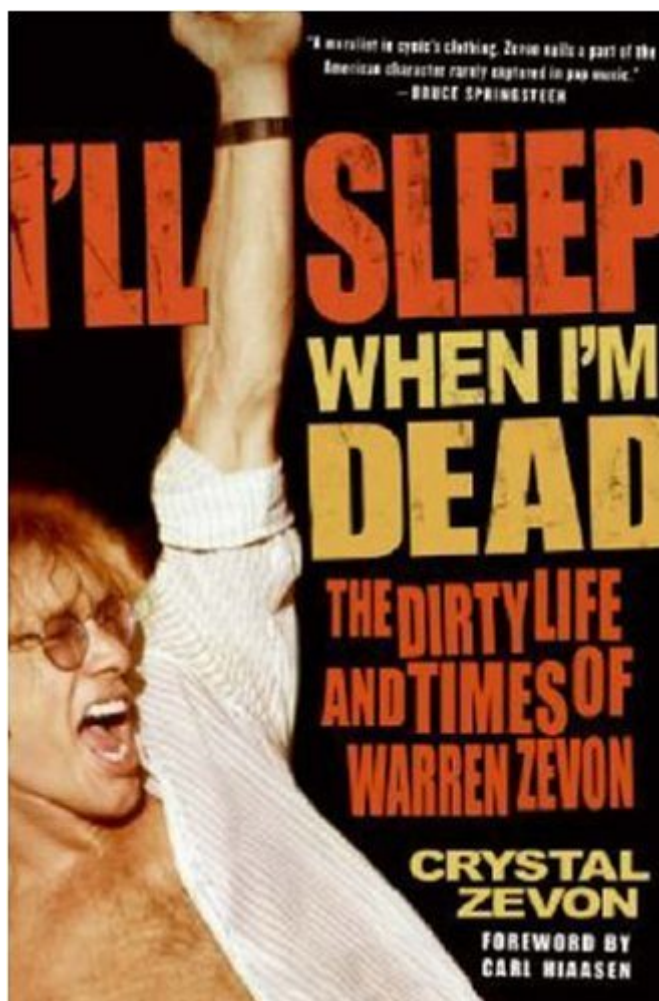


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# I'll Sleep When I'm Dead: The Life And Times Of Warren Zevon



## Synopsis

When Warren Zevon died in 2003, he left behind a rich catalog of dark, witty rock 'n' roll classics, including "Lawyers, Guns and Money," "Excitable Boy," and the immortal "Werewolves of London." He also left behind a fanatical cult following and veritable rock opera of drugs, women, celebrity, genius, and epic bad behavior. As Warren once said, "I got to be Jim Morrison a lot longer than he did." Narrated by his former wife and longtime co-conspirator, Crystal Zevon, this intimate and unusual oral history draws on interviews with Bruce Springsteen, Stephen King, Bonnie Raitt, and numerous others who fell under Warren's mischievous spell. Told in the words and images of the friends, lovers, and legends who knew him best, *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* captures Warren Zevon in all his turbulent glory.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I bought this book on a whim as I am a Warren Zevon fan and thought it would be a light and easy-to-read exposition on sex, drugs and rock'n roll of a guy who knew how to live (and die). Instead, I found this to be an in-depth look at a tortured genius who was one of the great lyricists

of the last quarter of the century. That Warren was respected by so many of his peers is not surprising, but I did not realize he had so many friends and admirers in the literary world - a testament to his ability to tell a story concisely and with a sense of irony that is pretty much unique in the world of popular music. There is plenty of Warren's ugly side disclosed in the book. I imagine he would be a psychoanalyst's dream but undoubtedly his poor and dysfunctional childhood as well as his tortured relationship with his mother and father had a lifelong impact on his compulsive behavior. That his mistreatment of his children and the women in his life did not ultimately destroy those relationships but in fact saw them strengthen in his later years speaks to his inherent humanity. The ravages of alcoholism are laid bare and it is clear that his ex-wife and the author of the book had to deal with more than her share of spousal abuse. There is a tendency to think how wonderful it would be to live the lifestyle of your rock idols - this book illustrates that Warren Zevon's song writing talent came with another side that no-one would wish for. But maybe that was the price he had to pay for his genius. However, warts and all, I know I'll be keeping Warren in my heart for a while.

A must read for music lovers and Warren Zevon fans alike. Even if you are not a Zevon fan, this is a great read. Crystal Zevon presents this in the form of diary excerpts and interviews with Warren's friends, contemporaries, girlfriends, family and others that encountered him whether briefly or for a lifetime. This is the life of a troubled man and his incredible genius for creating some of the best and most highly respected music of our times. No matter how incorrigible and difficult Zevon could be, he always ends up with the respect and love of the people who surrounded him in his life and legions of fans world wide. Warren Zevon was much, much more than 'Werewolves of London'. He was a laundry list of music that was the brainchild of one of the greatest writers/composers/singers/instrumentalists to grace the concert stage. Highly recommended for the reader who loves to read outside the box and who craves biography in all it's glorious and no-holds-barred best. Now for my personal take on Warren Zevon the man, he was indeed a person haunted by the terribly sad and abusive childhood and family life he was subjected to. Unfortunately, Zevon was never able to overcome the ghosts of his past and those are the torments that stayed with him his entire life, affecting him in all corners of his existence. I think deep down he wanted to be a better person, a better father, a better husband and friend but, he was unable to accomplish this because he had no guidance for this. The reason I feel this way has to do with remarks made by others when they recount an event when Zevon treated someone badly and afterward Zevon puzzles as to, "Why did I do that?" or "I hated to be that way to him!" There are of course other

reasons for my feelings on this but, just by reading between the lines and understanding human emotions, I feel sorry for him in many ways. Other ways, yes, I do find his behavior reprehensible but, one must also go back and remember the events that happened to create this personality. I feel in many cases, Zevon's friends and contemporaries knew how badly he needed help, and not just for his alcohol addiction but for his emotional problems stemming from his early life traumas. These people knew there was little they could do but still accept Zevon for the person they knew him to be which in many other ways was a lovable and incredibly talented man. Even the most difficult of people can have those around them in life that know the truth about them and those are the people that will stand by and lend support to the best of their abilities. These are the people that gathered and supported Zevon into rehabilitation and a 17 year sobriety. Notice how Zevon eventually falls from sobriety once he learns his fate in the end. He had two ways to go, either sober and brave or drunk and realistic about the fact that death was the ultimate end of the story. I do not think Warren Zevon had any ability to take the former path. He had no guidance in how to do that. Sad that this was the way things ended for such a great artist that will forever be unmatched. Sad story on all counts.

I enjoyed the Excitable Boy's mad ride. It is highly readable and entertaining throughout. This is one of the best rock bios I have ever read. It delivers the full Zevon which oftentimes wasn't that pretty at all. Perhaps that is what makes great creative music though. The book is an often brutal look at the debauched Seventies California rock and roll lifestyle and its assorted demons and devils. I also enjoyed the tales of his early days with The Everly Brothers and his Gambler Father. Warren had a good wolf and a bad wolf battling for his brain and that bad wolf liked booze. Eventually he contained, mostly, his Mister Hyde and made his way as a working rocker, a David Letterman favorite and a close friend of Hunter Thompson and Carl Hiaasen. Zevon wrote the most creative lines in rock. I hope the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame remembers him soon.

i thought zevon was some fun loving guy with "crazzee" songs and a real rocker. well, turns out he was a complex individual who left us too early. if you like his music and would like to get to know him better, then buy this book: you won't be disappointed. my only connection to the guy was a girl i knew that many, many years ago was partying on the beach in hilton head, SC late at night with some friends with a campfire on the beach going. some random guy walked up and hung out with them for hours and played his guitar for them. yes, congrats, you guessed it, of course it was zevon, hello, but the point is what rocker do you know would plop down and hang out with people like a

regular guy? oh, and these girls were really hot too, so lets not form some ghandi-like image of the guy, but, he was a gentleman with them and as the sun came up he wandered off. rock history is filled with artists that left us too early, warren was definitely one of them and you'll really get to know understand him better from someone that knew him well if you read this book.

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