



Going Off Alarming: The Autobiography: Vol 2

Danny Baker

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The dazzlingly funny second volume of Danny Baker's memoirs: the television years.

Since my first book was published I have had countless friends and family members get in touch to say how come I hadn't included this story or that tale. Was I ashamed of being shot twice, once up the arse, in Jamaica Road? How long should a man live with such a secret? If by retrospectively dropping my trousers every few pages I can reveal a fuller picture of myself during these years, then so be it.

Besides. Being shot up the arse. In front of your mates.

What else did I forget?

Going Off Alarming: The Autobiography: Vol 2 Details

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From Reader Review Going Off Alarming: The Autobiography: Vol 2 for online ebook

Joe Donnelly says

Danny Baker is one of the most entertaining broadcasters there is. His radio shows have always been a breath of fresh air, his wit and ability to tell stories is without equal.

This second installment of his biography covers the years of his big breakthrough and subsequent fall from grace.

It is a series of tales told only as Danny could tell them. There is little meat to flesh out the bones of why he got the sack from various broadcasters and shows. To that end there is little malice or bad feeling about any of the downturns in fortune. Everything is told with good grace and buckets of humor.

Don't expect an insight into broadcasting in the '90s, just enjoy the brilliant storytelling of a star who seems to think one of these days he'll be found out.

Brilliant stuff....roll on volume 3.

Andy Wright says

There's a feeling of more of the same after vo. 1, but the stories aren't quite on par - possibly due to this being a less interesting (for us, anyway) time of Baker's life. The first book was full of youth-on-a-journey stories. This is more "Then I worked in television. Then got another job in television" and so on. There are a few great tales - one in particular featuring Frank Zappa - and as much as I like Danny, I did prefer the first book.

Nigeyb says

Having thoroughly enjoyed Going to Sea in a Sieve: The Autobiography, the first volume of Danny Baker's autobiography, I was looking forward to Going Off Alarming which is the second instalment.

Danny Baker is a great story teller and someone with many great stories to tell. The first thing to confess is that I am very biased in favour of Mr Baker. I am frequently amazed to discover that not everyone shares my enthusiasm. What's not to love?

Going Off Alarming is, in common with Volume 1, very similar to listening to Danny talk - quick, chatty, witty, and compelling. This volume deals with the celebrity years as variously a TV presenter, comedy writer, radio presenter and the face of Daz washing powder - as well as being a high profile pal of Chris Evans and Paul "Gazza" Gascoigne.

The book is naturally a joy. The anecdotes come thick and fast, and are frequently at Danny's own expense. My personal favourites include getting shot in the arse in Jamaica Road, his first meeting with Kenneth Williams, the caravan tow bar injury, his non-meeting with Bob Dylan, and an extraordinary day out with Paul Gascoigne. We also get to enjoy more anecdotes from Dan's childhood, and especially about his dad Spud who appears to be an even bigger character than his son.

It's another entertaining, funny and interesting read. I say again, what's not to love?

Derek Bell says

It's rare for me to laugh out loud at a book but this was impossible not to, usually building from a snigger through a stifled to laugh to an outright guffaw.

Baker writes like he broadcasts - with brio and wit and sheer joy of life - at times the sentences are worthy of a latter day P G Wodehouse in the way he builds an anecdote.

The undoubted star of the book is his dad Spud, a man with his own outlook on life and who Danny clearly adores, his mum is no weak link either and wife Wendy manages to cope with everything usually by laughing at him.

Roll on Volume 3.

David says

Volume 2 of Baker's memoirs is a colourful, at times riotous breeze through the years where his media ubiquity, he claims, must have been grating for viewers and listeners. That's not how I remember it. His co-conspirator, Danny Kelly, once described Baker as the country's best broadcaster and from radio evidence, that's how I remember the early 1990s. He's still doing the same show on 5Live on Saturday mornings, and it's unmissable.

His inherited devil-may-care cavalier attitude to such fripperies as career or financial planning is well-documented here, a childlike charm on its own. Inherited? Yup, from the glorious Spud, Danny's dad, who, as in *Going to Sea in a Sieve: The Autobiography*, is again the provider of most of the laugh out loud episodes, rivalled only by Twizzle, the cunningly-inventive but deranged dog.

Volume 3 is promised. I could read it right now.

Robert says

Sky black with hats, for this is a pip and a dandy. An object lesson in how this sort of thing - i.e. a multi-volume autobiography - **should** be done; *nota bene*, Stephen Fry. It fairly zips along, is seldom not very funny and along the way skewers most of the tropes that we've been trained to expect from the genre. Can't wait for volume three for more letting daylight in on magic. English as tuppence, changing yet changeless as canal water, nestling in green nowhere, armoured and effete...

Alex says

I remember when Danny Baker was writing this book, because he used to give updates of his progress on his Twitter feed. They were mainly along the lines of 'I should be writing but I can't be bothered. I'll have some wine instead and then I'll knock out 300 pages in a couple of days when it matters'.

Well, the finished book certainly reflects his attitude above, and in the end he didn't even knock out 300 pages.

There are still some anecdotes in the book that are well worth reading (especially the section on his friendship with Paul Gascoigne), but mainly it's really half-hearted, haphazard, poorly-structured and lazy.

I'm hoping for far better from the next volume, mainly because he should cover his falling out with BBC London, and as his Twitter feed shows, he only really nowadays gets fire in his belly when he feels someone or something has done him wrong.

Andy Walker says

The second volume of Danny Baker's memoirs (pompous name he wouldn't approve of I'm sure) are like volume one, an uplifting and life affirming read. Baker describes his journey (another word he'll hate) into the TV firmament in such a haphazard way that you have to believe him when he says that none of his career has been planned. His enjoyment of the trappings of 'fame' shine through this book as does Baker's humility and humanity. In particular his description of his friendship with Paul Gascoigne is particularly heartfelt and is so typical of the man. And it does justice to his Geordie pal too.

I can't wait to read volume three.

Jeff Howells says

A raconteur par excellence. Danny Baker can not only talk the hind legs off a donkey but probably also off the entire field of the Grand National. When he's interviewed you only need to ask one question and he's away for hours on end and barely catching a breath.

However the important thing is he is always so brilliantly entertaining & damn funny. This second volume of his memoirs had me hooting with laughter practically at every page. There's very few around that can match his "Daz" ling exuberance (see what I did there?)...

David Manns says

Baker's second volume of autobiography is as funny, revealing, and eminently readable as the first. This time we get the lowdown on Baker's TV career, that point in the early 90s where he became almost ubiquitous. He freely admits that he became over exposed and that he never actively pursued TV "fame" but simply was in

the right place at the right time (again). It's a common thread that opportunity constantly comes a-knock in' at the Baker door.

Baker also drops in stories that he forgot to put in the first volume (such as being shot up the arse on the Jamaica Road!) as well as snapshots of home life (especially amusing are the tales of his loopy dog, Twizzle).

As Baker himself says, if you're expecting a "misery memoir" then look elsewhere. Baker's philosophy is to look on the sunny side and let the other stuff take care of itself. To that end he spends money as fast as he can make it, because otherwise what's the point? Enjoy life now. It's a persuasive point of view.

As ever he may be marmite to some, but I found this another immensely enjoyable read. Roll on volume three.

Desmond Reid says

Eccentric he may be. Boring he is most certainly not.

Danny Baker, the English irreverent broadcaster, has published his second autobiography: 'Going Off Alarming'. From being 'shot up the arse' (not once but twice!) to his days as a media writer in the 90's (Chris Evans 'TFI - Friday') his journey has certainly been haphazard and chaotic at best.

Yet, Baker's 'career' (a term he surely would hate) through television and radio shows his pure joy of grabbing every opportunity with both hands. Whilst always believing he'll get a 'proper' job when all this malarkey and froth dries up.

Celebrity encounters aplenty, he also dishes up large slices of life which prove he just an ordinary bloke enjoying the ride of his life.....

Recently, the bombastic but supremely talented showman that is Connor McGregor clinched his second title belt in a sensational bout within the world of mixed martial arts known as the 'UFC'.

I can't help wondering if Connor and Danny are cut from the same cloth for their accomplishments in polar opposite worlds. Both used their very wit and DNA from humble working class roots (Irish former plumber v. son of a docker) with a supreme unshakable self belief.

Baker also divides a nation for his likability and those who don't.

This unflinching self confidence is matched with a sharp tongue which shines throughout 'Going Off Alarming' (a reference from his equally colorful dad 'Spud' when things are about to 'kick off'). Danny has the uncanny knack to always fall buttered side up, repeatedly throughout his life. But that's Danny and overall hilarity always prevails.

For every celebrity encounter with the likes of Bob Dylan (cringe worthy gold) and footballer Paul Gascoigne (a mind-boggling tale of him driving a double decker around Marble Arch) there are recollections of the ordinary. The chapter 'Black Sheep' reflects on Danny's lovable and demented dog 'Twizzle'. His relationship with his Bank Manager in the early days is also laugh out loud gold.

His dad stands large throughout his life and one can see where Danny gets his bravado. A story where Spud defends a perceived wrong on his son's behalf against the comedian Harry Enfield highlights Baker families strong sense of place.

Overall, an unwavering look at Bakers life past in all its hues. At times maybe a little laboured (detours to such unrelated topics as Ouija boards are aplenty).

However, Danny's unquestionable self confidence in his own uniqueness makes this volume a colorful hyperactive slice of life read.

7/10

Neil Denham says

I can understand why some people might not like Danny Baker, but I personally love the way he looks at life with a joy and wonder that is missing from so many biographies.

I laughed every single page, and felt a really honesty in the stories he tells... even when on the surface they seem unfeasible!

Kay Smillie says

Not quite as good as volume one but still an enjoyable journey into the life of the ebullient Danny Baker and his wonderful dad. What you see is what you get with this gentleman. An eye for the absurdities in life and not afraid to speak his mind. Kudos too for working with Michael Robbins in the panto. Oh no he didn't! Oh yes he did! Still never been paid for that though. Far from the average autobiography but Danny Baker is far from your average bloke.

Ray Smillie

Alan M says

Ahh - that difficult second album. Flawed, but mostly worth the pocket money.

I became familiar with Danny's work through his All Day Breakfast Show podcasts, which I found enormously enjoyable and got me through some months of a commute that otherwise threatened to do for me, both physically and mentally. As with volume 1, some of the anecdotes were already familiar, although some weren't. All are told with some panache – the Zappa and Dylan being for me great examples, but I do wonder about the process for deciding what went in to the book and what didn't. I can't help but recall a Baker and Kelly podcast where they talked with some amusement about how familiar they both were with stretching limited material gossamer thin on Radio 5 Live, and I get a sense something a little similar is

happening here. Compare the limited insight we get into Chris Evans to the chapter long account of the exploits of DB's dog Twizzle.

Danny makes it clear at the very start of the book that he prefers to accentuate the positive, and his brother's death is related with little comment beyond the facts of what happened and no insight in terms of the impact on him or his father who is otherwise very visible throughout the book. Much of his career is described in a jaunty mildly depreciating tone swaddled in lashings of "how could this keep happening to me". And yet there is a different Danny Baker that is only occasionally evidenced here.

The other Danny surfaces when he tackles a couple of subjects that he clearly feels passionately about and he takes at least one glove off. Whether it's education, the state of radio or his relationship with Paul Gascoigne, it's a welcome break from the cheery banter that dominates the book elsewhere. DB is an eloquent and powerful speaker when roused, and it's a shame that it's rarely allowed to show.

In terms of the "other" Danny what strikes me is that the easy come easy go happy go lucky approach he describes in the book is at odds with the public hissy fits he had about the end of the All Day Breakfast Show and his BBC London gig. Maybe the next volume will set the record straight on what the ins and outs of the end of the All Day Breakfast Show, and maybe it just proves Danny is human after. It would be interesting to hear how he reconciles the slating he gave Aunty at the time with all the work he's picked up from them since.

Simon Harper says

I was already familiar with a lot of these anecdotes but this is a superbly written autobiography and packed with great stories, hilariously told. The bit about him trying to paint the bedroom ceiling had me doubled over on the bus. Roll on Volume 3.
