



My Side of Life: The Autobiography

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As a lead singer of Westlife, one of the most successful pop acts of all time, Shane Filan was on top of the world. Together with the band, he achieved an incredible 14 No.1 singles (a record beaten only by the Beatles) sold 44 million records and was adored by fans the world over.

Everything he touched turned to gold, or so it seemed. Like many others, he had piled his fortunes into the Irish property boom and when the bubble burst, Shane struggled with mounting debt. Just ten days after Westlife's final farewell concert, in front of a sold-out crowd of 80,000 fans, Shane was declared bankrupt with debts of €23 million – losing everything.

But this wasn't the end for Shane Filan – a devoted singer and family man, Shane circled back to his roots and a year later he launched his solo career. In *My Side of Life* Shane shares his story for the first time – his early years growing up as part of a large Irish family in Co. Sligo, the phenomenal success of Westlife and the ups and downs of their time together, the breakup of the band, his financial devastation, and finally going it alone as a solo artist.

This is Shane's side of the story.

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From Reader Review My Side of Life: The Autobiography for online ebook

Nada says

I've never been a fan of Westlife, I tried many times but I simply couldn't like them. The only reason I'd listen to any of their songs was Shane Filan's voice. I must confess, he's a very good singer. When I first came across this book, I didn't think much of it but I was curious to know about his side of life. From the first chapter I was captured and interested in every story, heck I laughed a lot too. Toward the last chapters I was very sadden by how his financial ended up like. I loved his honesty, sense of humor, positive attitude. Most of all, I LOVED how highly he spoke of Michael Jackson, I found it very adorable and inspiring that he got the chance to actually make his dream come true. The same goes with his devoted love for the Backstreet Boys.

Overall, this book is really good. I had so much fun reading every page.

And Shane, I really wish you well. You made a mistake that you paid big to pay the price but I'm sure you will redeem it all sooner or later. Keep your head up and hopefully you'll be big as a solo artist.

Frances says

This book brought back many memories to me as a Westlife fan. I admire Shane's strength and positive attitude following his bankruptcy.

dee Juusan says

An honest, very positive heartfelt book. Gave me a lot to think about and taught me to not throw judgments easily at a person who's big and famous just because I can.
(My review is biased having liked Shane and Westlife since they appeared when I was 13 years old.)

Stopfi says

I laughed. I cried. I felt all existing emotions while reading this book. There were so many happy moments, but also a lot of sadness, especially in the end. I even didn't want to continue because of all the tragic turns! But of course I did.
And I loved it. I loved it for its honesty and it was a truly amazing story! Well done Shane :)

However, I'm still hoping for a Westlife reunion. I miss them so much.

K.M. Lowe says

I've been a Westlife fan from day one... reading this book has just made me love them more. Shane always came across as an honest person. This book just reflects that. I loved reading this book. It shows that hard work and determination does pay off... I'll always hope for a reunion one day. :-)

Book Addict Shaun says

I am unashamedly a huge Westlife fan, and have been since I was nine years old and I got Westlife for Christmas. Shane grew up loving boy bands and when I was younger the 90s was full of them yet Westlife were my favourite. Let's not forget they also sang at Wayne Rooney's wedding, and Wayne was the fan so perhaps there's a few closet male fans out there somewhere. Having read Westlife: Our Story, released in 2008, I knew that a book from just one member, now the band has split, would perhaps be a bit more revelatory than the band's book and also contain stories from the years after that book was released. After finishing it I can say it's definitely one of the most honest, heartfelt stories I have read. Shane has bared his heart and soul, even just reading the words you know it can't have been easy for him to share his story with the world (despite the press doing it for him) but at the same time I imagine it was quite therapeutic.

The book opens with an extremely happy childhood in Sligo, one almost of perfection really with some brilliant stories of his time growing up and how he got into singing. Given that the family only had two TV channels, Shane had a very active life and found entertainment away from the box (imagine that!). Eventually reaching the Westlife days I loved again reading about the formation of the band and the story of how a hungover Shane failed to impress Simon Cowell, having to come to a second audition in disguise almost, years later Simon claiming to Shane that he knew all along, hmm. The stories are of course similar to the group autobiography but it's still a really enjoyable read. I loved the story of just when the group were starting out, they went to Ronan Keating's 21st birthday where Shane found himself at a urinal in between Alan Shearer and Ken Docherty. And that wasn't the first time he was starstruck. I love how the lads have always remained humble and grounded despite their phenomenal success.

Being a Girls Aloud fan I'm always intrigued reading about Louis Walsh through the eyes of Westlife, given that Girls Aloud weren't very complimentary about his management. It's almost like he's another person when you compare the two. Without him though Westlife wouldn't exist and there's some brilliant and at times hilarious stories here about their relationship over the years. Reading about Westlife taking off brought back so many memories to me. From getting their first album at Christmas (and each one after that bar the years they didn't have one), pretty much every year of my life since then can be linked to a Westlife song.

What always annoyed me, and still does, is music snobs that slate singers or bands for not playing an instrument or writing their own songs. Putting aside the fact Westlife did write some of their own songs, there was a story in Westlife: Our Story which is repeated here, about the first time Shane heard I'm Already There, and how it made him cry, the band realising they had to record it. For me I'd rather hear a song the singer loves, I couldn't care less who wrote it. Plus some of my favourite Westlife songs are the covers they did. Shane's favourite song being You Raise Me Up, got to say mine is Flying Without Wings but it's a close second for him I think! Speaking of the snobbery one of my favourite stories is a campaign from Oasis and The Sun newspaper to keep Westlife from the top spot, well it didn't work and Westlife beat Oasis to number one and stuck two fingers up to The Sun at the same time. Brilliant.

I remember reading *Westlife: Our Story* and it ended saying how they wanted to go on for another ten years, so it was a shame to read about the demise of the band here. How they just weren't feeling it and ultimately decided to disband. Still, they didn't have to and could have gone on longer for more cash but chose not to. There's not many that would do that. Personally I was gutted when they finished, and didn't like it but it's only when you read the book and see how unhappy everyone was that you realise it was the right decision. Seeing them in Liverpool on their Farewell Tour was incredible, and on their last ever night at Croke Park (I saw it in the cinema, but still, unbelievable). It's a shame to read that they aren't that close anymore, only seeing each other occasionally yet that's probably true of most friendships and given the fact they have spent most of their adult life together they probably need the time away! Despite a few arguments along the way they all had a very close friendship.

It's crazy then that whilst all this was going on, Shane's backup plan for after the band very literally fell apart, ending in him becoming bankrupt. When reading about his property deals, you almost want to scream 'Stop!' as you know what's about to come. It was just one disaster after another, the banks threw money at them and then demanded it back when it all went to pieces. What's annoying is how good some of the ideas were, but they were bogged down by bureaucracy and objections from the locals, despite Shane wanting to improve Sligo more than anything else. Part of me wonders how they would've reacted to the ideas were they from an unknown developer. Perhaps he should've kept the business anonymous.

As they say hindsight is a wonderful thing, and fate works in mysterious ways and Shane is now picking himself up and now has a very successful solo career, a beautiful family and tons of happy memories. Discussing the prospect of the band getting back together in the future, it doesn't look like it'll happen any time soon but I hope it does one day. Knowing the band though it'll only happen if all four are 100% and I really, really hope it happens in the future. One of the best autobiographies I've read, and one of the best books I've read this year I can't recommend it enough. Fans will already have it but for those that don't, go and get it.

Thanks to the publisher for the review copy.

Sara says

As a westlife fan I had to read this and it did not disappoint. I have read it twice and both times it had me laughing as well as in tears, I was an emotional wreck at times. I would recommend this book to everyone even if they are not westlife fans!

Daniella Clear says

meh that is all I can say

Adèle says

Wow, vilken bok! Jag vet inte riktigt vad jag ska säga förutom att det var en jävla bra bok! Jag inser att jag kan vara en aningens partisk när det kommer till Shane och Westlife men den är så läsvärd! Till och med jag

som trodde jag visste allt om detta fick mig några överraskningar och det bjöds både på skratt, gråt och hopp :) Läs denna!!!!

OMG Daniel Reads Books! says

I've been a huge fan of Shane's for most of my life - since I was 4 years old in 1998, to be exact! Westlife were my favourite boyband, and I grew up loving them and knowing every word to every song! They were simply an amazing band!

Because of this, you may think my 5 star review is biased... Well it probably is a slight bit, however this autobiography is one of my favourites and I'm quite upset now that I've finished it...! :(

A brilliant read that I implore any fan of Shane to read, as well as celebrity autobiography enthusiasts! You won't regret it :)

Kelly says

Thank you for the memories! Thank you for the love, the joy, the tears and the voice. Thank you for the music and the family. Simply - thank you!

Georgie Woodall says

Excellent heart felt read, couldn't put it down!

Emilia Rosengård says

As a huge Westlife (and Shane) fan I loved this book. I felt like I was a part of the story all along. The book is an honest and heart-warming story about the biggest and best boy band in the world. Actually, I cried at the end because it was over♥?

Evi says

I'm giving this 5 stars, simply because reading this story brough back so many amazing memories! This book was a lovely ride on memory lane AND made me feel proud of everything this man has done in his life. I don't think it's possible, but I love him more now than I already did!

Holly says

As a massive Westlife fan this was a really good read. I knew the majority of the early story of how Westlife formed/became famous but it was interesting to have a personal view of it rather than the one presented in the official Westlife books from when they were still together. Shane is very open about his financial problems and whilst the details were sometimes hard to follow you really got the sense of the emotions he felt during the demise of his property business, which coincided with the band coming to a stop.
