



Freaky Dancin'

Bez

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Told in his own inimitable style, the erstwhile maracas man from the infamous Happy Mondays, and the embodiment of the 1980s Madchester scene, recounts the highs and lows of his life with the band and numerous other adventures.

Freaky Dancin' Details

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From Reader Review Freaky Dancin' for online ebook

Ryan Heeger says

A really enjoyable account of Bez's involvement with the Mondays, but also an insight into his scally days prior. In fact the first half of the book is dedicated to his solo pursuits and tribulations, including being stranded, skint and starving in Morocco. The final pages regarding the HM's unravelling in Barbados are painful but hilarious.

Jen says

"'Just do it, jump on an do yer mad dance an, er, play this maraca.'
It was a ball-achin moment of adrenalin an fear in a potent mixture."

Mark "Bez" Barry was/is the dancer and maracas player for the Happy Mondays. If you're familiar with the band, the "Madchester" scene, or early rave culture, you've probably heard of him. His autobiography covers his teen years through the infamous Barbados recording of "Yes Please!"

What can you say about a person who is arguably the most iconic yet superfluous band member ever? How can you even begin to describe Bez and why any of us ever paid attention to him, moreover actually remember him? Thankfully, Bez himself is here to try to tell us his story.

Written in vernacular to such a degree that it's at once gimmicky and completely in character (there are no ending Gs on any of the words in the entire book), Bez's memoir reads like a Choose Your Own Adventure book in which every possible wrong decision is made and yet the story doesn't end with the protagonist's death. How a single person could indulge in so much alcohol and so many drugs is almost unfathomable. (The only frame of reference I can conjure is Keith Richards and I'm not sure he hasn't actually died a time or two.)

Basically, this book is about how Bez (and later on his pal Shaun) does ALL the drugs and makes ALL the bad decisions so that you don't have to.

It's neither a how-to book nor a cautionary tale, as Bez continually messes up his life without ever falling flat. Peppered throughout the story-telling are basic "don't do as I do" warnings, but I can't imagine anyone with the wherewithal to read this autobiography being foolhardy enough to believe that he could cheat the system in Bez-tastic proportions.

Bez is the only person on the face of the planet who could go from down-and-out drug-buddy in Thatcher's England to dancer/maracas player and poster-boy for global rave culture.

In case you get the wrong idea from the above: I seriously enjoyed Bez's autobiography. It was an exciting -- if sometimes disjointed -- romp through work-class, 1980s England and the start of the rave scene. As someone who never would have had the nerve to try even 10% of the craziness Bez recounts, reading this book was like having a new friend tell you the "best bits" about his life. Without the embarrassment or self-censorship that usually comes along with that.

Ian Fiddes says

9/10. Great read- hilarious!

Mr Disco says

I cannot recommend this book more highly than Bez has been every single day of his life.

Mikebee says

i learned that bez and shaun ryder did enough drugs to kill every horse in england, and that happy mondays are one of the best bands EVAH.

Audra Deemer says

A story of a young man who spends his days in constant pursuit of drugs could turn out to be a sad and cautionary tale. This book by Bez, about his young adult years and his (in)famous time as the maraca-shaking/"freak dancin'" member of the Manchester band Happy Mondays, turns out to be a very funny and honest memoir. Though much of Bez's antics are self-destructive, it is also obvious that he quite enjoyed himself. He is unapologetic but he seems to hide nothing. Freaky Dancin' is a must for those readers interested in the Happy Mondays and notorious nightlife scene of Manchester in the late 80s and early 90s.

Jan says

Not so much about the music, but what did I expect from an accidental maraca player? Tales of drugs, fights and car accidents told in a winky British accent from one guy who lived through the "Happy Mondays."

Ian McHugh says

I read this and ended up not really liking Bez. A real shame for me. There are some great stories of various mad-cap drug-fuelled escapades but these become monotonous over +350 pages. There's little here about the music - probably because Bez had little to do with the creation of it - and few bits of insight into the way in which the music came together. The rise and implosion of the Mondays is relayed here and it is, as you'd expect, a ridiculous and hilarious rollercoaster of drugs and girls and fights and friendships. If you're looking for a traditional music bio then this is not it. If you want to read about the madness of 'Madchester' then this fits the bill.

Craig Henry says

Really enjoyable, not just about the mondays but goves an insight how Bez became Bez

Mo75 says

Yeah, this is pretty funny. It reads like how I'd imagine having a few pints and spliffs down t'pub with Bez would be like, with him telling random stories about being with the Mondays at me.

Jason Blake says

Good fun if your old enough to remember the Manchester scene

Leigh Roberts says

Enjoyed this a great deal

Ben says

Really well written considering who the author is. Great book.

Mattias Ivarsson says

All the car crashes are the best part of the book. High quality slap stickcomedy and Bez himself is a genius of course

Jason says

Very funny, the man (together with Shaun Ryder) are walking miracles. Not sure how both ate till alive, but the world would be a much duller place without them.
