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Jay-Z, R. Kelly Part Ways as *Best Of Both Worlds* Tour Collapses

Plug pulled after bizarre show that sends Kelly to the hospital.

By Shaheem Reid and Robert Mancini

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The plug has been pulled on Jay-Z and R. Kelly's *Best of Both Worlds* tour after a bizarre show at New York's Madison Square Garden on Friday night that sent Kelly to the hospital and both artists to the media to tell very different stories.

A brief statement issued on Saturday (October 30) by tour organizers announced that Kelly would not perform that evening at Madison Square Garden, on Sunday at the Continental Airlines Arena or on Monday, again at Madison Square Garden. The statement indicated that the shows would now feature "Jay-Z and special guests."

In his own statement, Kelly expressed his disappointment at the move and noted that he is ready and willing to perform as part of the tour. "The fans deserve better than this," Kelly said. "I'd like the show to go on. It's really disappointing that Jay-Z and the promoter don't."

The tour hit Madison Square Garden Friday night for the first of three shows (the duo performed without incident on Thursday at Long Island's Nassau Coliseum). However, thousands of fans were left disappointed as Kelly abruptly bolted from the show, claiming that his life was in jeopardy.

Kelly told the crowd that while he was trying to perform, "two people were waving guns at me," and declined to perform further. Shortly after, Jay told the crowd, "I don't need that n---a!" and, accompanied by Mary J. Blige, Usher and Ja Rule, delivered a hit-filled set.

In an interview on New York radio station Hot 97 early Saturday morning, Jay called Kelly's actions "foolery" and said that the "insecure" Kelly was jealous of the crowds' love for Jay. In a separate interview, Kelly admitted to Hot 97 that he panicked, but said in a statement that he tried to return to the stage, only to be pepper-sprayed by a member of Jay-Z's entourage — an attack that sent him to New York's St. Vincent's Hospital. He said he had been ready and eager to perform on Friday night, but that he was not allowed to do so.

Friday's show started normally, with the two headliners rocking the stage together during the first set. Shortly after, Jay-Z came back for his solo turn, followed by one from Kelly. The show then went back to Jay's hand with another Jiggaman set.



Jay-Z brings out the stars at Madison Square Garden

The performers used distinct plans of attack. Jay rocked the crowd with street goliaths like "Give It to Me," "U Don't Know" and "Big Pimpin'," while Kelly crooned his bedroom hymns like "Your Body's Calling" and "Feelin' on Yo Booty," where he amused everyone by singing "Booooooieeeeeee."

Just before the R's second solo set was to begin, Kelly, dressed in the same black-and-white vest he donned on the cover of his *12 Play* LP, came out onstage and began talking somberly. It sounded like he was holding back tears. He told the audience that he was originally going to send

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