



## Sweet Revenge: The Intimate Life of Simon Cowell

*Tom Bower*

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**For this definitive biography, acclaimed journalist and bestselling author Tom Bower was granted unprecedented access to Simon Cowell and those around him—and the result is a fascinating multilayered portrait of one of the world’s most intriguing television personalities ever to dominate the music industry.**

Simon Cowell has made an international name for himself as the no-holds-barred judge on the television phenomenon *American Idol*. He’s been called mean, arrogant, brash, and unapologetic, but his stinging barbs and smug personality have also earned him cheers from fans, as well as millions of dollars, a string of exotic beauties, and industry clout to develop his own projects. But Cowell’s true reward is *revenge*.

*Sweet Revenge* is the ultimate insider’s account of Simon Cowell’s rise to fame—even as others plotted his downfall—from his cheeky exploits as a British school lad to his failures as a frustrated young music exec in London to his explosive rivalry with Simon Fuller over the genesis of the *Idol* franchise to the PR disaster that nearly sunk his wildly successful show *The X Factor*. Conducting more than 150 interviews with industry power players, Cowell’s inner circle, and Cowell himself on a private jet, chartered yacht, at his L.A. home, and on the studio lot, Tom Bower pulls back the curtain on a man who is at once insecure, ambitious, easily bored, vain, needy, and driven, a man who will go to any limit to secure his success. Cowell is also revealed as a loyal friend and loving son. His father, to whom Cowell was particularly close, became his most trusted adviser and mentor.

Packed with juicy details, exclusive interviews, and never-before-revealed facts, *Sweet Revenge* presents a complete picture of Simon Cowell that few have ever seen.

## Sweet Revenge: The Intimate Life of Simon Cowell Details

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## From Reader Review Sweet Revenge: The Intimate Life of Simon Cowell for online ebook

### Linda says

I am a fan of Simon Cowell, but I could not get through the book. It was from the library so I did not feel bad when I put it down. I found it boring. Maybe I should have plugged along, but I hate to read just for the sake of reading.

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### Nicola says

didn't like the writing style and whilst some of the details of Cowell's life are fascinating the author managed to drag out each item too far. He also refers to all the characters by surname only which only added to the confusion and made reading awkward. Haven't finished it and have no intention to.

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### Simon Taylor says

Sweet Revenge focuses largely on the professional life of Simon Cowell, most likely because his work takes up so much of his life.

Following a scene-setting "day in the life of" segment, Bower chronologically charts the rise and rise (and plateau?) of Cowell's varied career from his early days in the industry to his TV successes.

It is particularly interesting to read about the thought processes and methodology of Cowell as he finesses his TV empire. We know who he hired, who he fired and what we saw as a finished product, but Bower peels away the top layer to show us why.

It's interesting to read what was "real" and what was portrayed as real on- and off-screen. Bower is unflinchingly honest about what actually happened, what was staged, and what spin (/fibs) were fed to the press. Nobody can claim ignorance about the manipulation (or "helpful direction") of ITV's flagship entertainment shows, but it's amazing to read such a candid account.

The political wrangling between Cowell, TV executives, record labels and production companies provides a fascinating insight into a side of the industry we see very little of. The constant redistribution of power (actual and perceived) is almost soap operatic as each stakeholder vies for the upper hand.

A predominant theme of the book is Cowell's long-running feud with Simon Fuller. Its origins are described in detail, as well as the effect it had on their working lives. Cowell recognises his nemesis' strengths and the relationship between the Simons is complexly gripping.

At times, the writing becomes repetitive with too much time spent on irrelevancies and glossing over more interesting stories.

The book shows us Cowell's lifestyle, his thought process, his flaws and his fears. Those complaining of a lack of salacious gossip perhaps misunderstand the "intimate" life Bower shows us. The enigmatic success story that is Simon Cowell is opened up and revealed in fascinating detail.

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### **chucklethescot says**

This was quite an interesting book and it certainly does what it can to uncover every secret that Simon Cowell ever had. I think it is good that Cowell did nothing to stop this book coming out as some vain celebrities may have done, instead being of the opinion that he isn't bothered what people think of him. There are rumours that he fully cooperated with the book behind the scenes and I think he probably did, given the level of detail about Simon's thirst for revenge on everyone who wronged him in his early career and a few well kept secrets that were revealed. Either way it was nice to read a biography that told all of the story and not just edited highlights like Danni Minogue.

It covers a lot of ground-trying to launch himself into the music business which was pretty cutthroat at the time. There were failures and problems with his chosen industry, and being stabbed in the back seems to be a common issue. We also see what really goes on behind the scenes of the popular reality TV series that he has been involved in like X Factor, Pop Idol and American Idol. I can say that I wouldn't want to work with some of the people on these shows!

There is also the look into his private life-his early fling with Sinitta when she was trying to start her music career, his never before revealed affair with Dannii Minogue when she was on X Factor, his lust for Cheryl Cole, his friendly relations with all his ex girlfriends-something I still find pretty amazing. He seems to reward those who are loyal to him or have stood by him just as jealously as trying to ruin those who try to ruin him. These relationships do interest me and it was interesting to finally see WHY Dannii Minogue and Sharon Osbourne were at war during filming.

Fans of Simon Cowell or the music industry should certainly find this interesting.

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### **Lord Bobby says**

Really enjoyed. It

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### **Sally says**

I had always - secretly - wanted to meet Simon Cowell. But not any more. Tom Bower has cured me of that.

The first half of this biography made me think Cowell should be fronting one of those "Ten years ago, I was a miserable loser. But just look at me now! And the secret is...." In inauspicious Act I to his career, for sure.

As well as learning that Cowell is VERY generous to his many ex-girlfriends (and so very hetosexual), this book had lots of interesting stuff about the inner workings - if that is quite the right word - of the music business, and tons of detail about contracts and contract wrangles, which appealed to my inner litigator.

As for Cowell himself. He's ;lost his place at my dinner table in favour of Eric Cantona.

### **sue says**

Terrible, that's the only word I have to say about this. Its so well planned that Simon Cowell would have had a hand in this, you can tell by reading this.

It goes from his childhood, roots, right up to today. I really think that the avenue and telling of this book about Simon and how he reacts to different things edited by him.

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### **Steve says**

What would you call a person whose daily life revolved around “vitamin injections, special fruits, intravenous drips, piles of pills, Botox, massages, dyes, chest waxing, tooth caps and cosmetic surgery” all in an attempt to limit “the evidence of aging?” What would you call a person whose biggest wish is to acquire “as much money as I can get my hands on?” He’s known by fans and critics alike around the world as “Sarcastic Simon, Nasty Simon, Mr. Nasty.” That pretty much sums up “the intimate life” of Simon Cowell.

This printed documentary started out as an unauthorized biography, but, author Tom Bower, with a “track record of writing about men with power and money,” managed to get Cowell’s cooperation under certain conditions.

Bower could’ve titled this bio “The Art of the Deal,” but I think Donald Trump would probably not appreciate the plagiarism. So much of this material deals exclusively with the buying and selling of recording artists, not unlike American slave trading of the 1800’s. Morning, noon and night, all hours of the night, Cowell runs from one deal to the next, mostly with the intent of “sweet revenge” against his real and perceived enemies and critics. Bower’s take on the narcissistic Cowell could be used as a text book in Harvard business school classes on intellectual property litigation.

This is a very sad portrait of one wasted life. It’s a picture of one man so full of himself he has no room in his life or his many houses for anyone else. It’s a snapshot of a man who uses women as toys along with his private jets, Rolls Royce limos, chartered yachts, mansions in Los Angeles, London and Caribbean vacations. There’s a reason why Carly Simon’s 1972 hit “You’re So Vain” could’ve been used as a theme song for the music mogul’s 4.4 million dollar fiftieth birthday party. When it comes to hedonism, Hugh Hefner could take a few lessons from Simon Cowell. Here’s one very lonely man “whose fame relied on nonchalance toward the downfall of others.” Call it “sweet revenge.”

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### **Barbara Kinsky says**

I am loving this book but if you are not a Simon Cowell fan or supporter you will not enjoy this book. I now admire the music mogul even more than I did before. From a man who was semi-poor, who was laughed at continuously for music flops to a self-made well respected millionaire today - unbelievable!!

## **RNOCEAN says**

Quite an interesting biography on a man whose chosen mistress is power. I find Simon to be a fascinating and driven man who will accomplish just about anything he sets his mind too. I do admire his honesty and straight forwardness where others might find him arrogant and obnoxious. I had to read this book immediately, downloading it to my Nook the moment I knew that it was released. One of the better biographies I have read.

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## **Victoria says**

I don't know why, but it was bit hard to read for me. Still I got till the end and didn't regret a second that I read it. It is full with interesting deatails about his life. All in all it perfectly shows that climbing showbiz mountain isn't easy task to take on. You are gonna fall, get bruised, but you just can't give up.

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## **Gabriel says**

It was kind of Boring but informational.

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## **Mark Butterworth says**

"Survival in the music industry required luck, talent, relationships, and brazenness. Those with only three out of the four qualities would inevitably fail. To climb to the very top, as Cowell had, also required single-mindedness, selfishness, and stardust."

I've read a lot about Simon Cowell before - interviews and biographies. They all hint at what this uncovers but while others hinted at a quirky guy with drive and a big idea, this book gets closer and builds on what's come before by exposing not only the quirks, drive and big ideas but also a near-crippling insecurity, a deep fear of loneliness, an obsessive personality underpinned by perfectionism and the need for routine and - most interestingly - a man who emerged triumphantly from 35 straight years of failure and setbacks but who still lives under the weight of insecurity and fear of the failure that shaped him. As the title suggests, many tried to stifle his ambition and things get really fascinating when his success puts him in a position to seek revenge against those that fought so hard to put him down. The reward for his peers, collaborators and - interestingly - ex-girlfriends however, is a deep-seated loyalty.

As well as being a very personal account, I also found it a great insight into the business of music, television and media in general - there is just enough depth there for it to be informative but not too much that it's ever dull. It's a really easy read, though not a book that's written particularly well. Finally, it lifts the veil on reality TV shows (it helps if you're familiar with them as anecdotes from the UK's Pop Idol, Popstars, American Idol, Got Talent, and X Factor in the UK and US and the players involved in each are what much of the second half revolve around) and I was pretty amazed at the infighting that goes on behind the scenes - like, judges and producers actually, physically, fight each other before and after shows. Crazy. To this point, the businesses of showbiz, entertainment and music are called out for being the turbulent worlds that they

are. In doing so, this bio does a good job of aiding understanding as to why Cowell is like he is, both in private and in public. His life is now absurdly extravagant but it certainly hasn't always been that way (see the first 35 years in the life of...) and it's hard not to walk away with an appreciation for his endless persistence and tireless work ethic.

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### **Dannie Ray says**

This was a brilliantly written account of Cowell's professional career. There was some information at the beginning as to his early years and family history, but this was mostly an account of his ascent to the top of the music and tv business. While some of the business jargon was slightly confusing to someone who has no knowledge of the subject, all areas where this happened were fleeting and necessary to understand the bigger picture.

If you like Simon Cowell, you will love this book.

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### **Anne says**

Well, I'm glad to be done with it. At least now I know my distaste for the man was justified. The book was well-written, but each chapter of Cowell's life has basically been a repeat of the last, once he got money, much like his TV shows - You think they're going to be new and exciting, but, in reality, they're all just the same recycled idea.

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