

Neon Angel PDF

Cherie Currie



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About the book

Book Review: "Neon Angel" by Cherie Currie

In "Neon Angel," Cherie Currie takes us on a thrilling ride through the vibrant and chaotic rock scene of the 1970s, offering an intimate glimpse into her life as the celebrated lead singer of The Runaways. This memoir is a candid exploration of youth, capturing the rebellious energy and the seductive nature of fame that permeated the era.

Currie's narrative is unflinchingly honest, revealing not just the exhilarating highs of her musical career but also the dark shadows cast by addiction and personal struggles. Through her powerful and vivid storytelling, she shares her journey of rapid ascent to rock stardom and the turbulent experiences that came with it.

"Neon Angel" is more than just a memoir; it's a raw and unapologetic account of what it means to be a woman in the rock industry, making it a must-read for those intrigued by the powerful allure of rock 'n roll and the trials faced by its legends.

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About the author

Artist Profile: Cherie Currie

Overview:

Cherie Currie is a dynamic and versatile artist celebrated for her role as the lead vocalist of The Runaways, a groundbreaking all-female rock band formed in the mid-1970s.

Musical Journey:

Currie joined The Runaways as a teenager, instantly captivating audiences with her raw, powerful voice and electrifying stage presence. Her contributions were pivotal in securing the band's international success and pioneering a path for women in the rock genre.

Diverse Career:

After her tenure with The Runaways, Cherie expanded her creative horizons by venturing into acting. She starred in notable films, including "Foxes," where she shared the screen with Jodie Foster. In addition to acting, Currie showcases her artistic talents as a chainsaw carver, illustrating her passion for visual arts.

Literary Contributions:

Currie's personal story is intimately captured in her memoir, "Neon Angel,"

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in which she unapologetically reflects on her experiences in the entertainment industry, detailing both her highs and lows as she navigated life in the public eye.

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Neon Angel Summary

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Neon Angel Summary Chapter List

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1. Chapter 1: A Dream of Rock Stardom: Cherie's Early Life and Ambition

In the opening chapter of "Neon Angel," Cherie Currie reflects on her formative years, painting a portrait of a young girl whose dreams gleamed as brightly as the neon lights of Hollywood. Raised in the sun-kissed town of Encino, California, in the 1960s, Cherie's childhood unfolded against a backdrop steeped in the music and culture that defined an era. Her early life was marked by both inspiration and tumult, shaped significantly by her family dynamics and her burning ambition to become a rock star.

Cherie grew up in a household filled with music. Her father was a vocal coach, while her mother was a homemaker who instilled in her children the values of unconditional love and support. However, the dream of stardom began at home with the seeds of ambition planted firmly in Cherie's heart. She became captivated by the sounds drifting from her radio, particularly the powerful voices of female rock icons like Janis Joplin and Grace Slick. These women paved the way for Cherie's burgeoning passion, shining a light on what was possible for a girl like her.

The glamour of rock music enchanted her, igniting a fervent desire to be part of that world. Cherie was mesmerized by the allure of the stage—the lights, the crowd, and the thrill of performing. Her experience in school plays provided her the first taste of the spotlight, where she reveled in the attention



and applause. Inspired by the catchy tunes and the electric performances of her idols, she dreamed of a future where she could share her voice with the world.

However, the journey towards achieving her dreams was not without obstacles. Cherie's adolescence was overshadowed by familial strife, marked by her parents' messy divorce. The instability in her home life posed significant challenges, but it also fueled her determination. At times, it felt like her music was the only reliable escape from the chaos surrounding her. As her passion grew stronger, she sought solace in songwriting, expressing her innermost feelings and experiences through her lyrics—a creative outlet that helped her navigate the emotional turbulence of her teenage years.

Cherie's ambition and resilience drove her to pursue experiences that would bring her closer to the music she loved. She attended a music summer camp as a teenager, which became a pivotal point in her journey. It was here that she honed her vocal skills and met like-minded individuals who shared her passion for rock and roll. The camp experience was integral in solidifying her desire to perform, allowing her to envision a life on stage.

As she stepped into her teenage years, Cherie's persona began to evolve. She embraced an edgier look, complete with the bleached hair and glam rock attire that embodied the burgeoning rock scene of the '70s. This

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transformation mirrored her internal resolve to break free from her circumstances and seize opportunities wherever they presented themselves. Cherie's part-time jobs as a waitress and cashier helped fund her quest to sing, and she soon found herself mingling with local musicians, dropping demos, and actively seeking a place in the music industry.

Ultimately, it was this relentless pursuit and fierce ambition that led Cherie to an audition that would change her life forever. Despite the odds, she remained undaunted, believing that her dream of rock stardom was within reach. Thus, while this chapter concludes, it sets the stage for her journey into the world of The Runaways, a pivotal moment that would launch her into the glitzy, yet perilous realm of rock music, transforming her deepest aspirations into tangible reality.

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2. Chapter 2: The Runaways: Rise to Fame and the Glittering World of Rock

In Chapter 2 of "Neon Angel," Cherie Currie takes readers on a journey through her early experiences with the iconic band The Runaways, a formation that would catapult her and her bandmates into the heart of the glittering yet tumultuous world of rock music. This chapter vividly illustrates the excitement and chaos that defined their rise to fame during the 1970s, highlighting both the shining allure and darker shadows that accompanied their success.

The chapter opens with Cherie's reflections on the youthful exuberance and dreams that brought together a group of teenage girls, each with a fierce desire to break into a male-dominated industry. Formed in 1975, The Runaways comprised Cherie as the lead vocalist, along with Joan Jett, Lita Ford, Sandy West, and Jackie Fox. Their chemistry was undeniable, with each member bringing unique talents that, when combined, forged a revolutionary sound that would resonate with young audiences across America and beyond. Cherie recalls the thrill of performing their first concerts, where they dazzled fans with high-energy rock performances and a vibrant stage presence.

As The Runaways gained traction, they found themselves propelled into the fast lane of rock stardom. Their first album, simply titled "The Runaways,"



was released in 1976, showcasing hits like "Cherry Bomb" that became instant anthems for rebellion and youth empowerment. Cherie vividly describes the euphoric experience of hearing their music on the radio for the first time, which cemented their place in rock history. The chapter emphasizes the band's role in pioneering women in rock, a dynamic that challenged societal norms and inspired future generations of female musicians.

However, with fame came challenges that began to unfold behind the scenes. Cherie showcases the glamour of touring, with the exciting yet grueling lifestyle characterized by late-night gigs, countless interviews, and the ever-present glare of the media. Each performance lit a fire within the band, further fueling their ambition; yet, the relentless schedule also took a toll on Cherie and her bandmates. The pressure to maintain their reputation and continuously churn out successful albums created a backdrop of tension among the members, who were navigating not just their careers, but also the complexities of adolescence.

One particularly poignant moment recounted by Cherie illustrates their escalating fame. During one show at the iconic Whisky a Go Go, the intensity of their performance captivated the crowd, leading to a standing ovation. Cherie reflects on how that night marked a pivotal point for The Runaways; it was a moment where they felt that they had truly arrived. Yet,



this intensity was laced with a sense of impending instability, as the heavy demands of being on the road began to wear thin on their relationships.

Behind the glamor, Cherie candidly acknowledges the naive exuberance of their youth and the darker realities that fame brought. As they traveled from city to city, they were met with both adoration and scrutiny. This newfound visibility often led to unhealthy environments influenced by drugs and alcohol, which began to permeate the band's culture. Cherie describes how, for a time, the exhilaration of rock stardom pushed them to embrace an extravagant lifestyle, but it ultimately concealed the strains that fame created on their unity and individual well-being.

The rise of The Runaways and their subsequent notoriety not only laid the groundwork for women in rock music but also set the stage for Cherie's own internal struggles with identity and self-worth. This chapter ultimately encapsulates the duality of their experience: the exhilaration of success and the underlying pressures that threatened to unravel the fabric of the band. Cherie Currie's vivid narration does not shy away from portraying the complexities of their rise—one that was as thrilling as it was alarming, setting the scene for the personal battles many young stars face in the pursuit of their dreams.



3. Chapter 3: Struggles with Fame: Personal Battles and the Price of Success

As Cherie Currie navigated the dizzying heights of stardom with The Runaways, she found herself grappling with the darker side of fame that cast a shadow over her youth. The glitz and glamour of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle were often juxtaposed with a profound sense of vulnerability and isolation, creating a stark complexity in her experiences.

Life on the road, though exhilarating, brought intense pressures that were both exhilarating and overwhelming. The adrenaline of performing in front of thousands offered a high that was addictive, yet it was accompanied by a relentless schedule that seldom allowed for rest or recovery. Cherie experienced firsthand the toll that constant touring took on her mental and physical state. The frenetic pace of life as a teen rock star meant that time for self-reflection was virtually nonexistent, leaving her to struggle with her identity amidst the pressures of public expectation.

The stark reality of fame became even more apparent with the temptations that accompanied it. Cherie's youthful naivety leaned her toward a lifestyle filled with excess. Parties, alcohol, and drugs became staples of the rock scene, and the boundaries between celebration and self-destruction began to blur. Cherie's personal battles with substance abuse emerged as a critical theme during this time, revealing how easily one can slip from the exaltation



of success into the abyss of addiction. The emotional highs of performing contradicted sharply with moments of deep despair offstage, as she found it increasingly difficult to cope.

As her fame grew, so did the scrutiny from the public and press. Each misstep was magnified, and the personal life of a rock star was laid bare for all to see, further complicating her relationship with fame. Cherie's narrative echoes the struggles of other iconic figures in music history, such as Kurt Cobain, who faced similar battles with the pressures of success while contending with their demons, leading to tragic endings.

Cherie felt trapped by the expectations to maintain the glamorous persona of a rock star, battling internally as she struggled to define her true self among the myriad of external realities encasing her. Her conflicts became evident as the band's dynamics began to shift, with jealousy and rivalry complicating their once-solid friendship. Cherie's insight reveals how the line between camaraderie and competition can blur in the music industry, complicating personal relationships and highlighting the often lonely path that accompanies fame.

Moreover, there were familial struggles that weighed heavily on Cherie during this time. While pursuing her dreams, she also faced the normative challenges every teenager does, such as maintaining familial relationships

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while being thrust into the adult world of rock music. The pressure of supporting her family, coupled with her personal battles, created an internal tug-of-war that adds layers to her story. Moments of doubt and insecurity plagued her as she questioned whether she was making the right choices—not just for her career, but for her future as well.

Ultimately, Chapter 3 of Cherie Currie’s memoir underscores not only the exhilaration that comes with chasing dreams but also the inherent struggles that accompany fame. It serves as a poignant reminder that the price of success can sometimes be one’s peace of mind, as the realities of addiction, personal conflict, and identity crises arise, leaving long-lasting impacts that Cherie would grapple with long after the lights dimmed and the cheers faded.

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4. Chapter 4: Finding My Voice: A Journey of Recovery and Rediscovery

In Chapter 4 of "Neon Angel," Cherie Currie embarks on a profound journey of recovery and rediscovery, reflecting on the turmoil that came after her early fame with The Runaways—a band that catapulted her into the dizzying heights of rock stardom. This chapter encapsulates her struggle with the darker side of fame, a theme that has persisted throughout her narrative. Here, Currie recounts her experiences post-band, where she fights against the numbing effects of addiction and the emotional scars left by her turbulent teenage years.

After The Runaways disbanded, the glitzy allure of the rock star lifestyle began to fade, and Cherie found herself grappling with identity—who was she beyond the music and the fame? She faced significant challenges, including addiction to drugs and alcohol, which had initially seemed a glamorous escape but soon spiraled into a choking grip on her life. This battle is not uncommon among individuals who find themselves in the spotlight at a young age, often resulting in feelings of profound loneliness and disconnection.

During this tumultuous period, Cherie's turning point came through a combination of introspection and the help of supportive individuals around her. She emphasizes the importance of acknowledging one's vulnerabilities,



understanding that those vulnerabilities are not weaknesses but rather parts that shape our identities. Cherie describes moments of despair but juxtaposes these with igniting epiphanies—like the realization that the music that once defined her was still there, waiting to be embraced again in a healthier way.

Moreover, Currie’s journey toward recovery wasn’t isolated to seclusion; she found solace in reconnecting with music, harnessing it as a therapeutic outlet. Music became her voice again, allowing her to express emotions that she had previously drowned in addiction. In sharing her rediscovery of creativity and artistry, Currie provides a beacon of hope to readers who may feel lost in their struggles.

One powerful example she illustrates is how, through songwriting, she began to navigate her feelings of pain, loss, and confusion. Each lyric crafted was a piece of her healing—whether it was expressing sadness over her past or hope for the future. This act of re-engagement with her passion became synonymous with reclaiming her identity and self-worth.

Cherie's path was fraught with the usual trials of recovery, including relapses and the need to reevaluate her relationships. She candidly discusses how some friendships faded while new, healthier connections flourished, demonstrating the critical nature of surrounding oneself with uplifting influences. This chapter highlights the importance of community, much like



Alcoholics Anonymous, where shared experiences foster a sense of understanding and belonging, ultimately paving the way for personal redemption.

As Cherie's voice grew stronger, she began to embrace her role as a survivor, using her story not just as a cautionary tale but as an inspiring narrative of resilience. She emphasizes that recovery is not a destination but a continuous journey—one filled with learning, growth, and a reawakening of the spirit. The chapter closes with Cherie reaffirming her commitment to a life of authenticity, where her voice can be used to help others—not just through music but through sharing her life experiences.

Through this chapter, readers are left with the understanding that the journey of finding one's voice after adversity is complex, yet profoundly transformative. Cherie Currie emerges as a symbol of hope, embodying the idea that falling down does not mean failure, but rather an opportunity for rebirth and deeper understanding of oneself.

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5. Chapter 5: Life After the Stage: Reflections on Fame, Family, and Personal Growth

In the aftermath of the dazzling days of rock stardom, Cherie Currie's journey takes a deeply introspective turn. Stepping away from the bright lights and frenetic energy of the music industry, she enters a phase in her life where the true meaning of legacy, identity, and family come into sharper focus. The fame she once craved and enjoyed became distant as she grappled with the challenge of defining herself outside of her role as a lead singer of The Runaways. This chapter explores her reflections on the aftermath of fame, the evolving dynamics within her family, and her ongoing quest for personal growth.

For Cherie, leaving the stage meant confronting the quiet and often daunting reality of life without the adrenaline of performance. The exhilaration of the spotlight had been intoxicating, but as the sounds of applause faded, it necessitated a reckoning with who she was beyond the music. Cherie candidly reflects on how the formidable pressures of fame often overshadowed her personal values and inner voice. The chaotic lifestyle that came with being a rock star left her feeling unmoored, prompting her to embark on a quest for authenticity—a journey that would take years and be filled with both challenges and revelations.

Family played a significant role in this process. Cherie's relationships with



her parents and siblings became crucial as she navigated the choppy waters of post-fame life. Her reflections highlight how the bonds of family can bring both comfort and conflict. After years of touring and the emotional toll of addiction, Cherie sought to reconcile with her family, confronting the effects her choices had made on her loved ones. Cherie discusses various instances where her family rallied around her during low points, illustrating the importance of support systems in times of personal crisis. For example, she shares poignant memories of her mother's unwavering encouragement and the way her brother's presence provided a sense of stability amidst her tumultuous journey.

Moreover, Cherie's exploration of identity extends to her evolution as an individual. In life after *The Runaways*, she began to recognize the need for self-acceptance and understanding. This maturation period was not devoid of setbacks; setbacks that serve as strong reminders of the importance of perseverance. For instance, she recounts a particular phase in her life that involved exploring various creative outlets, such as art and writing, which became therapeutic forms of expression. These experiences allowed her to reconnect with her passion in a new, grounded way, showcasing that growth can stem from pursuing new paths that honor one's original passions while fostering a sense of renewal.

Throughout this chapter, Cherie reflects on the lessons learned from her

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once-glamorous but tumultuous days in rock music. She emphasizes the significance of authenticity and the courage to face one's demons. Cherie highlights the importance of setting boundaries and the necessity of making choices that prioritize mental and emotional health over public perception. Her growth as an individual marks a profound understanding that true happiness stems not from the attention of the masses but from within—noting that fame can often be a double-edged sword.

Finally, Cherie's reflections culminate in a recognition of the power of storytelling as a medium for connection. In sharing her life experiences, she not only aims to inspire others who may find themselves in the throes of fame or struggling with personal demons but also to underscore the notion that it's never too late to seek change and embrace personal growth. Moments of introspection may have been sparked by her rise and fall in the music business, but they ultimately helped to shape a narrative filled with authenticity, resilience, and a commitment to personal truth.

In this chapter, Cherie Currie does not shy away from the complexities of life after the stage. Instead, she embraces them, inviting readers into her world—a world where fame is only a piece of a much larger puzzle that encompasses family, self-discovery, and the unwavering pursuit of a fulfilling life.





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