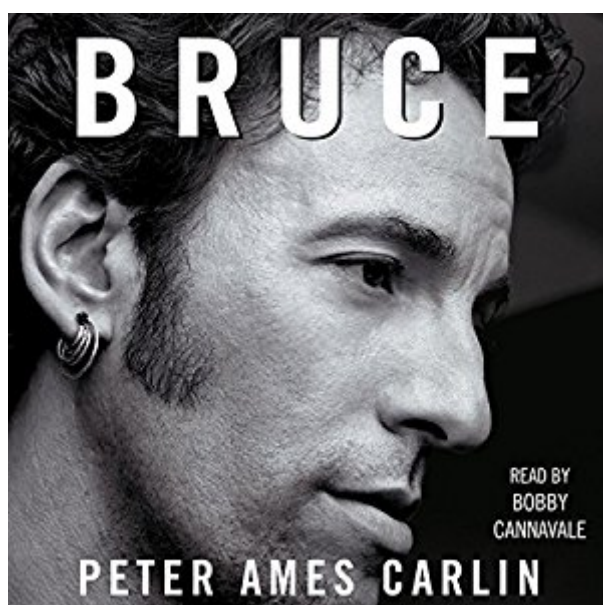


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# Bruce



## Synopsis

This sweeping biography of Bruce Springsteen features in-depth interviews with family, band members, childhood friends, ex-girlfriends, and a poignant retrospective from the Boss himself. It's Bruce as his many fans haven't before seen him - the man behind the myth, describing his life and work in intimate, vivid detail. For close to four decades, Bruce Springsteen has reflected the heart and soul of America in a career that encompasses twenty Grammy Awards, more than 120 million albums sold, two Golden Globes, and an Academy Award. Yet despite the honesty of his songwriting, Springsteen has remained adamantly elusive and reserved. In a groundbreaking biography that draws on unprecedented access to Springsteen and those closest to him, acclaimed music critic Peter Ames Carlin presents the most revealing account yet of New Jersey's favorite son. With contributions from band members past and present, including the last interview given by legendary saxophonist Clarence Clemons, Bruce encompasses the breadth of Springsteen's astonishing career and explores the inner workings of an American icon right up through his most recent sold-out tour and number-one album, *Wrecking Ball*. A must for fans, *Bruce* is a meticulously researched biography of one of the most complex and fascinating artists in American music.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In some ways, this biography is a rehash on the biography's by Dave Marsh (*Born to Run* and *Glory Days*), but what Marsh didn't give us, this book does, an intimate account of Bruce's early life in New Jersey, to include dealing with a Manic Depressant father, which fueled Bruce's loneliness (but

gave us wonderful songs) and some very personal behind the scenes accounts of life on E-Street. I've been a fan for nearly 40 years and Bruce has kept his personal life very guarded, which is ok with me and I respect that, but the effect of that has been a vision of Bruce constructed only from what his machine gave us. What I enjoyed most about this book was the details of his early life. I've grown up with Bruce through his stories about his relationship with his father as told on stage and through his songs, but those only paint a picture of a father and son not getting along, as most fathers and sons don't. The fact that Mr. Springsteen suffered from depression (and I would even bet it was PTSD from the traumatic loss of his sister from a horrific accident when they were young) has given me a whole new perspective to what a young Bruce, his Mom and his sisters must have endured. His father wasn't just a stern, hardened man of the era wanting his son to pursue a noble profession, he was a deeply hurt man isolated and unable to connect with his family. This kind of depression went largely undiagnosed in those days and people had to deal with it the best they could, not truly knowing what was wrong. Bruce's way of dealing with it was in words and music. A lot of teenagers are attracted to strapping on a guitar and being in a band just because it made you cool and you got all of the girls. Bruce strapped on that guitar to escape a fate he didn't want anything to do with.

"Bruce" is an interesting book to review, because even though I have a bunch of complaints, it's still a wonderful book, worthy of five stars. Let's start with my complaints: First, this is a long book for a rock and roll biography. As I joked to my wife: I now feel like I know more about Bruce Springsteen's life than I know about her life. This is especially true when it comes to Springsteen's family history. In fact, author Peter A. Carlin devoted so much space to Springsteen's ancestors that I almost became too bored to continue. If genealogy is your thing, chapter one is for you! Despite the book's length, many of my questions remained unanswered: 1) How and when did the E Street Band get its name? Carlin just brings up the subject as an aside, by stating, "now dubbed the E Street Band." 2) This one is pretty obscure: When I was in school, I was a huge fan of both Bruce Springsteen and Graham Parker. So in 1980, when Springsteen joined Parker on the song "Endless Night," it was the coolest thing I could have imagined at the time. What happened when those two got together seems to be a lost story, and it would have been an interesting addition to the book. 3) There is very little in "Bruce" about the two prominent women in the E Street family, Patti Scialfa and Soozie Tyrell. Carlin mentioned that Patti stayed out of the interview process, but even so, he used plenty of secondary sources for other parts of the book. Why not do the same for Scialfa and Tyrell? 4) Here's the most important subject I would have liked Carlin to address: How does Bruce, now in his

sixties, still manage to physically out-perform everyone else in rock and roll? Just stating that he frequents a local gym isn't enough.

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