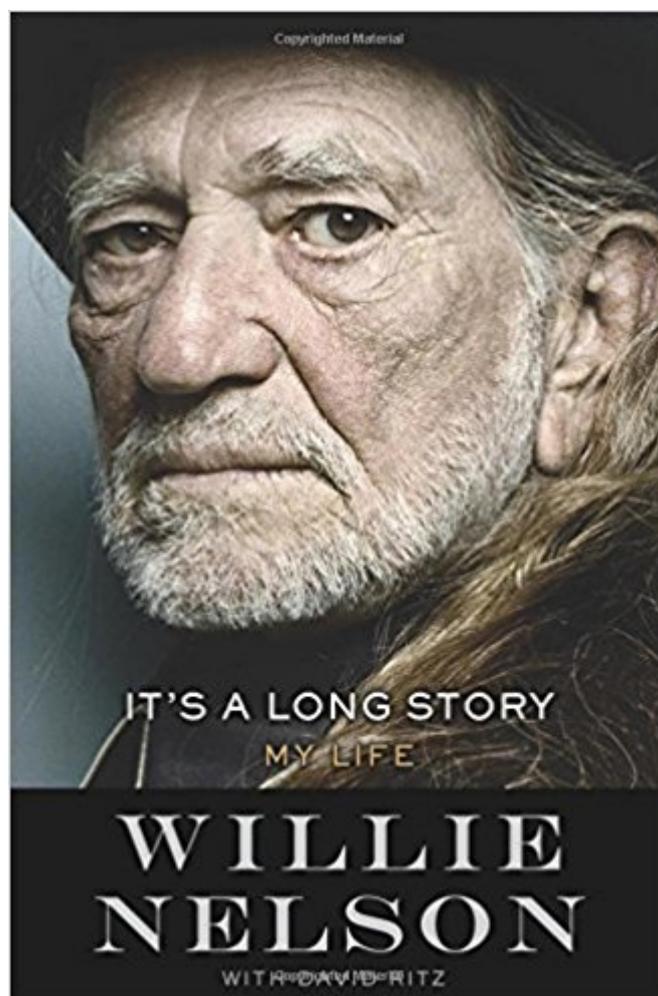


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It's A Long Story: My Life



Synopsis

The definitive autobiography of Willie Nelson "Unvarnished. Funny. Leaving no stone unturned." . . . So say the publishers about this book I've written. What I say is that this is the story of my life, told as clear as a Texas sky and in the same rhythm that I lived it. It's a story of restlessness and the purity of the moment and living right. Of my childhood in Abbott, Texas, to the Pacific Northwest, from Nashville to Hawaii and all the way back again. Of selling vacuum cleaners and encyclopedias while hosting radio shows and writing song after song, hoping to strike gold. It's a story of true love, wild times, best friends, and barrooms, with a musical sound track ripping right through it. My life gets lived on the road, at home, and on the road again, tried and true, and I've written it all down from my heart to yours. Signed, Willie Nelson

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Customer Reviews

Willie Nelson at the time of writing this book is 82 and he seems to be writing right from his heart. He covers a lot of his experiences, feelings and thoughts; but what might be of most interest to his many fans are his descriptions of how he wrote many of his songs. He wants to tell his story and he most certainly does. A song is a short story and he has used them to tell much of his life but here are the fine points. I like his music, but have never seen him perform (but now I have tickets for this summer) and didn't know much about him, other than some things I have read in newspapers and his legal troubles. Those are covered in here and how he keeps on going. He relates much of his life to his music and he covers his childhood to the present in these pages. He does begin with his IRS

troubles. He is blunt in his language and his attitude. He writes as he speaks and yes there is profanity in here. That is just how some talk and his writing is seemingly as honest as his manner. He does tell about downing huge quantities of whiskey and wine, experimenting with LSD and of course his ongoing love affair with pot. If anything else his song writing is amazing. He has written some of country music's greatest classics: Crazy, Pretty Paper, Funny How time Slips Away among others. He tells how they came into being and how they and others were recorded. Despite all this, what is overriding is his love for family, friends, even his different wives, women, and his faith. This might be old hat for his tried and true fans, but these are his personal stories and his look on life and the background of his music, his songs and how his recordings came to be. This is a book for Willie Nelson fans and when you read it you will have more of an appreciation for this man and his music. It might even make new fans for the man and his songs.

What I love most about Willie's autobiography is the attention he paid to telling the story of his younger years. Long before Honeysuckle Rose and Farm Aid, long before he became a target of the IRS and a spokesman for marijuana, before Austin and before Nashville even. Willie Nelson's is truly a long story, and it's a pleasure to hear it told from the beginning, in Willie's voice. It's a Long Story begins at the beginning - in Abbott, Texas - where Willie and his sister, Bobby, were raised by their grandparents, and takes the reader through Willie's start as a disc jockey and a musician, his ups and downs (mostly downs) in the Texas clubs, and his attempts to make it in California and Oregon, where he met Mae Axton, who worked for Elvis's manager at the time and advised Willie to go to Nashville, or at least back to Texas. Some of the best parts are the insights Willie provides into the origins of his early songs, written at some of his lowest points - numbers like "Night Life", "Crazy", and "Hello Walls", which he wrote at a \$50/week songwriting job he took at Pamper Music in Goodlettsville, TN. We all know Shotgun Willie, the high-flying outlaw country star who has played music with everyone from Ray Charles to Kid Rock. It's a Long Story reveals the man prior to the legend, the clean-shaven Texas picker who pounded the pavement, sold vacuum cleaners and encyclopedias on the side, and busted his ass for three decades before his star began to shine.

'Night Life, 'Crazy' and 'Hello Walls, three of Willie Nelson's most wonderful and long lasting songs were almost sold for five dollars a piece. Willie was down on his luck, looking for work, and needed money. Thankfully, the man he wanted to sell them to, would not buy them, but offered him an opportunity to move on. This is but one little bit of info we learn about this wonderful, musical man. From a young age Willie had the music in him. Brought up by his grandparents in the little

Texas town they lived in, he and his sister had a wonderful childhood. Not much money but love, hard work, and perseverance. Willie was always active, an athlete, loved the music he learned from Church, but when he was offered money to play honky tonk in a bar, he took it. Eight dollars a night, more than he made in a week picking cotton. He moved around a lot, every small and large town in Texas, Oregon, California, and then he traveled to Nashville where his life turned around. Willie makes it clear that family and friends come first. However, Willie was a ladie's man, and was out every evening playing his music. With three marriages behind him and several children, Willie admits he cheated, many times. He liked to drink, smoke pot, and play his music, but he loves his family, dearly. We hear all the stories, the people he met who helped him on his way from birth to this present day. He is now 82, still going strong, loves his ranch in Abbott, Texas, and that is where his journey begins and ends. He talks about his problems with the IRS and the multi millions he ended up owing. He glosses over his financial manager who he said extended the IRS claims. Willie refused to declare bankruptcy, and worked for years to pay off his debt. Willie is good to everyone, and it seems whatever came in went to those he knew. Lessons learned, however, and his money is now looked after very carefully. Willie gives his love of pot several chapters. He no longer smokes it, but he does inhale it. We hear of the times he has been picked up in his traveling bus. One thing Willie was adamant about, no hard drugs in his brand, none. He had a friend who liked cocaine, but that was his business. We hear about and meet all the musicians he played with, famous and not so. He has known them all, played with most of them, gone to the White House several times, and met the famous and infamous. One interesting point is that Willie does not remember several stories in the book. David Ritz, his co writer may have put the book together after hearing Willie talk about his life, and Willie may not have read the book of his life. No matter this is a rollicking, good read by a musician and song writer extraordinaire. To hear his music is to love him. Recommended.

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