

Then It Fell Apart

Moby

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"This shallow, diarrhea-splattered horror was my actual life," writes Moby after a particularly brutal night out. In *Then It Fell Apart*, Moby, the once globally famous musician, picks up where his first memoir, *Porcelain*, left off, sharing unending stories of drugs, sex, and rock and roll.

Raised in Connecticut, Moby grew up poor with a single mother who spent most of her time chemically enhanced. An array of rough suitors populated their lives, accentuating the differences between Moby and his rich, waspy classmates. Moby uses this early lack to make sense of his profound desire for fame, attention, money, and drugs, as well as of his anxiety disorder.

The text sets forth an encyclopedic remembrance of New York City nightclubs, parties, drugs, celebrities, and sexual escapades. Famous names drop in and out of the text, often with Moby marveling that he knows these people. He relates a hilarious off-color story about a brush with Donald Trump and recalls a dinner party with David Bowie and Lou Reed. His frank discussion of Eminem offers some insight into their famous grudge, and he offers an empathetic response to September 11, 2001, that will resonate with other New Yorkers.

These anecdotes come in surplus, and there's no sudden crash as suggested in the title. Instead, Moby's descent is long and slow, full of momentary revelations that are forgotten after the next drink or drug, then reprised and regretted when he wakes. At its most compelling, the memoir is about making music—compiling, listening, revising, and embellishing. The process is fascinating and doesn't seem as driven by a need to impress as the rest of the book.

Then It Fell Apart is erudite and conflicted, a flawed artist's own version of the decadent life of recording stars, with its strange duality of absolute thrills and destructive excess.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (May/June 2019)

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