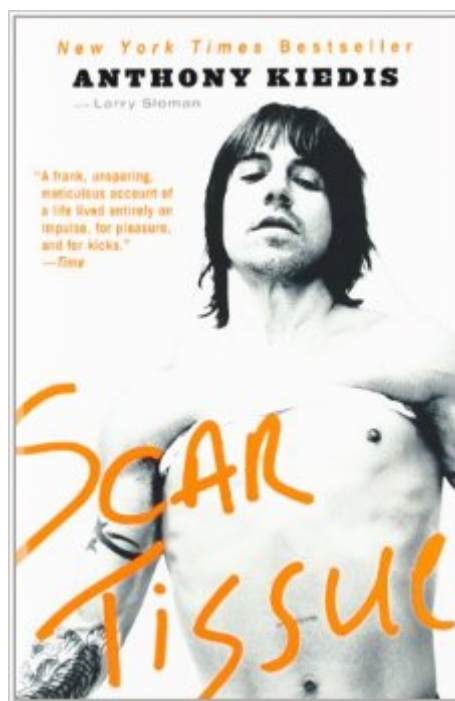


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Scar Tissue



Synopsis

Now in paperback, the New York Times bestseller by one of rock's most provocative figures Scar Tissue is Anthony Kiedis's searingly honest memoir of a life spent in the fast lane. In 1983, four self-described "knuckleheads" burst out of the mosh-pitted mosaic of the neo-punk rock scene in L.A. with their own unique brand of cosmic hardcore mayhem funk. Over twenty years later, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, against all odds, have become one of the most successful bands in the world. Though the band has gone through many incarnations, Anthony Kiedis, the group's lyricist and dynamic lead singer, has been there for the whole roller-coaster ride. Whether he's recollecting the influence of the beautiful, strong women who have been his muses, or retracing a journey that has included appearances as diverse as a performance before half a million people at Woodstock or an audience of one at the humble compound of the exiled Dalai Lama, Kiedis shares a compelling story about the price of success and excess. Scar Tissue is a story of dedication and debauchery, of intrigue and integrity, of recklessness and redemption--a story that could only have come out of the world of rock.

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Customer Reviews

I have never been the worlds biggest Red Hot Chilli Peppers fan. Sure I think they are a good band with some really good records, but I've never felt the need to drive far distances to see them live, collect all their albums or any of the other stuff usually assosated with fandom. But Anthony Keidis' autobiography "Scar Tissue" interested me for a few different reasons. One, I do enjoy they're later period softer rock music, which for my money is some of the best alterna-pop you're likely to find.

Two, I thought he would have some good stories since he was around in both the early eighties hardcore punk scene and the mid-ninties alternative rock boom. And three, in interviews he comes across as a pretty cool guy. So on those fronts I was not dissapointed by "Scar Tissue". It was a pleasant and good book, full of surprising honesty and compassion even if at times it fails to go too deep below the surface. You learn a lot about his life, but not as much about him as you might like. Now if you're not into what I call "junkie" books then you should probably stay away from this book. A large portion of the book is devoted to Kiedis' herion addiction which I have to admit was handled about as well as I have ever read. It is a cautionary tale with the typical body count of friends and loss loves, but rather than shaking his finger at himself and those around him, he tells it honestly and doesn't try to make apologies about his behavior any more so then he needs to. This is refreshing and good. He's saying not to use drugs mind you; he's just going to tell you how it really is. At times the book is written with a somewhat pedestrian writting style, but for the most part I sensed it came from Kiedis and not his co-author. It has, at it's best times, a conversational vibe that makes reading it that much enjoyable. So I really liked the book, so why do I only give it three stars? Well, because there is a drastic rating inflation on this site. To me, a five star anything means the thing is flawless, four means it's in the top of it's league but not perfect, three means it's good but I've read/ seen/ heard better, two means it bathes in it's mediocrity, and one means that it's godawful horse manure. And Kiedis' book fits the three to a T. It's a good book, I enjoyed reading it. It's not one of the best books I've ever read, nor is it one of the worst. It's a good book that I'm pretty sure if you're interested in you'll dig. And what more can you ask for?

Anyone coming for an autobiography of the Red Hot Chili Peppers might be a little disappointed in this book. Kiedis focuses more on his personal journey through life, and especially on his formative adolescent years. The Chili Peppers are a part of his life, to be sure, but this story is truly Anthony's personal struggles to be a sober, straight-living man. Anthony spends a significant amount of the book on his teenaged years. He was essentially his father's roommate (not his son, not his "charge") in Los Angeles from the age of 12. He experienced more drugs and debauchery before the age of 18 than most people could live through in their entire life. In describing his experiences, however, Kiedis used an inviting tone; he never bragged about his exploits or tried to paint himself in an excessively rosy light. He simply invited the reader along to explore his personal experiences and emotions. Scar Tissue is truly a book about drug addiction, about the lifelong slippery slope of trying to obtain (and maintain) sobriety. It is amazing that Kiedis can keep his dozens of periods of abuse and relapse straight in his mind, much less transform them into a compelling narrative journey for

the reader. Life on drugs was in no way glamorous--Kiedis spent many years at rock bottom, barely surviving, and scrounging for his existence. He also fooled many people about his drug use, and managed to escape any arrest or scrutiny for possession. Reading about how Kiedis has to consider and seize his sobriety each and every day (he's been clean since 24 December 2000) will surely inspire anyone who is struggling with their own personal demons. It's amazing that the Chili Peppers have been as successful as they are, considering their poor record management in the early days, the excessive personnel changes, and the rampant drug abuse. I'd love to read a tell-all from Flea next!

I've read a lot of rock star bios and this one sticks. Why? Kiedis's unflinching honesty, graphic depiction of a life lived without structure and the fact that he has lived to tell the tale. It's all here. The drugs, the booze, the sex, the debauchery. So what, you might ask, is so unusual about that? Don't all rock star bios share these elements? Yeah, most of them do. But the difference here is Anthony Kiedis's story is a bloodletting without being preachy and full of predictable fluff. He never judges, he never steps up to the pulpit and warns the world. He never shoves 12 step sensibilities down anyone's throat. He tells his tale with charm, kid bravado and, surprisingly, humility. He admits his faults. He admits his immaturity. Through every chapter we watch him grow. He takes two steps forward, then ten steps back. Then he takes five steps forward and two steps back. What I particularly found refreshing was the stories Kiedis tells about his inspirations for many Chili Pepper songs. Here is a man who cared (s) about the finished product. (If you doubt that, check out their latest effort, Stadium Arcadium. It's a masterpiece.) You want to cry with Kiedis and you want to laugh with him during the entire bumpy ride. And I personally was wondering how his father was able to take a series of pictures of his eight year old son smoking pot without the folks over at the Fotomat running interference when he took them to be developed. Unless, of course, they were Polaroids. Then that point is moot I guess. Nevertheless, I hated his dad for the things he exposed Anthony to at such an early age. We're lucky Kiedis turned out as good as he did in the end. Nevertheless, this is a rock star bio worth the effort. It's long, it's detailed, yes. Some details come off as too much information. But still, it's never a boring read. No fluff, no filler. Just a cautionary tale told with the best of intentions. And if he had to name his bio after a Pepper's song, Scar Tissue was the perfect choice.

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