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POLITICS

# Trump recounts assassination attempt: 'I'm not supposed to be here'

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Republican presidential nominee, former President Donald Trump, embraces the firefighter uniform of Corey Comperatore as he speaks on stage on the fourth day of the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee.

*Joe Raedle/Getty Images*

Former President Donald Trump opened his presidential nomination speech with an emotional recounting of the shooting at his rally last week that left him injured and killed another.

For more than 10 minutes, Trump recounted to the Republican National Convention in vivid details his observations of the attack on the "warm, beautiful day in the early evening in Butler township in the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

Trump, in a more subdued and somber tone than his usual bombast, said that he felt something hit his ear, and that he "felt very safe, because I had God on my side."

"I'm not supposed to be here tonight," Trump said as the crowd responded "Yes you are!" "Not supposed to be here ... I thank you, but I'm not, and I'll tell you, I stand before you in this arena only by the grace of Almighty God."

### **Here's the transcript from Trump's speech discussing the assassination attempt:**

Let me begin this evening by expressing my gratitude to the American people for your outpouring of love and support following the assassination attempt at my rally on Saturday. As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life. So many people have asked me, "What happened? Tell us what happened, please." And therefore, I will tell you exactly what happened. And you'll never hear it from me a second time because it's actually too painful to

tell.

It was a warm, beautiful day in the early evening in Butler Township in the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Music was loudly playing, and the campaign was doing really well. I went to the stage and the crowd was cheering wildly. Everybody was happy. I began speaking, very strongly, powerfully and happily, because I was discussing the great job my administration did on immigration at the southern border. We were very proud of it.

[Applause] Behind me and to the right was a large screen that was displaying a chart of border crossings under my leadership. The numbers were absolutely amazing. In order to see the chart, I started to, like this, turn to my right, and was ready to begin a little bit further, turn, which I'm very lucky I didn't do, when I heard a loud whizzing sound and felt something hit me really, really hard on my right ear. I said to myself, "Wow, what was that? It can only be a bullet," and moved my right hand to my ear, brought it down. My hand was covered with blood. It was just absolutely blood all over the place. I immediately knew it was very serious, that we were under attack. And in one movement, proceeded to drop to the ground. Bullets were continuing to fly. I was very brave. Secret Service agents rushed to the stage and they really did, they rushed to the stage.

[claps]

These are great people, at great risk I will tell you, and pounced on top of me so that I would be protected. There was blood pouring everywhere. And yet, in a certain way, I felt very safe because I had God on my side. I felt that.

[Applause]

The amazing thing is that prior to the shot, if I had not moved my head at that very last instant, the assassin's bullet would have perfectly hit its mark. And I would not be here tonight. We would not be together. The most incredible aspect of what took place on that terrible evening in the fading sun was actually seen later. In almost all cases, as you probably know, and when even a single bullet is fired — just a single bullet, and we had many bullets that were being fired — crowds run for the exits or stampede. But not in this case. It was very unusual.

[Applause]

This massive crowd of tens of thousands of people stood by and didn't move an inch. In fact, many of them, bravely but automatically, stood up looking for where the sniper would be. They knew immediately it was a sniper, and then began pointing at him. You can see that if you look at the group behind me. That was just a small group, compared to what was in front. Nobody ran and by not stampeding, many lives were saved.

*[Applause]*

But that isn't the reason that they didn't move. The reason is that they knew I was in very serious trouble. They saw it. They saw me go down. They saw the blood and thought, actually, most did, that I was dead. They knew it was a shot to the head. They saw the blood. And here's an interesting statistic: the ears are the bloodiest part. If something happens with the ears, they bleed more than any other part of the body. For whatever reason, the doctors told me that. I said, Why is there so much blood? He said, "It's the ears. They bleed more." So we learned something. But they just — they just — this beautiful crowd. They didn't want to leave me. They knew I was in trouble. They didn't want to leave me. And you can see that love written all over their faces. Incredible people. They're incredible people. Bullets were flying over us, yet I felt serene. But now the Secret Service agents were putting themselves in peril. They were in very dangerous territory. Bullets were flying right over them, missing them by a very small amount of inches. And then it all stopped. Our Secret Service sniper, from a much greater distance and with only one bullet used, took the assassin's life. Took them out.

*[Applause]*

I'm not supposed to be here tonight. Not supposed to be here.

*[Crowd begins to chant, "Yes you are."]*

Thank you. But I'm not. And I'll tell you. I stand before you in this arena only by the grace of Almighty God.

*[Applause]*

And watching the reports over the last few days. Many people say it was a providential moment. Probably was. When I rose, surrounded by Secret Service, the crowd was confused because they thought I was dead. And there was great,

great sorrow. I could see that on their faces. As I looked out, they didn't know I was looking out. They thought it was over. But I could see it. I wanted to do something to let them know I was OK. I raised my right arm, looked at the thousands and thousands of people that were breathlessly waiting and started shouting, "Fight, fight, fight."

*[Crowd begins to chant, "Fight, fight, fight" in unison.]*

Thank you. Once my clenched fist went up and it was high into the air — you've all seen that — the crowd realized I was OK and roared with pride for our country, like no crowd I have ever heard before. Never heard anything like it.

*[Applause]*

For the rest of my life, I will be grateful for the love shown by that giant audience of patriots that stood bravely on that fateful evening in Pennsylvania. Tragically, the shooter claimed the life of one of our fellow Americans, Corey Comperatore. Unbelievable person, everybody tells me. Unbelievable.

*[Applause]*

And seriously wounded two other great warriors. I spoke to them today, David Dutch and James Copenhaver, two great people.

*[Applause]*

I also spoke to all three families of these tremendous people. Our love and prayers are with them and always will be. We're never going to forget them. They came for a great rally. They were serious Trumpsters. I want to tell you, they were serious Trump stories and still are. But Corey, unfortunately, we have to use the past tense. He was incredible. He was a highly respected former fire chief, respected by everybody, was accompanied by his wife, Helen. Incredible woman I spoke to today, devastated. And two precious daughters. He lost his life selflessly acting as a human shield to protect them from flying bullets. He went right over the top of them and was hit.

What a fine man he was.

*[Applause, with chants of "Corey." Trump walks to Comperatore's fireman uniform,*

*which is placed on the stage.]*

I want to thank the fire department and the family for sending his helmet, his outfit. And it was just something, and they're going to do something very special when they get it. But we did something, which cannot match what happened. Not even close. But I am very proud to say that over the past few days we've raised \$6.3 million —

*[Applause]*

for the families of David, James and Corey, including from a friend of mine — just called up. He sent me a check right here. I just got it. \$1 million —

*[Applause]* from Dan Newlin. Thank you, Dan. And again, when speaking to the family, I told them, I said, well, “I'm going to be sending you a lot of money, but it can't compensate.” They all said the same thing. “You're right, sir. We appreciate so much what you're doing, but nothing can take the place of Corey.” And the other two, by the way — they were very, very seriously injured. But now they're doing very well. They're going to be OK.

*[Applause]*

They're going to be doing very well.

They're warriors. So now I ask that we observe a moment of silence in honor of our friend Corey.

*[Moment of silence]*

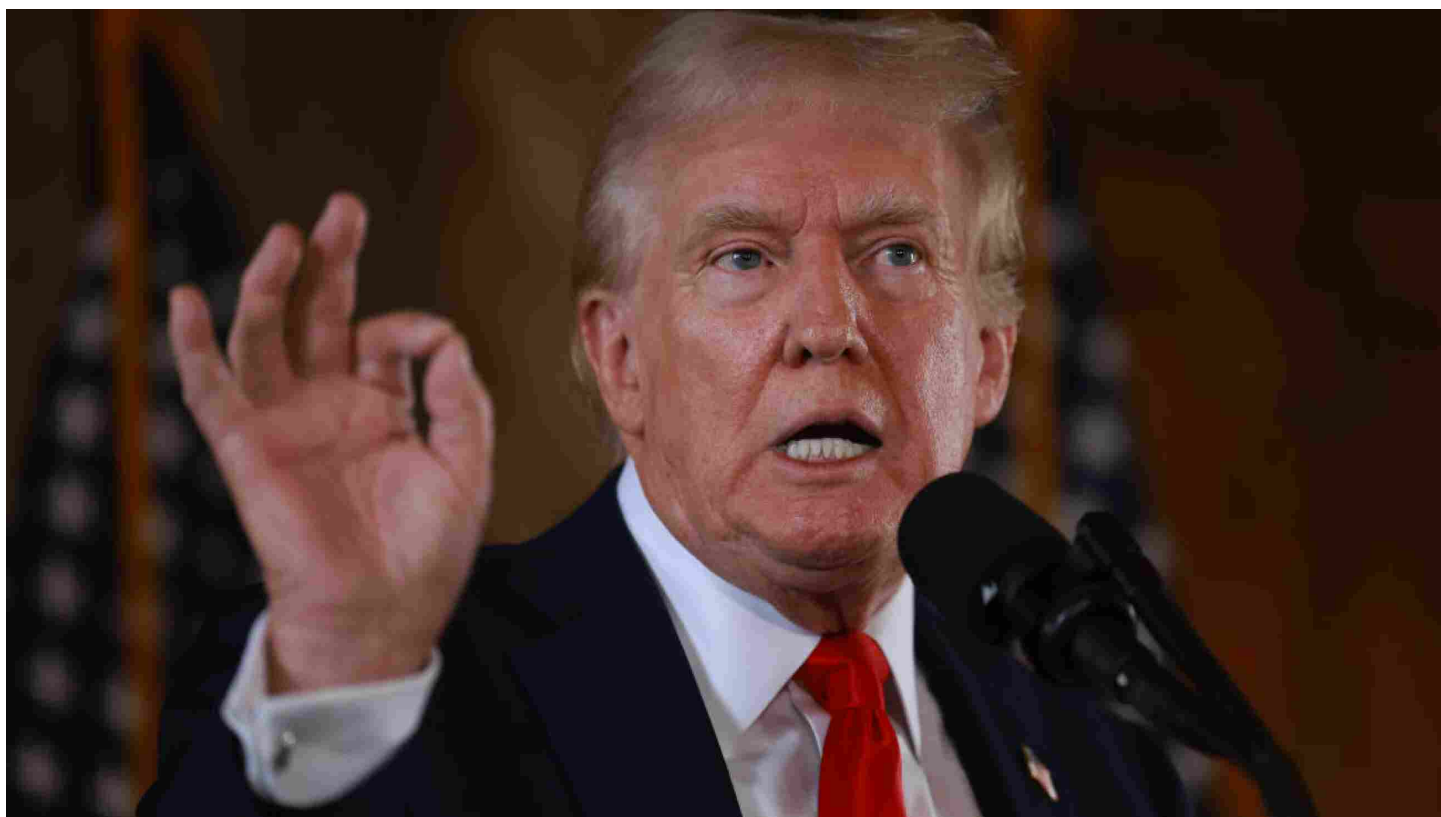
There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for others. This is the spirit that forged America in her darkest hours. And this is the love that will lead America back to the summit of human achievement and greatness. This is what we need. Despite such a heinous attack, we unite this evening more determined than ever. I am more determined than ever. And so are you. So is everybody.

*[Chants]*

Thank you. Thank you very much. Our resolve is unbroken and our purpose is unchanged to deliver a government that serves the American people better than ever before. Nothing will stop me in this mission because our vision is righteous

and our cause is pure. No matter what obstacle comes our way, we will not break. We will not bend. We will not back down. And I will never stop fighting for you, your family and our magnificent country.

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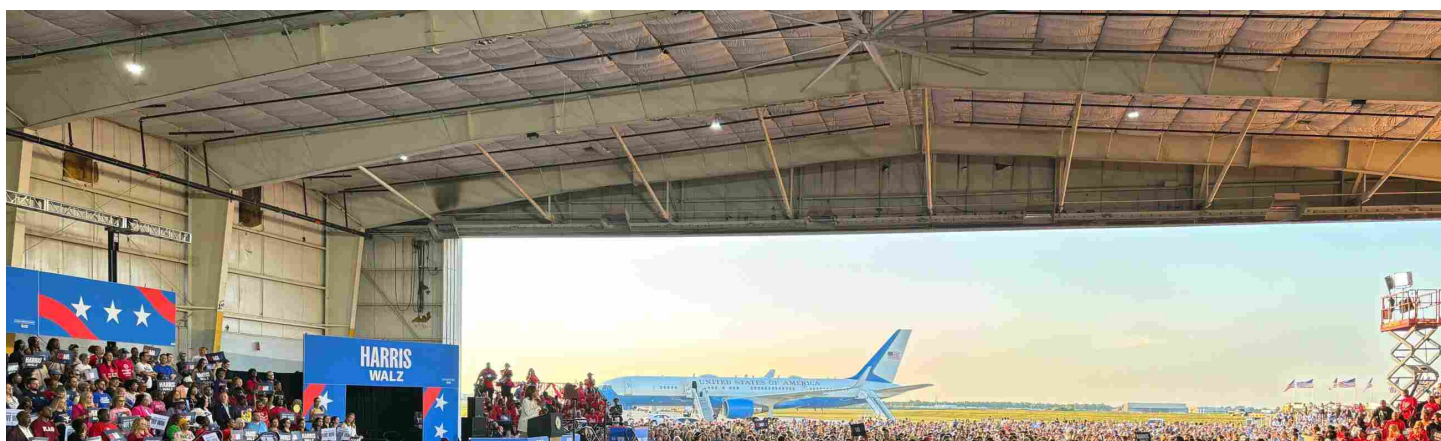
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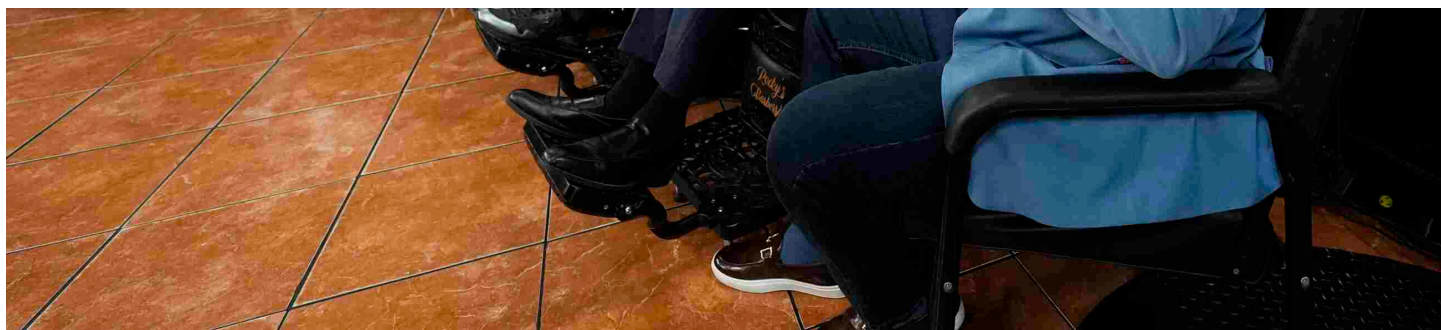
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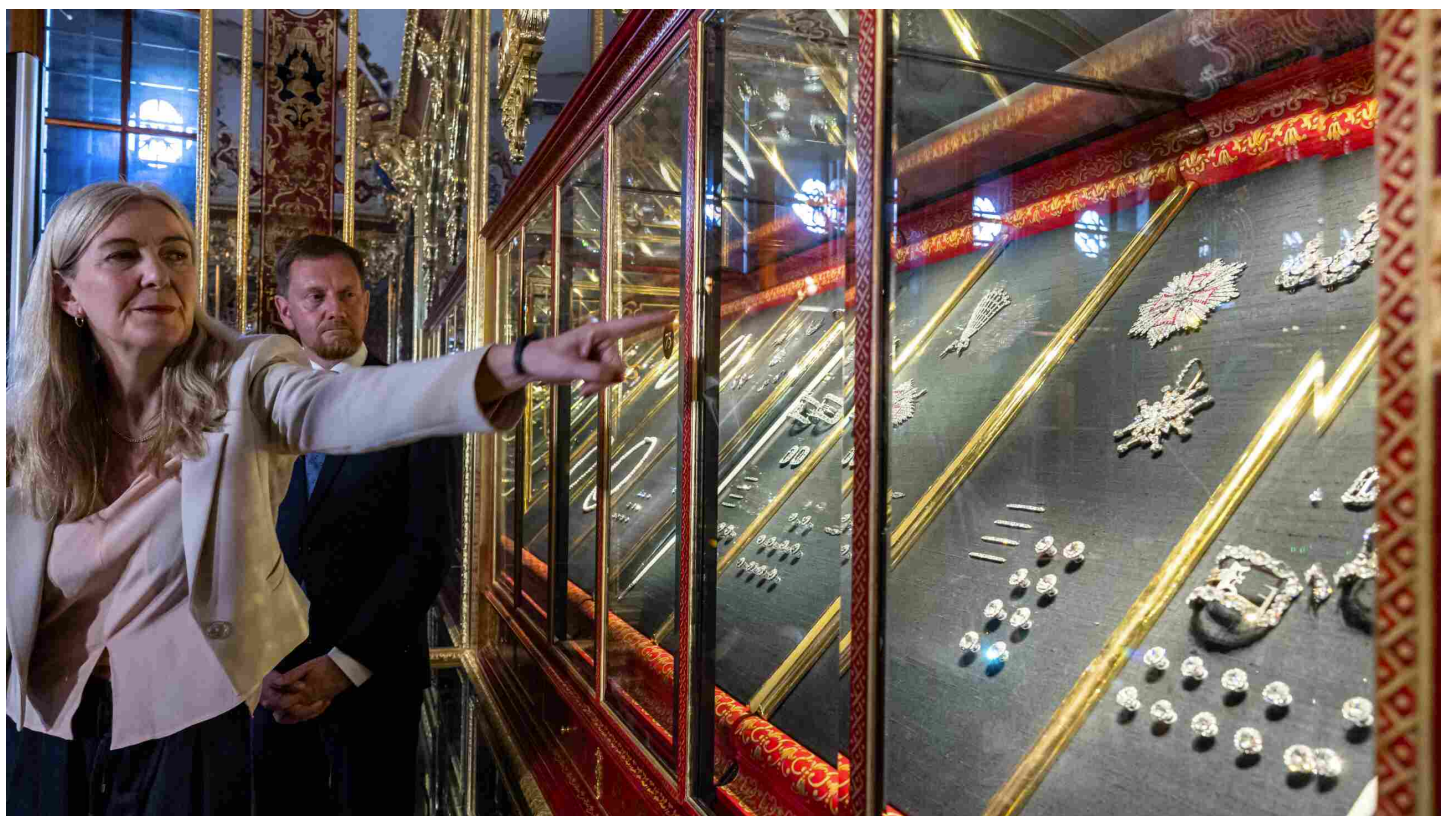




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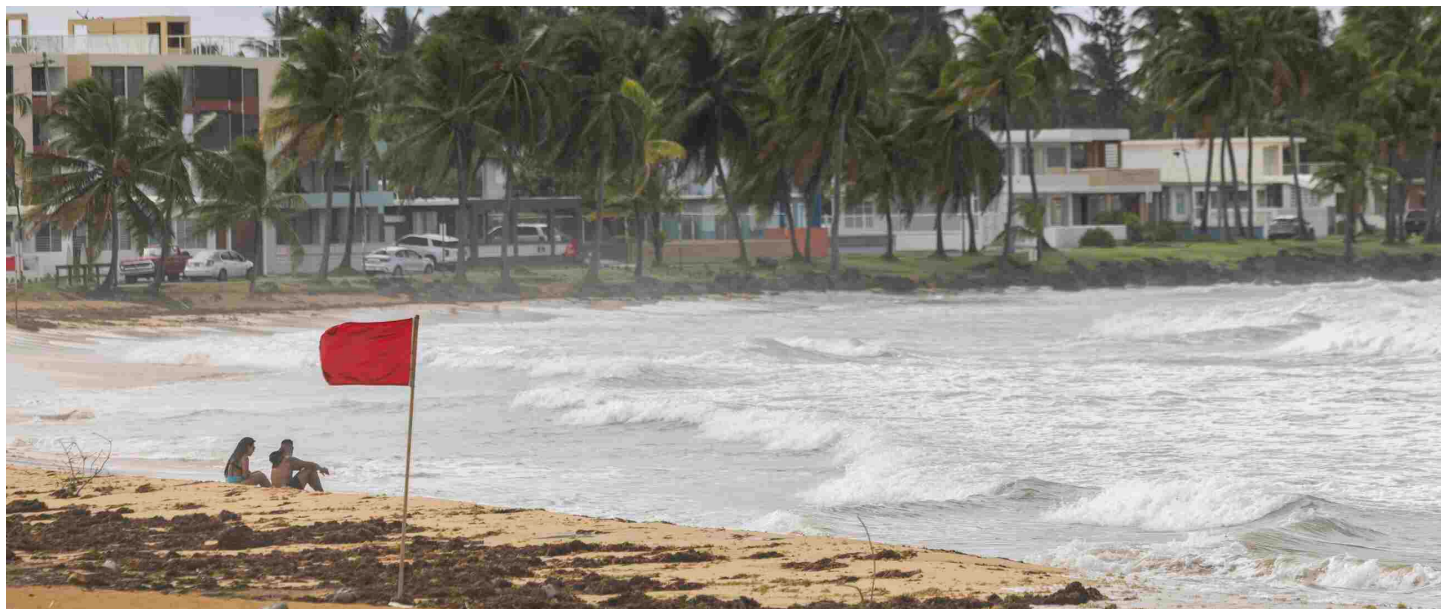
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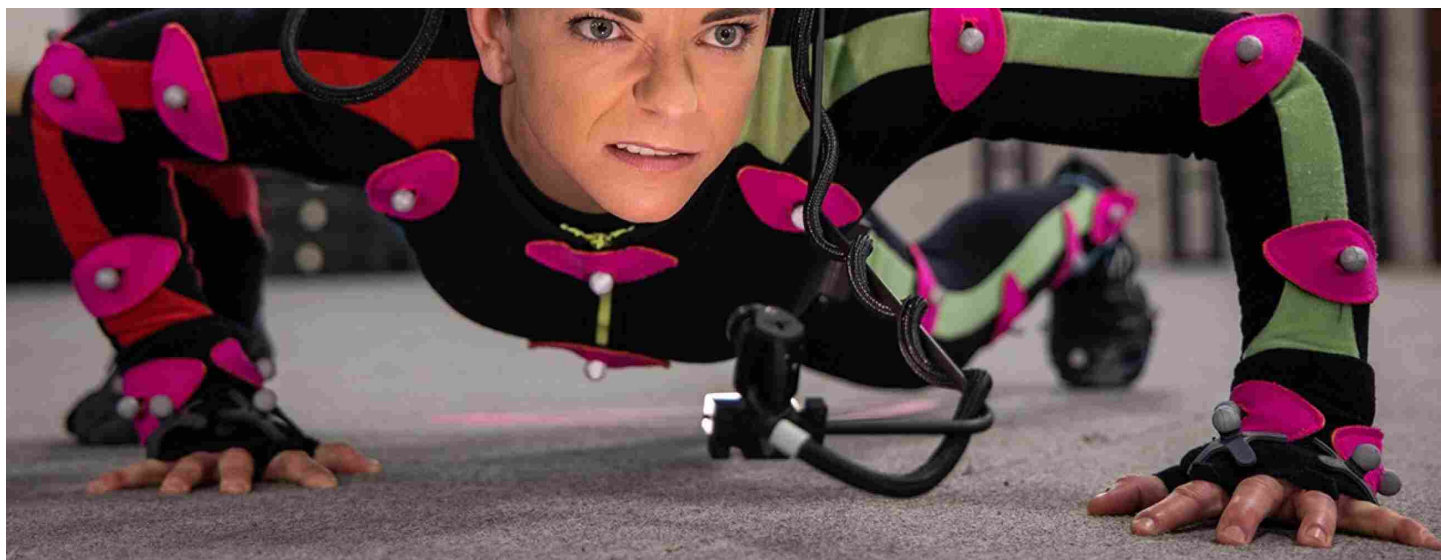
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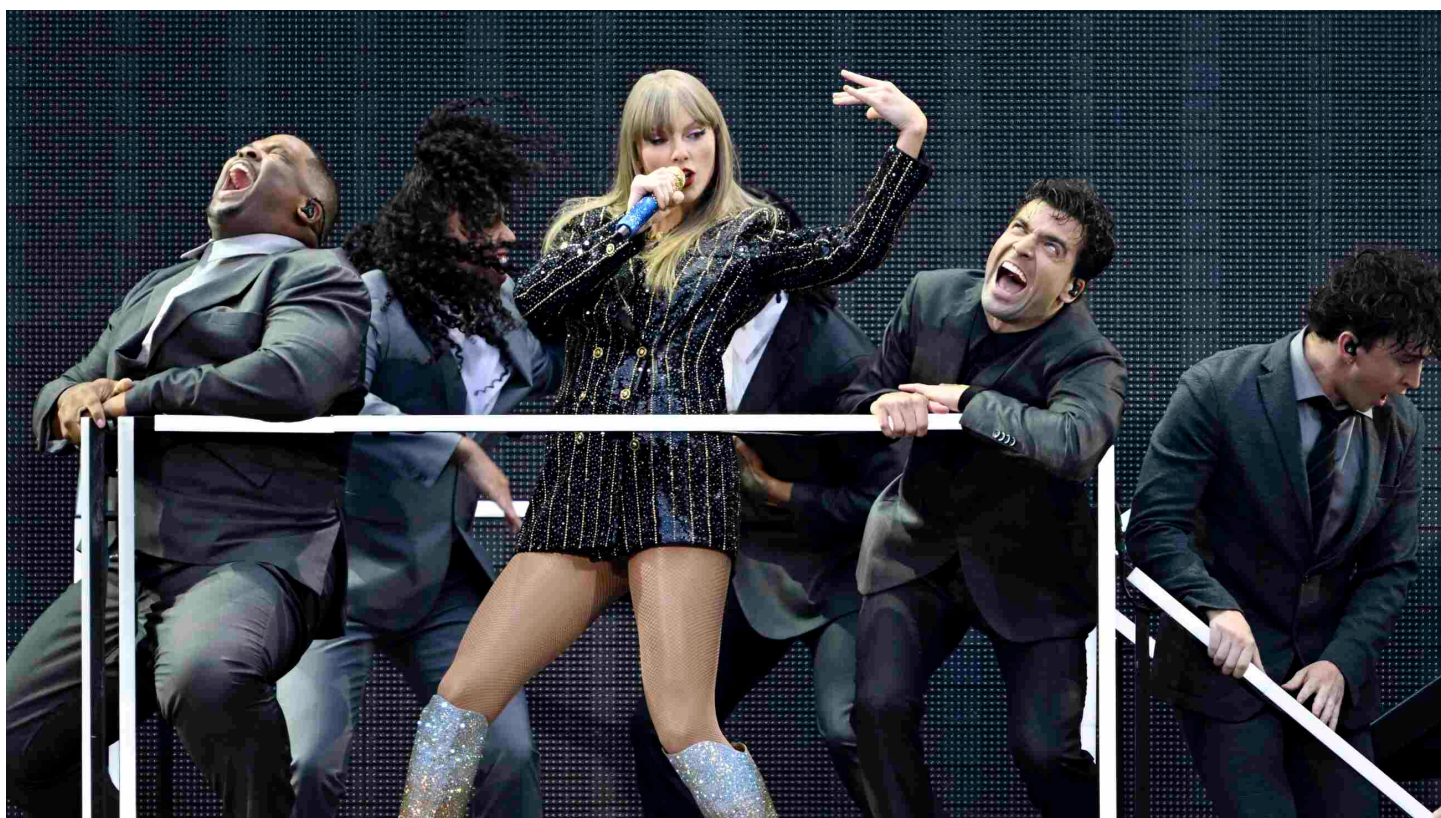
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