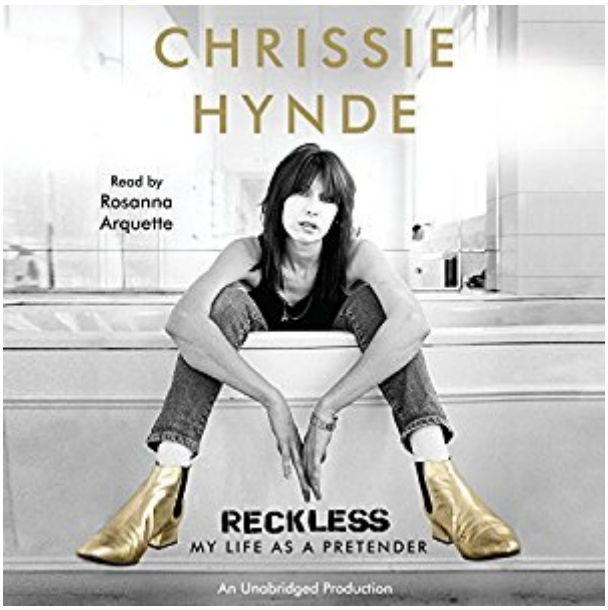
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Reckless: My Life As A Pretender



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Synopsis

From Chrissie Hynde, one of rock's most iconic, alluring, kick-ass, and (let's face it) sexy women, a brilliant, no-holds-barred memoir of a rock life lived to the hilt. Chrissie Hynde, the songwriter and front woman of The Pretenders in its various incarnations, has for 35 years been one of the most admired and adored and imitated figures in rock. This long-awaited memoir tells her life story in full and utterly fascinating detail, from her all-American Ohio '50s childhood to her classic baby-boomer seduction by the rock of the '60s to her sojourn in the crucible of punk that was '70s London to her instant emergence with her band, The Pretenders, in 1980 into stardom as a frontwoman and songwriter. She brings a fantastic eye for detail, a withering and sardonic sense of humor, and a fearless and sometimes naked emotional honesty to her memoir, and every line, every word of it is unmistakably hers. It is sure to be recognized as a classic of rock literature - and, man, is it fun to listen to. With an introduction read by Chrissie Hynde.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition
Listening Length: 8 hoursÃ Â andÃ Â 56 minutes
Program Type: Audiobook
Version: Unabridged
Publisher: Random House Audio
Audible.com Release Date: September 8, 2015
Whispersync for Voice: Ready
Language: English
ASIN: B0143PGF6U
Best Sellers Rank: #203 inÃ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Arts & Entertainment > Music #376 inÃ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Artists, Writers & Musicians #889 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Rock

Customer Reviews

I really wanted to like this book -- and it was an enjoyable, quick read. However . . . Chrissie Hynde must be the Forest Gump of rock history, from the 60's through the early years of punk and New Wave. Why? Because she seems to have been at every significant moment of these years, and met everyone (!) along the way; and like Gump, her appearance seems to have influenced countless major musical figures throughout -- from the rock-and-roll parade that seemingly went through Cleveland, Ohio, at all stages, then to the New York-London confluence of performers, most notably

the Dolls and Johnny Thunders, Johnny Rotten, to Sid and Nancy and on. Apparently she was long involved with the group she is contractually required to call the Heavy Bikers -- a group familiar to all of us, but who is also rather litigious. More detail around that would have been very interesting.I thought this was pretty cool, but when a couple of minor details were just wrong (you're wrong about Sid Vicious, my dear) I started to wonder what I could believe of this unequaled access to rock-and-roll history. And, how come she doesn't appear in the bios of all these people she supposedly influenced? Finally at the end, the editor gives up, and it's just one unrelated paragraph after another, each telling an anecdote, which by that time, had exhausted me. I wanted to go to the kitchen, grab a beer, and hope that she hooked onto someone else who will listen to her story.I'm not saying it's fabricated. Just go in with your eyes open, your bullshit-detector on (as Joe Strummer might have put it).

As a major Pretenders fan, I always held Chrissie in very high regard, the songwriting in particular. This memoir, while I appreciate the honesty and its raw nature, makes me think Chrissie was really just a wannabe/hanger-on/druggie for much of her time from college up to the London days until meeting Jimmy Scott. I guess the image of Chrissie as a devoted musician and songwriter desperately trying to emerge from the post-Sex Pistols era is pure fantasy. Her tales reveal her to be not much more than a wasted hang-about with a few tunes in her pocket. So sad. It's also ironic that for someone with her devotion to PETA and animal rights, Chrissie disregarded her own body and health for so many years. As another review stated so well, I now feel like her successes are equal parts dumb luck, timing, and decent (but not amazing) talent. This version of Chrissie Hynde is not one I care to put on a rock 'n roll pedestal. Maybe this is what Chrissie wanted the reader to conclude. If you want to hear a real voice of bulls***-free rock wisdom, read John Lydon's two books.

Chrissie Henderson holds nothing back. Sex, drugs and rock and roll were her credo and mantra. A real wild child that flopped anywhere she could to gain shelter from the storm, as long as it was as far from her hometown in Ohio as possible. This included a period as a biker babe. The subtitle "My Life As A Pretender" is misleading. Over 200 hundred pages are devoted to her early life of bumming around and the punk rock scene. As insightful as this was, it became repetitive to the point of boredom. It was only until the last 60 pages that she delves into her life as a Pretender. Sad to say there is not much here that the true rock and roll fan does not already know. Nothing about her affair with Jim Kerr, very little about inspirations for her song writing. Like many of the bands of the

80’s the original Pretender line up lasted only a few years. This short tenure was due to the overdose deaths of two of the original members. There have been several iterations of the Pretenders since then, but Chrissie glosses over them. The book ends with the break-up of the original band. The reader is left wondering what happened in her life from the late 80’s to present time. Although she gives a 3 page summary to cover this bridge of time, the reader learns nothing about her solo career. I purchased this book with enthusiasm and high expectations. My enthusiasm was quickly damped and expectations turned into disappointment.

Much like other reviewers I have no idea how Reckless has gotten 4 stars. I was REALLY looking forward to this book as I have mad respect for Chrissie, being a strong female lead for a kick ass rock band. BUT 75% of the book is about her growing up in Ohio. Why her editors let her spend that much time on those stories is beyond me. A) Because they weren’t that interesting and B) they were the same thing over and over again (bands, booze, drugs, bad boys, and bad decisions). There is very little about the Pretenders and the journey as a band who went from nothing to worldwide sensation. The writing style was severely lacking. And, last but not least, the book is pretty much devoid of emotion. Just made it that much harder to like. Sorry Chrissie, this book is a bust...

I fell in love with her voice the first time I heard it in the 80’s. I went from cassette to CD and then ITunes but I always have their music. After seeing her in a leather jacket on an album cover I bought my first leather jacket. I wanted to be that wild, leather wearing woman. I bought this book after seeing an interview about this book. I was so excited to finally find who she was and how she got there. Well, I’m still trying to get through the book. It’s kinda boring. I keep waiting for something exciting to happen or at least for her to be excited about something. The stories just end suddenly and then a new paragraph starts on a completely different story. I guess that’s why writers get editors. I still love her voice and her music. If you think about it, everything you want to know about her is in the lyrics so the book is unnecessary.

Worst rock book I’ve read. Too jumpy, and not clear. 3/4 into the book and they just start telling the story of the band. Great band, but bad book.

surprising how I loved her in the 70’s but she is a terrible story teller.

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