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This is a memoir by Marianne Faithfull, recounting her days in the swinging '60s. She recalls her love and life with Mick Jagger, how Bob Dylan wooed her, the Rolling Stones courted her and finally, how drugs trapped her into a world where nothing else mattered but the next fix. She also reveals the contradictions of life as a "star", first as the pop confection she was packaged as, and later as the hard-edged artist who co-authored "Sister Morphine" and shocked the world with "Broken English".

Faithfull Details

Date : Published 1995 by Penguin Books (first published 1994)

ISBN : 9780140246537

Author : Marianne Faithfull , David Dalton

Format : Paperback 443 pages

Genre : Music, Biography, Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Biography Memoir

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Katherine Basto says

I liked this disturbing and never boring account of Marianne Faithfull's very interesting life! From her early days (her mother was a Baroness of sorts and her father just left the family to found some center that featured mind control. Personally, without a father's real influence, I think the young Marianne constantly was in search of a father figure) to a young first marriage, child and then onto being Mick Jagger's girlfriend. Then, you realize Marianne was only in her early 20s. I wondered how she could go off, leave her husband John Dunbar and young son Nicholas to get wasted at Keith and Anita's house day after day. Life was one big party while she left her contrived domestic life for someone else to deal with.

This seems to be a theme in many of the rock star books I've read. Create a family and then treat them as an aside. But Marianne is up for the thrills but she has an uncanny way of sabotaging herself. She claims she doesn't want attention, is shy but has no problems making scenes, wearing nothing but furs, shocking people and then somehow she wants to be accepted?

After a brief career with "As Tears Go By" I wonder why the Stones never wanted her as a singer in the band. She was left out to be a groupie of sorts and really stymied her own career. She slept with Keith Richards for a one nighter and claimed it was the best sex ever! But a real blow to Marianne was when Mick slept with Anita Pallenberg, her best friend and future wife of Keith. But then again, Marianne had a strong bi-sexual side (personally I think she enjoyed women more) and ended up sleeping with Anita herself. Oh yes, Mick was attracted to Keith as well. So, this was one incestuous group of people indeed.

She starts with hash and moves on to the stronger stuff! One of the reasons I've given this a 4-star is that at times Faithfull does not own up to the pain she has caused herself and others. One minute she has no money but when she gets it she goes out and buys clothes and drugs. Yes, I love the fact she was literary, moved by Coleridge, Carroll and others. But her superficial side is alive and well and she really has a hard time admitting it.

Why did she stay with Mick so long? Well, she wasn't working and someone was giving her money to buy all these things. Yes, she had some royalties but I think the book would have been stronger if she was able to be more honest with herself, honest with her motives and why she did what she did.

She mentions her mother Eva quite frequently, especially since Eva cared for the young Nicholas. Sad that he was taken away and even when she met up with him when he was 17 she offered him a line of coke. Really?

I was and still am a devotee of "Broken English." I love this album with its raw rage and angst. At times in the book, Marianne Faithfull admits she is not a nice person. She practically admits she's a narcissist; something a narcissist would never admit. It's clear she was...always seeking out attention and if she didn't get it, she'd immediately do something negative to insure she got that attention.

She was and still is a beautiful woman. She is an excellent writer as well. With all the drugs she has taken, I'm glad she's still alive! What a life!

Mona says

I was eager to read this book as I had heard so much growing up what an icon Marianne Faithfull was, but I didn't understand why or what she had really done to achieve that status. So this book finally solved the enigma for me!

I am going to give a two-part review: the first part will be an evaluation of the book itself - the quality of the writing, the craft, etc. The second part will be about my thoughts on Marianne Faithfull as a person.

The writing style is very open and conversational. You feel like Marianne is actually telling you the story while hanging out in the living room, relaxed and casual. She will tell a bit of a story and then punctuate it with a comment that really makes you feel like she is engaged and present rather than distant from something that happened so long ago. She especially has a talent for detailing the hedonistic era of acid tripping and decadent adventures. I loved reading her journey into the psychedelic world and the sense of magic and power that welled up inside and around her. The book is pretty well stitched, without a lot of jumping around, although there are a few minor fragmented stories. Overall, it's a wild ride that Marianne has taken and her life seems charmed in a tragic way.

Marianne does seem to take for granted that the reader is familiar with the Rolling Stones' discography and musical eras (as well as other musicians and artists of the time). There's a lot of name dropping and assumptions which I found hard to relate to, but I just glossed over those references since I really wanted to know about Marianne more than anything.

And now my thoughts on Marianne Faithfull. I think she is brutally honest in portraying her self-centeredness and weaknesses in this book. I found it kind of sad how much of the time was spent where Marianne defines herself in terms of her relationships to other people. Sometimes it seemed that there was more about other people in this book than Marianne - and I think her identity is very tied to the external. I found her personality to be a little pathetic. Extremely self-centered and a bit of a hanger-on. And the depths of her descent into drug use, as with many addicts, is like being on a never ending carousel. Oh here we go again, round and round, same scenery, same excuses, same tragic cycle.

I feel extremely sad for her son, who she hardly mentions - she spends much more time in the book describing her drug and music buddies than she does her child (who she can't even care for because she's so involved with drugs.)

After reading the book, I was at a loss to understand her cult status. What is all the hubbub? So I thought I would listen to her music and find the brilliance of her art and truly appreciate her. Nope. Maybe Broken English has some redeeming qualities, but I'm just not seeing what all the hype was about. I did see her perform in the play The Black Rider some years ago but wasn't terribly impressed by it, either.

So, the book does a fabulous job of revealing the iconic Marianne Faithfull. And I am not really a fan.

Louise says

It's been 23 years since publication but Marianne Faithfull's look at her life in the vortex of the 1960's and the crash of the 1980's holds up. This book is perceptive, literary and far beyond my expectations.

Clearly, her drop dead beauty brought Faithfull into the decade's music explosion and an incredible physical fortitude helped her survive drugs, alcohol, exposure and malnutrition. Her openness to new experiences and her lifelong reading (she is not a high school graduate) add dimension to this book that you don't get in many rock memoirs.

There is an inside view of life in an entourage. Glamour, energy and money seem to bring out competition and jealousy. She writes of the landmarks of the times, for instance, for many of those close to Brian Jones, his death was merely an incident of convenience. There are two scenes with Bob Dylan that are worthy of wider note in the canons of the era. Mick Jagger, while totally self-involved, manages to be more sober and humane than the others. Faithfull speculates that the only person Mick loves is Keith.

She gives a fuzzier view of the life of an addict. She notes the hierarchy of street life: drug addicts are better

than alcoholics. While she lives on “the wall” she has resources the others don’t. She can visit her mother who is raising her son in the house Mick Jagger bought them. She maintains enough lucidity to keep her contacts in the music industry which eventually result in an album.

The narrative on rehab is clearer. Faithfull’s childhood was no more stable than her life in the maelstrom of celebrity which she joined, arguably, as a child. While it was Faithfull who left Mick, it took her almost 20 years to vanquish the experience.

I’d like to know more about her mother, father and son. While this book shows the dismissive nature of male rock stars towards women, I’d be interested in, as the talking heads say, “more color” on her observations on the role of women in this period.

There is a lot here. It is a must read on the era.

Alex is The Romance Fox says

Just finished Faithfull...for the 3rd time!! And each time I am fascinated by this woman. One of the most unique and original female singer-songwriter.

An iconic singer, actress, songwriter and trendsetter, whose career has spanned over 50 years.

First reviewed in 2012

I love this book – first read when it was first published in 1994 and for me it’s a book that I can read again and again and still be touched and astounded by this extraordinary woman’s life.

Faithfull tells her story in a candid, hard-hitting and gritty way and one of the things I really liked was that she never looked for sympathy or made excuses for her mistakes but that she was honest and not shy to admit the mistakes she made.

”When you are 18, 19, 20, you're used to being photographed all the time, in a certain way. So, the narcissism becomes almost out of control. And the way that young women are photographed, they become addicted to this feedback of the image.”

There’s so much I want to write about my feelings and perceptions about this book..but it would fill pages and pages, so I am going to keep it as short as I can.

From a gawky, vivacious, ethereal and beautiful 17-year old, she soon became part of the Swinging 60’s London, after being discovered by the Rolling Stone’s manager and recording her first single, As Tears Go By, ironically written by Mick Jagger & Keith Richards, reaching No 9 in the British Charts.

By the age of eighteen, she was married and had a child, toured the country with well-known English bands,

began hanging out with the Rolling Stones which soon led to her much-publicized relationship with Mick Jagger , which included the famous not so true “Mars Bars” episode,

the drug busts, her attempted suicide in Australia, losing her baby at 8 months. A muse, fashion trendsetter.....

Her spiral into a world of drugs, drink and homelessness was fast, furious and unrelenting and complete by the age of 23.

Obscurity, shooting heroin into her veins, drinking, squatting, losing her child, going days without food so she could get drugs, living in the streets was her life for the next couple of years.

I felt really sad as I read about this young woman whose life could or may have been so different and to actually experience what she did at that age.

How many people out there could ever pick themselves up from the pitiless bottom she found herself in?

One asks the question of why would a woman who was loved and loved a rock star walk away and choose the life she did for the next decade.

Yet, she was able to comeback...after being rejected by most of her friends and lovers, her family....the fact that she was able to emerged from that dark and painful period in her life is truly astounding.

And how sad it is that she is most famously known as Mick Jagger’s beautiful and drugged girlfriend and not for her own singing, song writing and acting talents. She was already a pop star before meeting the Rolling Stones, she acted as Ophelia in the movie Hamlet, she had done stage plays and yet not enough credit or recognition. Even had to fight Mick to get him to give her credit for the lyrics she wrote for the song Sister Morphine, Wild Horses.....when Marianne woke up after her six-day coma from her attempted suicide, the first words she said to Mick Jagger were...“**Wild horses couldn’t drag me away**” and they wrote the song Wild Horses together and she never received any credit for her contribution.

Keith Richards tells us in his autobiography, Life, that Marianne was the inspiration behind many of the Rolling Stones songs and even helped Mick writing a lot of the lyrics.....and to date she has never received any mention or given any credit for being the early Rolling Stones muse.

There are some fabulous parts in the book that were humorous...her sense of wit and humor comes across so well, especially when she first meets Bob Dylan at the Savoy Hotel in the 60’s,

and later when she talks to him about her album Broken English.

Life was certainly not kind to her even after her comeback there were so many set-backs and excruciating times for her. But you know what? Despite the knocks and beatings she has had in her life, she’s still around, still singing, still reading and LIVING.

I love her voice and her 1979 comeback album, Broken English, totally blew me away.

It was like listening to her talk about her life and all that despair heartbreak...I felt it I felt it... and when she does The Ballad of Lucy Jordan - is she talking about herself? And I can never forget her version of John Lennon's evocative and so hauntingly beautiful song, Working Class Hero.

Read her book and you decide if she's a survivor – an EPIC one or not.

For me, she will always be remembered as someone who had something in her that said...DON'T GIVE UP.
In her own words....

:""Never let the buggers grind you down.("")

And hey, if you want to see this incredible and iconic performer live.....this is where she will be in 2016.....I am booking my tickets RIGHT NOW!!!!

Tue, 02 Feb Roundhouse, London, UK

Fri, 08 Jul Jardin Public, Cognac, France

Check out some amazing shots of the beautiful and talented Marianne Faithfull:

<http://www.vintag.es/2011/06/beautifu...>

And if you want to hear some of her music.....check it out....

<https://youtu.be/S7oTqILoLns?list=RDS...> as tears go by

https://youtu.be/3N_rNz2oAGA?list=RDS... working class hero

Lord Beardsley says

I have long been a great fan of Ms Faithfull, but now I can safely say she is my other living idol along with Stephen Fry. It takes a lot for me to seemingly worship people still living, and she is my female living idol! Talk about someone who knows who she is and can look back on her life with a brilliant sense of humor! She is brilliantly intelligent, dazzlingly witty, and unapologetic about her past. Also, how many people end their autobiography with a recipe?

Sara says

After reading this, I have been struggling to come to terms with who this person is and what I'm getting from her autobiography, beyond the voyeuristic kick one gets from looking into someone else's life, particularly the (sometimes) rich and famous.

Ms. Faithfull is hard to pin down: she strives to be a "ghost", she hates her former beauty for the attention it brought her, but she wants to be acknowledged and noticed. She makes foolish mistakes and errors in judgment and excuses herself by saying it was the times, or the drugs, or she was young, and is angry when someone holds her accountable. She lived her life almost completely for herself and rarely considered the consequences of her actions or the effects they will have on others, particularly her child who she insisted on keeping, yet abandoned throughout his life. She says that Mick Jagger was a considerate and involved companion, who stayed with her longer than she deserved, and then she complains about his narcissism, self-indulgence and the fact that he finally had had enough of her. She mocks the boring "upper crust" types with whom she felt forced to socialize, yet she proved to be a rather dull companion herself during her many years in a drug induced haze as she made half-baked pronouncements about life and the world before doing a face-plant in the soup. She is incensed when someone tries to categorize her, yet she does it constantly with

everyone in her life; when she discusses one of her managers for example: "He was good at his job but in every other way quite awful. Just a draggy, English, middle-class, pop-music person." Pronouncements like this abound in this autobiography, and there is never a moment when she truly accepts what a self-aggrandizing, pain in the butt she really is. She does admit to self-loathing, particularly at the nadir of her drug years, but it comes across as a rather lame excuse to continue making bad choices rather than a true expression of angst.

I'm not sure I understand or like this person, but I did find her story an interesting one - not necessarily because of her but because of her experiences, the people she knew, and the times she lived in. I do admire the sheer strength and determination it must have taken to live through that era and, as always, I'm amazed at the ability of drug addicts to keep going and to recover from what is a horrible illness.

Jason says

Marianne Faithfull's personal journey through privilege, addiction, poverty, and the long climb back up after the fall is a smooth as silk reading experience. and, yeah, there's juicy insider bits aplenty about the Stones and other '60s music, art, and social scene luminaries, doncha worry 'bout that.

fun, engaging, occasionally heartbreakin, and well-written

Bethany says

For years I've had a fascination with Marianne Faithfull - the girl who looked like an angel and sang like a waif, who then became a woman, with a strength that belied her broken voice.

This book was very evocative of the 60s. Not the typical sunshiny portrayal of the 60s, which I love too, but the darker flipside. In fact, it was so evocative, it inspired me to write a story, which I'm still writing now and living amidst in the back of my brain.

This autobiography is definitely not for those who can't handle, well, darker and more explicit details of 60s livin'. I really liked it, though my upbringing kept tapping me on the shoulder saying things like, "Shouldn't you be shocked?"

Anyway, I found that reading parts of this whilst in the grips of lack of sleep made me sometimes feel like I was tripping along with Marianne. And by tripping I don't mean frolicking. :P

Rupert says

So far I have learned that Marianne loved Mick and Keith but not Brian or John, even though she married John, and she liked Bob and slept with him but then his fiancee came home so she took some acid and smoked some hash and had sex with some other people.

Ian Mapp says

I don't often read biographies but the few facts that I had about Ms Faitfull's life meant that I wanted to find out more.

I knew about the Stones and the 60s, but what always interested me was how she ended up living on the streets of London in the late 70s. How could someone fall from grace so far.

The book is entertaining for various reasons. 1) the sex. I knew she had slept with two of the stones. Turns out this should be three. And some women. And Gene Pitney. And Alex Higgins. 2) The drugs. This is relentless as she goes through all the drugs you can think off. Especially LSD. 3) Just how young she was. The major part of the book concentrates on the 60s where she was a pop star, married, with child and embroiled with the Stones. At the end of the sixties, she was only 23.

Crammed a lot into here years. Also makes you realise how close Punk was to the birth of Pop Music. From having Jagger write songs about you to being married to the bass player of the Vibrators in 8 short years.

I'd love to know what her son Nicholas makes of the book. He gets scarcely a mention. You'd like to know who was looking after him whilst all these scenanigans were taking place.

Interesting read that evokes the spirit of an era. We will never see those days again.

Madeline says

"In families there's always one person - almost always a woman - who is designated to be the mad one. In my circle I was the one elected, and since we lived our lives on the pages of the tabloid press, I became famous for it."

I'm implementing a new personal rule: from now on, no more memoirs by white dude rockers (my backlog of to-write reviews includes the Moltey Cru memoir and hooooo boy, that one's gonna be a doozy). From now on, we only read rock n' roll memoirs written by the women who slept with these dudes. And Patti Smith.

I'll admit freely that before I read this, I had no idea that Marianne Faithfull was a successful musician in her own right before she fell in with the Rolling Stones crowd, and became most famous as the on-and-off-again girlfriend of Mick Jagger. Which just goes to show, really, how the women who surround famous men are pushed to the side of the narrative, and only ever described in relation to the famous dudes they used to fuck. Marianne Faithfull, in telling her story in her own words, gets to give her own side of events (especially the infamous Redlands drug raid and trial, which Faithfull - fascinatingly - frames as the circumstances where Mick Jagger and Keith Richards developed their rock star personas) and show the readers that she was doing a lot more than just sleeping with a bunch of famous dudes. I mean, she also sleeps with a lot of famous dudes, but can you blame her? She fucked 1960's-era Keith Richards and turned down Bob Dylan, for Christ's sake! The woman deserves a statue!

As is the norm with memoirs from this era, there are a lot of drugs. But Faithfull's memoir is in a class by itself, because Faithfull wasn't just a drug user, she was (by her own admission) a full-on junkie. Reading

about drug addiction in books like *Life* by Keith Richards or *I Dreamed I Was a Very Clean Tramp* by Richard Hell, there's something almost...performative about the way these men talk about their drug use. It sometimes reads like they're trying to prove something, to live up to their rock star image. Faithfull's memoir is unique because of how far she really fell into drug addiction, and her descriptions of drug use are some of the most interesting I've read. She also goes into the time she overdosed and went into a coma and had a near-death experience where she had an entire conversation with recently-deceased Brian Jones. It might be total bullshit, but it's fascinating.

Part of what's fun about this memoir is getting to watch the crazy rollercoaster that was Faithfull's life - she careens from child of aristocrats, to pop star, to globe-trotting rock n' roll girlfriend, to housewife, to junkie, to *homeless* junkie, to film and stage actress...one wonders why anyone would ever bother reading a memoir by Mick Jagger or Keith Richards. I mean, all they ever did was play in a band. Marianne Faithfull has lived at least ten different lives, and what's possibly even more impressive (especially considering her near-death experiences and heroin addiction), she's *still alive*. There is something very powerful inside Marianne Faithfull that has enabled her to survive her own life, and the best part of the memoir is seeing her put aside her Manic Pixie Dream Girl Groupie persona and tell us about her life with unblinking, blunt honesty.

I criticized the groupie memoir *I'm With the Band* by Pamela des Barres for its complete acceptance and forgiveness of the garbage men in her life. Des Barres's book was 100% breezy tolerance of being used and abused by various men, all for the privilege of surrounding herself with famous people. I wanted anger, and des Barres either didn't have it, or recognized that publicly airing her dirty laundry with most of the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame wasn't the smartest long-term plan.

Faithfull isn't angry, exactly, but she's certainly not pulling her punches when it comes to calling out the toxic behavior of the men in her life. She's honest about her own failings, and she also sees others' motivations clearly. She describes running into Bob Dylan and happily telling him that she's off heroin, in treatment, and very happy.

"He just acted as if I was lying. All I got from Bob was 'What? You? Nah!'

His reaction was fairly typical of the rock contingent. They liked me better on heroin. I was much more subdued and manageable. It's very common with rock stars. They surround themselves with beautiful and often brilliant women whom they also find extremely threatening. One way out is for the women to get into drugs. This makes them compliant and easier to be with."

Like I said - she's not *angry* at these men, exactly. But whereas Pamela des Barres was utterly uninterested in applying a critical lens to her past, Faithfull isn't afraid to question the behavior and motives of the people from her past.

"It was a nightmare for Mick, the whole experience of me getting into smack. But he never did anything to stop me. The most he would say was, 'Don't you think you're doing a bit much of that stuff?' I would lie to him and tell him I was only chipping and he would believe me. Mick is the classic codependent. He gets his energy from being around drug addicts. Like Andy Warhol. He'll do drugs with addicts if he *has* to, to get their trust and affection. Like an undercover cop."

Also, just because I couldn't resist quoting it, here's Faithfull on Keith Richards (who, it's important to note, Faithfull had a massive crush on before she agreed to start dating Mick instead):

"I run into Keith a lot at airports lately. He's no longer the Byronic lad I once knew. More a Shakespearean character, a combination of Prince Hal and Falstaff. It's always very reassuring to see him. I feel, when I'm

with him, as if we are the last remaining compatriots of a long-vanished kingdom who have not entirely renounced the old ways (although we do differ on the interpretation of the alchemical creed).

...Apropos of yet another casualty in our ranks, Keith volunteers, 'It's always baffling when somebody commits suicide. Not you, in Australia, of course, yours was a perfectly *valid* reason.' Thanks, Bud."

Dear Pamela des Barres even makes a brief appearance in the book. It was pretty funny to read about her self-described passionate affair with Mick Jagger in her own memoir, and then read Marianne Faithfull's version:

"Mick had been spending a lot of time in Los Angeles, where bevies of *wahinis* fawned over him and catered to his wildest fantasy. These girls would do *anything*. He was *the* rock star par excellence - the *point* was to please him. So when he came back to Cheyne Walk he quite naturally wondered whether he couldn't get some of the same stuff at home! Unfortunately for Mick, I'd only recently read Germaine Greer's *Female Eunuch*, from which I had discovered that the whole point was the orgasm. Mine, not his.

One night shortly after he got back, Mick suggested that I start using ice cream-flavored douches. I'm not stupid. I realized that this must be the sort of thing that American chicks did. But I didn't put two and two together till I read *I'm With the Band* (Pamela has a whole rap about strawberry- and peach-flavored douches)."

If I had to sum up the entire thesis statement of this book, and Marianne Faithfull's casual approach to her own fame and colorful past (as well as her air of total, genuine *coolness*), it would be this passage:

"Being with Madonna is a bit like being with royalty, you know. Actually, cocktails with Princess Margaret was a little bit more relaxed. It *was* fun, though. especially looking back on it. Anyway, all my friends' kids were terribly impressed."

Lisa says

Marianne is just not as interesting as she thinks she is.

Sonia says

April (who just got married) gave this book to me in early summer 1999. It is a good companion piece to Pamela Des Barres' *I'm with the Band* (which MF mentions several times--they both did Mick), but MF has a much more jaded view of things (drugs will do that to you, kids, or is it just Being the Descendant of Sacher-Masoch living in England vs. Growing Up Beatlemaniac in Reseda, California?).

Not to miss is one of the last photos--it's just her cleavage.

In fall 2004, Marianne Faithfull was starring in The Black Rider in San Francisco.* The tickets sold quickly, and unfortunately the matinee I saw starred the "alternate" (not understudy, as it was all part of her contract). The morning before the show, I went to Kabuki Springs and Spa (very nice place for shiatsu and a bath in Japantown), and lo! There was Marianne Faithfull undressing in the locker room. I waited until she was in her bra and I was fully clothed before approaching her. She was very gracious, but of course it wasn't an appropriate time for autographs. Man, those San Francisco days when I was "writing my dissertation" were

good times.

*Also in this play was Janet "Mrs. Bale" Henfrey. Awesome!

Lynx says

Wife, mother, muse, popstar, punk diva, ethereal English rose, homeless junkie, recovering addict... those are just a few words one could use to describe Marianne Faithfull but I think 'Total Badass' sums her up nicely. This inspiring woman has had one wild life and candidly shares her experiences in this awesome autobiography.

I talk in-depth about Marianne's life on Muses and Stuff, a podcast which celebrates the women who inspired the men and the music we all love. Please click the link and listen, rate, and share! And remember, the devil's in the details, if you like what you hear go pick up Marianne's book and hear it straight from the wonderful woman herself!!

Sarah McMullan says

Always Faithfull
