

= My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy =

My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy is an autobiography written by Nancy Cartwright . First published in September 2000 by Hyperion , it details Cartwright 's career , particularly her experiences as the voice of Bart Simpson on The Simpsons and contains insights on the show , diary entries and anecdotes about her encounters with various guest stars .

Critics commented that the book seemed to be aimed at fans of The Simpsons rather than a more general audience . Other criticisms included the simplicity of the writing and a lack of interesting stories . In 2004 , Cartwright adapted the book into a one @-@ woman show , which she has performed all over the world , including at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe .

= = Background = =

In the opening chapter , Cartwright writes " About five years ago I decided I wanted to write this book . I knew that The Simpsons would end some day . [ ... ] I decided that I wanted to write it while the show was still on the air . " In an interview with Scotland on Sunday , she added " I wanted to tell my story and I needed to because I get so much fan mail . People are so interested in the whole process , how it all comes together . This book does that . " In a 1995 interview , five years before writing the book , Cartwright remarked that she wanted to write a book and that if she did , it would be titled " My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy . "

The book contains excerpts from date books and journals that Cartwright had kept over the years . The book was officially announced in January 2000 and Cartwright had originally intended that it be released on October 31 .

= = Content = =

My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy opens with a dedication to Daws Butler , a list of acknowledgements and a foreword from Cartwright 's The Simpsons co @-@ star Dan Castellaneta . The first chapter of the book details Cartwright 's life and career prior to 1987 . In the second chapter , Cartwright recalls the day she went to audition for a role in a series of animated shorts on The Tracey Ullman Show . The shorts were about a dysfunctional family and Cartwright intended to audition for the role of Lisa Simpson , the eldest daughter . Upon arriving at the audition , she found the role of her brother Bart to be much more interesting . Matt Groening , creator of the shorts , allowed her to audition for Bart , and gave her the job on the spot after hearing her reading . From there , the book contains her experiences as the voice of Bart. After three seasons of shorts , a half @-@ hour spinoff called The Simpsons debuted in 1989 . In the following chapters , she recalls the early days of The Simpsons , commenting on the recording process and her co @-@ stars and revealing how she got the roles of some of the other characters she voices , including Nelson Muntz and Ralph Wiggum . In the 15th chapter , she discusses her experiences of voicing a famous character , but rarely being recognized .

Several chapters are devoted to a detailed " behind the scenes " look at how an episode of The Simpsons is made , including the writing , recording and animation . My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy contains multiple excerpts from Cartwright 's diary detailing various events , mostly encounters with The Simpsons guest stars . Guest stars she talks about include Ernest Borgnine , Danny DeVito , Kirk Douglas , Mel Gibson , Kelsey Grammer , Tom Jones , Michael Jackson , Mickey Rooney , Meryl Streep and Elizabeth Taylor . One chapter describes the day she found out that Phil Hartman , a frequent guest star on The Simpsons , was murdered . The final chapter is a retrospective in which she answers the question " what is it like to be the voice behind the star ? "

= = Reception = =

My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy 's original print of 25 @,@ 000 copies were sold on pre @-@ order in the United Kingdom , with 38 @,@ 000 copies being sold . Cartwright began a

publicity tour in late October 2000 , starting in her hometown of Dayton , Ohio , where the book became the top selling non @-@ fiction in the town in the first week of November 2000 .

Laura A. Bischoff of the Dayton Daily News commented that the book was the " ultimate insider 's guide to The Simpsons . " However , several critics commented that the book was straightforward and presented few interesting stories . Susan Shapiro of The New York Times wrote that " Although the paradoxes of being ' a celebrity nobody knows ' are interesting , the photographs , diary entries and overly cute commentaries make this book feel like a personal scrapbook . " Rosellen Brewer of the Library Journal commented that " Cartwright 's own life notwithstanding , there is nothing really new or exciting here . She knew what she wanted to do and was able to do it ; end of story . " Lee Bacchus of The Province wrote that " This little book by the voice of Bart Simpson reads as if it were written by a 10 @-@ year @-@ old boy . Not that that 's all bad . Cartwright , who voices Bart along with Ralph Wiggum and a few others on The Simpsons , gives a very unchallenging tour behind the scenes of the phenomenally successful series . It 's kind of fun to discover how the show is put together and how an adult woman snagged one of the coolest jobs in the world [ ... ] If only it wasn 't all so relentlessly perky . "

Another common criticism was that the book was aimed at fans of The Simpsons and not a general audience . A preview in People said the bottom line was that the book is " for die @-@ hard fans only . " Bacchus concurred , saying " Cartwright writes as if she were speaking to devotees of The Simpsons Fan Club , too often providing bland tidbits of background that only obsessives would ever really care about . " Rob Sheridan of the National Post also believes that the book is " aimed squarely at rabid Simpsons fans " , and criticized the writing , commenting that " the chronology of her story is sometimes muddled , and a lot of sentences have that first @-@ draft feeling [ ... ] But none of this is anything to have a cow about . "

= = Stage adaptation = =

In 2004 , My Life as a 10 @-@ Year @-@ Old Boy was adapted into a one @-@ woman play . Described as " a romp through Springfield through [ Cartwright 's ] eyes " , the first portion of the play is scripted and includes anecdotes from Cartwright , dialogue performed in her characters ' voices and video clips from The Simpsons . At the end , she does a question and answer session and occasionally plays a game to allow for audience participation . Cartwright 's friend Rose Goss co @-@ wrote the play , and serves as director . Cartwright has performed the show at various locations , including the Big Laugh Comedy Festival in Parramatta , Australia , in March 2004 , a three @-@ week run at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Edinburgh , Scotland in August 2004 , at the " Simpsons Mania " convention in Toronto , Canada , ( the North American debut of the play ) in October 2004 and at Riverside Studios in London , England , in May 2005 .

The play has received modest reviews . Julian Hall of The Independent criticized it for a lack of inside stories about The Simpsons , writing that " Cartwright never allows you to become bored but that means some issues are skirted over faster than American closing credits on television . You never really get a feel what it is like recording the show . " Brian Logan of The Guardian described Cartwright as " a lively host [ ... ] eager to please " , but found the play to be " an overweeningly upbeat collection of Simpsons chitchat . " David Chatterton of British Theatre Guide described it as " interesting and entertaining , but not really a ' must see ' even for Simpsons fans . " Clive Davis of The Times wrote that " In contrast to The Simpsons itself , where not a line , not a syllable , goes to waste , Cartwright has a habit of losing herself in anecdotes that stumble into dead @-@ ends . [ ... ] The half @-@ hearted trivia quiz involving volunteers from the audience soon dies a death too . The performance really cries out for a hard @-@ headed director . The video clips of Cartwright at large are fun , however . "