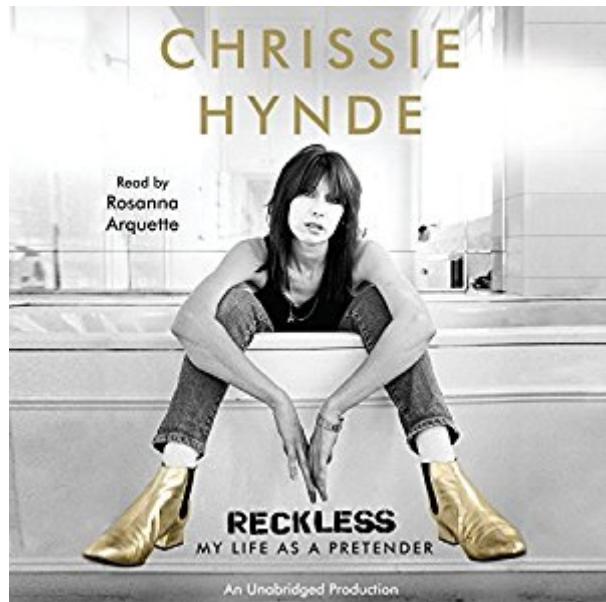


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# Reckless: My Life As A Pretender



## 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

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## Customer Reviews

If you're looking to learn more about the Pretenders as a band, look elsewhere. There are a scant 67 pages out of 310 devoted to that time. The bulk of this book is a series of rambling anecdotes, mostly about her childhood to early 20's in Ohio, and then in London (and France). I didn't find that many of them gave me that much insight into Hynde as a person, or her motivations. A lot of it seemed strangely devoid of emotion. I would have been happy with that part cut way down to significant events and much more time spent on her experiences with the first lineup of the Pretenders. It isn't even very well written, which is surprising coming from someone who can write

beautiful and evocative words for her songs. But I guess she says it best herself when discussing her brief time writing for the NME: "The idea of me writing anything at all was ludicrous. My head was disorganized, a tangle of crossed lines. I couldn't even conclude a thought on a postcard." Well, that still holds true. And then the book suddenly ends with the end of the Pretenders version 1. Which left me with confusion - if this period is so important that the memoir ends when it's over, why only devote 67 pages to it? Honestly, I would have loved to hear how she went on after that, how she made her decisions on filling the band positions, how her songwriting process might have changed without having James Honeyman Scott around anymore, how she balanced a rock band and motherhood. And nearly nothing is said about her singing, which has probably been her greatest gift. Certainly the first Pretenders album was great in many ways: unique songs, stellar guitar playing, solid rhythm section. But That Voice - that elevated it above so many other things of the time.

In reading this book, I'd give it a different number of stars for different audiences. For those who want to know up front 70% of the book is pre-The Pretenders, with the remainder a whirlwind tour time during The Pretenders' original group and minimal follow-up except in an epilogue: 3 stars for those who aren't familiar with the punk scene and The Pretenders. I've been challenging myself to read at least one new release a week; this happened to be the book and topic that looked the most appealing to me. Reading the free preview, the descriptions that are used by Hynde; they're very vivid. Yet, this narration style changes after the first 15% of the book. I was actually also drawn to the elements of deindustrialization that are discussed, it is pretty fascinating and they are used to set the scene for Hynde's development. These may seem like weird reasons to read the book, but honestly, I know little of Hynde and/or others of the era in which the Pretenders were really coming up, or the punk scene. The first 70% of the book, in Kindle, really gives an excellent glimpse into life in 1960's Americana. There is the discussion about the industry in Akron, the reliance on various industries like Firestone, and a really powerful piece regarding Hynde's firsthand account of being at Kent State University and what it was like after the shootings. It's in these areas that go of America that make it worthwhile read for those who might not be as familiar with the genre. There is also some insight, albeit minimal, reflections on counter-culture. One may get a sentence of some wonderful insight, but then it fades, one such discusses how the pill was not liberating for women, but in turn actually made them sexual objects.

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