, 'Kiss—when we say Kiss, what do you think of? You think of four guys with the white faces and the hard rock and the fantasy, so if we didn't have that, then we wouldn't be the same Kiss. We could still be Kiss, but it wouldn't be the same any more than you would be the same if you had a crew cut. It would look different, so people would treat you differently. People treat you different ways, depending on how you look.

**Q.** When someone took a secret photo of you two without your makeup what did you do?

**A. Gene**—You know how sometimes they put pictures together? I don't think that was us. But what do we do about that? We usually don't do anything, because most rock-and-roll magazines don't want to ruin the magic. You guys don't want to see pictures of us without makeup. It ruins it.

**Paul**—It's like magic. Like when you see a magician levitate the lady in the air. Part of the excitement is that you don't know how he's doing it, and if he said to you, 'Well, there are hidden wires,' and he showed you, then it wouldn't be as much fun anymore.

**Q.** A lot of people say that you use different kinds of blood. Is that like Dracula blood?

**A. Gene**—When I go downstairs, he comes and punches me in the mouth and I start bleeding. I say,

'Quick, Paul. Hit me. Hit me.' It's a secret. It's much better that you just like it.

**Paul**—Secrets are what makes all this fun.

**Q.** Are you ever scared on stage by the fireworks and the smoke?

**A. Paul**—No, I don't really get too scared, because it's like a gun. It's dangerous if you don't know how to handle it.

**Q.** Gene, what is your favorite song and why?

**A. Gene**—I could name a song that we've done, but probably my favorite song is always the next song, because whenever you start working on the next song, you get excited all over again. The best song is always the next song. The best soccer game that you play will always be the next soccer game, because you get excited about it . . . And the best meal you've ever had is the next meal that you see in front of you that looks really good.

**Q.** Does the first Kiss comic book have real blood in the ink?

**A. Gene**—Now here's the truth, and understand what this means. We did actually go up, not in this issue, in the first issue . . . to Buffalo, N.Y., where the comic book was printed and actually mixed in our blood with the red ink . . . So there are some comic books out there that actually have Kiss blood on them. Now how many, we don't know. I'm sure there are not many. It really doesn't mean anything except that we would be willing to go to those lengths. Kiss gives their blood for their fans.

**Q.** Is Kiss considered punk rock?

**A. Gene**—I don't think so . . . Kiss is Kiss, and it's up to you to try to figure out what it is. Instead of trying to tell everybody we're supposed to be this or that, it's enough if people like it, whatever you call it.