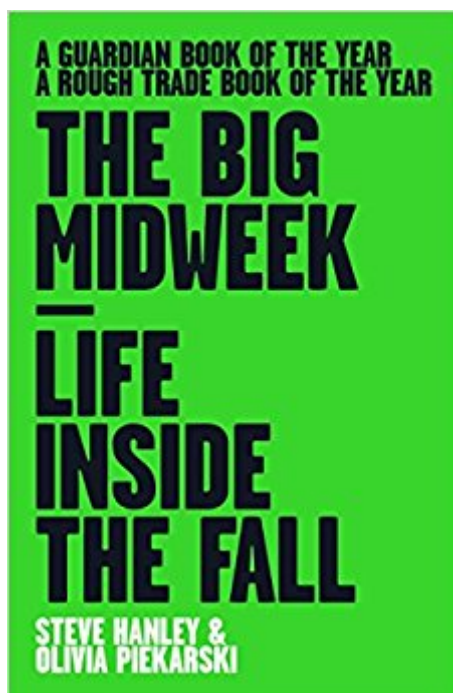


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# The Big Midweek: Life Inside The Fall



## Synopsis

The first insider's account of life inside seminal British rock band, The Fall. Hanley's story unfolds like a novel; from 1979 when he joined The Fall with his schoolmates Marc Riley and Craig Scanlon, up to and including an infamous on-stage fight in New York in 1998, he puts us right in the heart of the action: on stage, on the tour bus, in the recording studio, and up close and personal with an eccentric cast of band mates. These vividly drawn scenes give unprecedented insight into the intense, highly-charged, creative atmosphere within The Fall, and their relentless work ethic which has won them a dedicated cult following, high-art respectability, and a unique place in popular music history. "One of the more sincere and endearing band biographies available. Hanley's book is enjoyable to read from start to finish."-LA Review of Books. A Guardian Book of the Year 2014 and A Rough Trade Book of the Year 2014. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

9781870041805 --The Misadventures of the New SatanAnton Tammsaare --01/14/2010Paperback

--25.00 --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I've always maintained that bass players and drummers write the best music bios. They don't have the distorting egos to maintain, keeping slightly out of the spotlight, workmanlike, but gaining more perspective than the blokes at the front of the stage. Steve Hanley has seen it all: the creative bloom and critical respect as well as the descent into oblivion under the initially benign but eventually mad (and maddening) dictatorship the godlike (and devilish) genius of Mark Smith. Not a

band bio in the conventional sense, Hanley gives a direct personal account of his 20 years in one of the UK's most lauded bands. In a manner both direct and subtly dry and witty he draws you into a first-hand tale which is so finely crafted one can't help but feel that this might be a novel or a work of exceptionally literate self-analysis: a tale so well told that it reads like fiction. While other Fall writings (and I've read them all) are largely crafted for the faithful, Hanley has fashioned something for anyone who can appreciate the extremes of joy and bitter pain of reaching for the brass ring and falling short (and increasingly with with a longer drop). I can't thank Steve enough for writing a book which ultimately transcends the band and it's history and simultaneously adds to it'd depth: no mean feat considering the extent of Fall's output. So, thank you Steve for writing the story of the Fall which the master wordsmith Mark Smith could never have written.

Funny, well-written balanced account from the bass player of the Fall from the first 20 years. When I met and interviewed the band as a college kid in 1985, Steve was the other quiet one, and the member I don't remember having a conversation with. Confirms what I knew, that Karl Burns is indeed mad. His take on the Marc Riley situation is different than all the oft-repeated stories you hear, without being nasty. Steve goes from admiration to disbelief to disgust over the course of the book. Many of the stories come across as if you were sharing a pint in a pub with him. I never realized when you hear Mark sing 'Eat Yourself Fitter' start improvising towards the end of a song, it was actually a command to the band not a lyric. Or that 'Eat Yourself Fitter' was a line from a magazine advert. Lots of insights into the recording process and just how tough it was to be around ole Mark E. as speed and drink got in the way. For me, none of this detracts from how great Smith is, and how he bounced back to make many more great records after this incarnation of the Fall rightly quit. Bought a couple of the records I hadn't heard whilst reading this too, so they got money out of me again. Thoroughly enjoyed it.

I love this book but I am finding it hard to feel any affection for our dark master (MES) after reading it. I love this band, and I always will. I just wish Mark could have been kind. Thanks for the book Mr. Hanley!

What a distinct pleasure it is to hear the voice of the man hunched in front of the SVT, locking down the thundering anthems that have so influenced my generation. The book poignantly conveys life in the cult of MES, in all its dysfunctional glory. Most highly recommended reading for all fellow sufferers and lifetime fans of this totally unique and seminal group.

Steve Hanley's bass playing with the Fall always was incredible. He likewise is an amazing storyteller. I could not put this book down and found myself reading as slowly as possible because I did not want to end. Hanley comes off as self-deprecating and deeply humorous. He paints great portraits of Marc Riley, Craig Scanlon, and Karl Burns as real and fascinating people. Not to mention Mark E Smith. He is honest throughout and rarely did a page go by when I did not chuckle to myself or out loud. This book is especially fascinating to long-time Fall fans, the Manchester scene, or modern music in general. Phenomenal read - I'm sad it's over.

The memories of Steve Hanley are so honest and well written, half the time it felt like being in amongst all the shenanigans. I love The Fall, have done since I heard and bought How I Wrote Elastic Man, fell in and out with them every now again which is really what this book describes in all its hilarity, honesty, pettiness, northern-ness, friendships, breakups, loyalty, however earned and misguided, crazies, and really the story of a worker bee and how he managed to get through life in The Fall, but life in general, his first kids health issue was really open writing that was beautiful to read. The most important thing of all though about this book is the sheer non stop humour involved, it is a laugh constantly, and laugh out loud is well overused phrasing but I was in fits at some of the mental, and idiotic stuff. Spinal Tap, this is beyond any of that x 10, no need to say anything about MES, how Steve has managed to see the funny side of so many of these excruciating situations says so much about himself that he deserves the highest respect. This book is without a shadow of any doubt the best music autobiography or memoir you could ever read, and I am sure if you are even interested in music never mind the madness that is The Fall, you will know what I am saying here. I could not put this book down, read it in 2 days, absolutely marvelous, well done to Steve and his co-author for this, I am eternally grateful. W.

One of my very favorite rock books ever, and I've read them all. An amazing feat. Epic. Puts you in The Fall.

Having listened to the Fall since 1978 and having bought all the books written about the band-this one is a cracker. Steve Hanley has written a book that is both a great history of the band and their various albums and lineups. But it is also about the disintegration of the lead singer as the ravages of alcohol and quite possible amphetamine use take their toll culminating in the infamous Waterloo at Brownies which saw the collapse of the best line-up of the fall in a hail of fists and broken

amps.Well recommended.

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