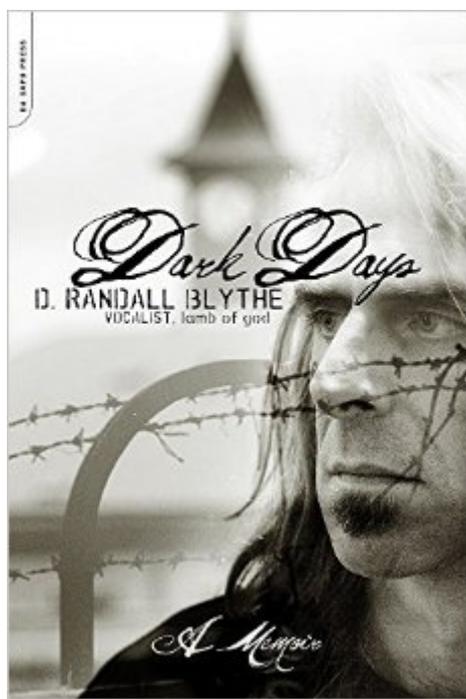


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Dark Days: A Memoir



Synopsis

On June 27, 2012, the long-running, hard-touring, and world-renowned metal band Lamb of God landed in Prague for their first concert there in two years. Vocalist D. Randall "Randy" Blythe was looking forward to a few hours off—a rare break from the touring grind—in which to explore the elegant old city. However, a surreal scenario began to play out at the airport as Blythe was detained, arrested for manslaughter, and taken to Pankrác Prison—a notorious 123-year-old institution where the Nazis' torture units had set up camp and where today hundreds of prisoners are housed in claustrophobic, sweltering, nightmare-inducing conditions. What transpired during Blythe's incarceration, trial, and eventual acquittal is a rock 'n' roll road story unlike any other, one that runs the gamut from tragedy to despair to hope and finally to redemption. Blythe is a natural storyteller and his voice drips with cutting humor, endearing empathy, and soulful insight. Much more than a tour diary or a prison memoir, *Dark Days* is D. Randall Blythe's own story about what went down—before, during, and after—told as only he can.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mr. Blythe's first book is a fun, sad, revealing, and provocative read. He doesn't use a ghost writer, which is refreshing, and he has a somewhat raw, natural talent for writing. He is sensitive to the loss of the young fan from the Czech Republic (and my own heart goes out to that family). However, he has his own story to tell about his temporary incarceration and trial. It is dramatic, but there are some great laughs thrown in, too. Read it.

This story is something that you only can dream of and you would think it was fiction if you didn't know better. The circumstances surrounding the story are tragic, sad, happy. Honestly, there is no overall good or bad outcome in the end. There can't be. There just is an end and you have to take that for what it's worth and reflect on it. Personally, I find the story to be organically very existential in nature. Even if you "know the story" behind this book you don't "know the story" until you've read it from Randy's perspective. It's a mind blowing read.

All in all this is a well written and compelling story, regardless of whether you're a lamb of god fan. Blythe presents a very interesting story, told in chronological order from the moment he was arrested in Prague, with the bulk of the tale encompassing his 30+ day stay in prison, and concluding with his acquittal. Not only does this book give insight into Blythe's mind and personality but he does a superb job taking the reader on his journey. That journey was sometimes terrifying, confusing and occasionally funny. You truly gain some perspective into his ordeal and it forces you to wonder how you would have handled being in a similar situation. It is one thing to suddenly (and surprisingly) face prison time for something that you didn't know about, but facing that prospect in a foreign country with different laws and practices, not to mention a whole other language (!!!) had to be overwhelming, which is one of the reasons this book is so enthralling. To read about his experience and learn how he coped is quite a tale. As much as I liked this book, the two criticisms that I have concern his prose. One, perhaps Blythe is trying too hard to impress but he either wrote this book with a thesaurus by his side or he does possess an extensive vocabulary. Either way, just because you know the words doesn't mean you should use loquacious umpteen times when an occasional "he wouldn't stop talking" would suffice. Secondly, there are many portions that were simply too long, with multiple examples when the reader got the point on the first try. Some trimming would have made this a much more lean and engrossing read. This is definitely a wonderful effort for a first time author. I hope Blythe continues to write and I hope any future offerings will be more tightly composed, not to mention happier.

Just finished reading this book. Surprisingly, I had not even heard of his incarceration until watching a TV show long after the fact, and I think that just points to the lack of coverage in the media. Unless I had picked up a guitar magazine, or been looking up the band at the time, I had no idea this was happening. My first impression was, "Why is he holding back?" He talks a lot about his battle with sobriety, and like all metal tell-all books I was expecting some crazy stories about some crazy stuff

he did while drinking. But then I remembered the title of the book - Dark Days. There is really very little humor in the book, and he discusses his battle seriously, how if he hadn't quit drinking, it would have killed him. In the same manner, he is actually quite open about his experiences in prison. This was hard time in a hard place, and you really believe him that he would kick the crap out of someone if he had to - not because he is a bad ass, but because of fear. It is told in sort of a stream of consciousness way, basically sharing what he is thinking and feeling as he goes through the rough conditions of being in a rough prison. I have to wonder if ever got in touch with his former cell mates - probably not. No one would want to back there. One thing that stood out to me is he seems very uncomfortable with his success and fame. It's a weird situation, they are not super famous, I'm sure for the most part he can walk down the street unbothered. But within the metal sub-genre, they are growing more and more popular. Disappointingly I'm not sure I would want to meet him as a fan, because of his contempt for fans, although I can't say I blame the guy. This is just the impression I get from reading the book. I would just be one of many others saying "Dude, glad you are ok." It's ironic because as a band they seem very dependent on their fans, they get no radio airplay or coverage in the media. He didn't have to go back, and he deserves a lot of respect for going back to finish his trial. What you get from reading the book over just watching the As The Palaces Burn video is a lot more detail about his time in prison. He is obviously an intelligent guy, and very creative. If you like the band, or just brutal tales of almost getting stuck in a Czech prison, then this is the book for you.

I would highly recommend this to any fan of metal music, Lamb Of God or if you just want an honest take on his side of the incident check this out. You should see the movie of the same name before you read the book so you can get the visual interpretation of what he is depicting in the book. I now truly understand why Randy was like he was before all of this went down. I have a whole new level of respect for him as a man and a musician. I really don't care for their style of music but I now truly respect him.

It's good, but very long winded. Randy's time in jail is fascinating. Getting a look inside his head is awesome, but the story meanders way too much. One minute, he's talking about a day in jail, then he goes on a five page tangent about something that is only somewhat related to his day in prison. If he cut out about 70 or so pages of tangent, this would be a stellar, 5-star book that everyone should read, but with the meandering stories (and the occasional preachy holier-than-thou rants), it drops a star. It's still a great book and one worth reading. A must have for LoG fans as well.

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