



Born to Run: The Bruce Springsteen Story

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Profiles the life and career of one of the leaders of contemporary rock and roll music, noting the character of his stage performances and the inspirations for his songs.

Born to Run: The Bruce Springsteen Story Details

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Gerri says

If you are a Springsteen fan, this is a must read. Lots of inside stories and personal info that I had not heard before. It is a very long book.

Thomas DeWolf says

As I prepare for the publication of my second book in October 2012, I turned for inspiration to Bruce Springsteen - through the words of the incomparable Rock & Roll critic Dave Marsh.

Disclaimer: Bruce's music has accompanied me for decades. I've been to dozens of his shows; witnessed many from the front row - elbows on stage. This book was not read without bias.

Marsh tells the story of Bruce's life, his art, life on the road, and the challenges of being true to himself while trying to share his music through the corporate path that mass-produced art must travel, as both a reporter and a true fan. The result is a book that any true fan of Bruce's will love. And any artist, writer, musician will know: you can be true to yourself and succeed.

Nancy says

Loved this book. I remember being surprised to learn how hard Bruce was on himself and those in his band and his circle. The hours and hours and hours spent to produce a perfect cut for every song on Born to Run. Wow. He wouldn't have been easy to work with/for - you would really have to be totally into the vision and the passion to stick it out. But the album was incredible!

Craig Werner says

Even though I'm reading Marsh's Two Hearts, which includes both of his Springsteen books and a fair amount of new material, I wanted to review Born to Run on its own. In the intro to Two Hearts, Marsh writes about having set out to create a new genre, the "Rock Book," incorporating biography, fan's notes, photos (sadly not reproduced in Two Hearts), music biz book, discography, and tour chronology. BTR did/does all that, but most importantly, it captures the energy of Springsteen's emergence, the reasons why he mattered then, which have been the foundation of why he matters now. I'm teaching the book to a class full of freshmen, only a few of whom were real fans when they signed up; most are there because their parents are fans and/or they're interested in music more generally or the 70s and 80s in historical perspective. Three weeks in, most of them get it. That's partly listening of course (and tonight we're watching a full concert video from 1975), but it's also because Marsh frames things so deftly. BTR, like the record its named for, communicates the vision of rock and roll (and the soul which is so much a part of Bruce's sound and sensibility) as something that can save your life. Jungleland and Backstreets got me through some very

difficult times and BTR knows how and why. If you're a Springsteen fan and haven't read it, do. Upgraded my review from the four stars it was in memory to the five it deserves for being a crucial point of reference.

Adam Carrico says

A fun, quick bio on Bruce up to the release of *The River*. There have been many more bios since this release (Peter Ames Carlin version is much better and more comprehensive), but it's still a nice read if you want to remind yourself of why Springsteen is so great. Enjoyed the transcribed stories from Bruce's stage banter and thought the author did a really good job of analyzing the lyrics/meaning behind each of the five albums covered in the book. Didn't like his rock criticism (and cynicism) dealing with artists that weren't named Bruce Springsteen. Overall, nothing new in this book you can't get elsewhere in a better package, but for a hardcore fan, why not waste a few hours reading things you already know in another format?

Mark says

A fantastic rock & roll bio that covers Bruce's career from its very beginnings up until his double album *The River*. Dave Marsh presents his subject matter expertly. If any fault can be found, it's the fact that this isn't really a biography. The reader winds up learning little about the person Bruce Springsteen but much about the musician Bruce Springsteen.

Karen says

He needs an editor but a fascinating insight into his life

Catherine says

A good, thorough book. Would've given it 5 stars but I didn't like how the author bashes several other artists to make a point about how good and different Bruce is. Bruce wouldn't approve.

Mary vO says

How I managed to wait this long to read it is beyond me.

Barb G says

Tons of great photos in this book along with the story of how it all began. What a shame it would have been if this story didn't have a happy ending, for Bruce and for all of us fans. Baby, we were born to run!!!

Carol Storm says

Now, a two star review for this book is not a two star review for Bruce Springsteen. It's a two star review for this book.

The way I see it, rock and roll began as a music of sensuality and power, full of sinful swagger, racial tension, and illicit seduction. Later, it became so many more things -- from the innocent harmonies of the Beach Boys to the Satanic power of the Rolling Stones, from soulful grooves of Motown to the laid back jams of the Grateful Dead. And among those things, most certainly, was the working class drama of Bruce Springsteen's greatest songs. Funny like THE HONEYMOONERS, tragic like ON THE WATERFRONT, Bruce is as much a dramatist as a musician, and just about everyone from Presidents to prostitutes agrees he deserves to be known as The Boss.

The problem is, Dave Marsh, in making a case for Springsteen, has to make a case AGAINST everyone else. The whole point of this book is that rock and roll is and can only be what Bruce Springsteen's music happens to be, which is white working-class protest music. The problem is, rock and roll is a lot bigger than Bruce Springsteen. And Marsh being Marsh, he has to indulge in little Stalinist purges every three pages or so just to clear the way for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Beach Boys were spoiled rich kids. The Who created rock opera. The Rolling Stones fiddled with sitars.

Obviously, not all of these experiments were successful, but rock and roll doesn't grow when Dave Marsh's inferiority complex is the only measure of success. It's painfully obvious throughout this book that Marsh in a big hurry to declare "The Sixties" a mistake, an aberration, a crime that needs to be forgotten. Bear in mind this is a guy who did not serve in Vietnam, sanctifying a rock artist who also did not serve in Vietnam. But there are approximately 345 cheap shots aimed at "hippies" in this book. About five of them are legitimate.

The sad thing is, Springsteen really is great. But not great enough to make Dave Marsh into a Vietnam veteran, or a working class hero, or even someone who can write a compelling account of a true rock legend.

Padraic says

Best ignore the "V. 1" indicator. Bruce before he was embalmed.

Mike says

I love The Boss. This biography is OK, but it's a little flat.

karen says

What a life and demons, your upbringing does have an impact on who you are and what you become. Bruce fought all the way and even with all his riches he has demons.

Elizabeth Teig Von Hoffman says

This must've been fantastic in 1978 when there was no other books on Bruce Springsteen. 40 years later, it's pretty rudimentary stuff that you'd learn all of and more in any other book on the Boss.
