

But

Life Isn't Like That, Is It?

Boff Whalley

Life's stories are always prone to disruption and digression, thwarting the neat storybook narrative we love so much.

Almost all of our stories follow the same basic pattern: beginning, middle, end: exposition, action, and climax. It's a neat and tidy way of telling a story. But life's not like that, is it? It doesn't obey the rules. Life's stories—like the stories told here in *But*, personal and impersonal, historical and contemporary—are punctuated by disruption, derailment, and digression.

Stories where the good guys lose. Stories where the bad girls win. Stories that just stop in the middle. Stories that fizzle out or simply never get going. Stories that don't make sense. Stories that start where they should end and end where they start. Stories that go round in a cyclical loop, forever. Unfinished stories. Unstarted stories. Stories that stutter and mumble, that cough and splutter.

That's what we have here in this book: real stories, that do all of the above. That's why this book is called *But*. Because the but is there to disrupt the easy normality of the way we tell our stories. This book is a collection of stories about real lives, real people, and real life. Stuttering, wayward, disjointed, funny, ridiculous, and unplanned.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Boff Whalley is one of the founding members of the anarcho-punk band Chumbawamba. In more recent years he has been a playwright and the founder of Commoners Choir, which combines political activism with singing. He is the author of four books, including *Run Wild*, about his experiences as a fell runner. He lives in Leeds, UK.

PRAISE FOR BOFF'S OTHER WORKS

"Free-thinking and mercurial, [he] is by turns rebellious, exuberant, fierce, kind, funny and invigorating."

—Jay Griffiths, author of *Wild*

"A stirringly evocative, riveting, hilarious, nostalgic, important book."

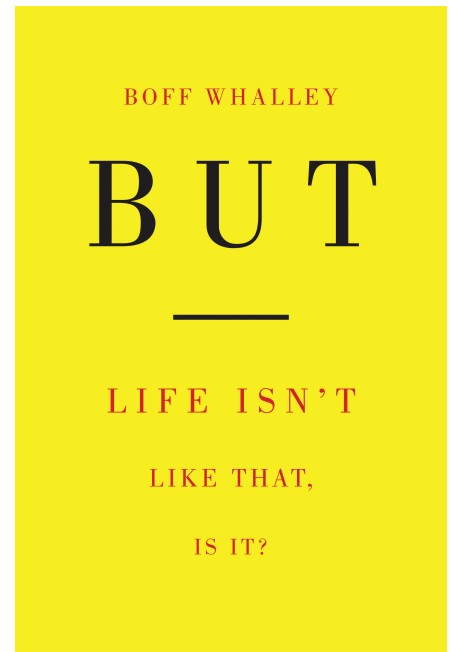
—Damian Hall, author of *We Can't Run Away from This*

"A strange, exhilarating blast of a book, throbbing with energy and sweaty authenticity."

—Richard Aaskwith, author of *Feet in the Clouds*

"A most enjoyable look at fell running with a punk soundtrack and attitude. It all makes for a great read, and I'm happy that Killing Joke may have been along for the ride."

—Big Paul Ferguson, Killing Joke



SUBJECT CATEGORY

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