



Old Wives' Tales

Sharon Osbourne and Courtney Love have a lot in common. They are both outspoken, headstrong women who married men that later became monstrously famous musicians. They both had plastic surgery. They are both known for throwing things — Love for hurling makeup at Madonna, Osbourne for pelting Iron Maiden with eggs. And now, they've both written books about themselves. But the tomes of the two most (in)famous rock wives since Yoko Ono take us on vastly different — but equally sensational — trips. Here we roll out the high (and drunk) points of each. — *NIKI D'ANDREA*



Book	Sharon Osbourne, <i>Extreme: My Autobiography</i> (Springboard Press)	Courtney Love, <i>Dirty Blonde: The Diaries of Courtney Love</i> (Faber and Faber, Inc.)
Format	Chronological memoir, with a modern-day narrative thread at the beginning of each chapter that has the reader following “Sha-ron” around Beverly Hills for a day — April 20, 2005, to be exact.	Schizophrenic scrapbook, with postcards, letters, journal entries, handwritten lyrics and Polaroid snapshots arranged in chaotic, semi-chronological collages.
Synopsis	Sharon Arden grows up in England. She works for her music mogul father, Don Arden. He rips her off financially and treats her like crap. She marries Ozzy Osbourne, becomes his manager and severs ties with her father. Ozzy gets drunk and abusive for eleven of the next twelve chapters, but the book's epilogue is serene.	Courtney Menely grows up in Oregon and is a problem child. She travels to England, then later LA and then later Seattle, with various stops in between. She changes her last name, starts the band Hole, marries Kurt Cobain and gives birth to their daughter, Frances Bean. Love then becomes the (admittedly still-recovering) “grunge widow” after Cobain's death.
Surprising scene	Ozzy Osbourne, “obsessed with Phil Collins” and playing Collins' first solo album, <i>Face Value</i> , over and over at full volume, until his bandmates throw the cassette out the window.	Love penning a letter to Cobain some ten years after his death, asking him to put a hex on Frances Bean's teacher.
Interesting quote	Sharon Osbourne referring to Smashing Pumpkins founder Billy Corgan as “a lightbulb in trousers, Yul Brynner's mutant brother.”	From an early letter from Cobain to Love: “Let's be mountain junkies and breed Satanic mall rats.”
The point	Survival. Survival, sarcasm and also knowing where to find a fabulous pair of custom Heidi Klum Birkenstocks, dahling. Osbourne tells her tale with candor and humor, and it makes for an entertaining (and alternately horrifying and touching) read.	Many people — especially Courtney Love — are morbidly fascinated with Courtney Love. That's partly because of her drug-induced duality — she can be an amazingly intelligent, talented woman as Sober Courtney, or a plane crash hitting a train wreck as Stoned Courtney. <i>Dirty Blonde</i> shows bits of both, but leaves plenty of demons unexorcised.