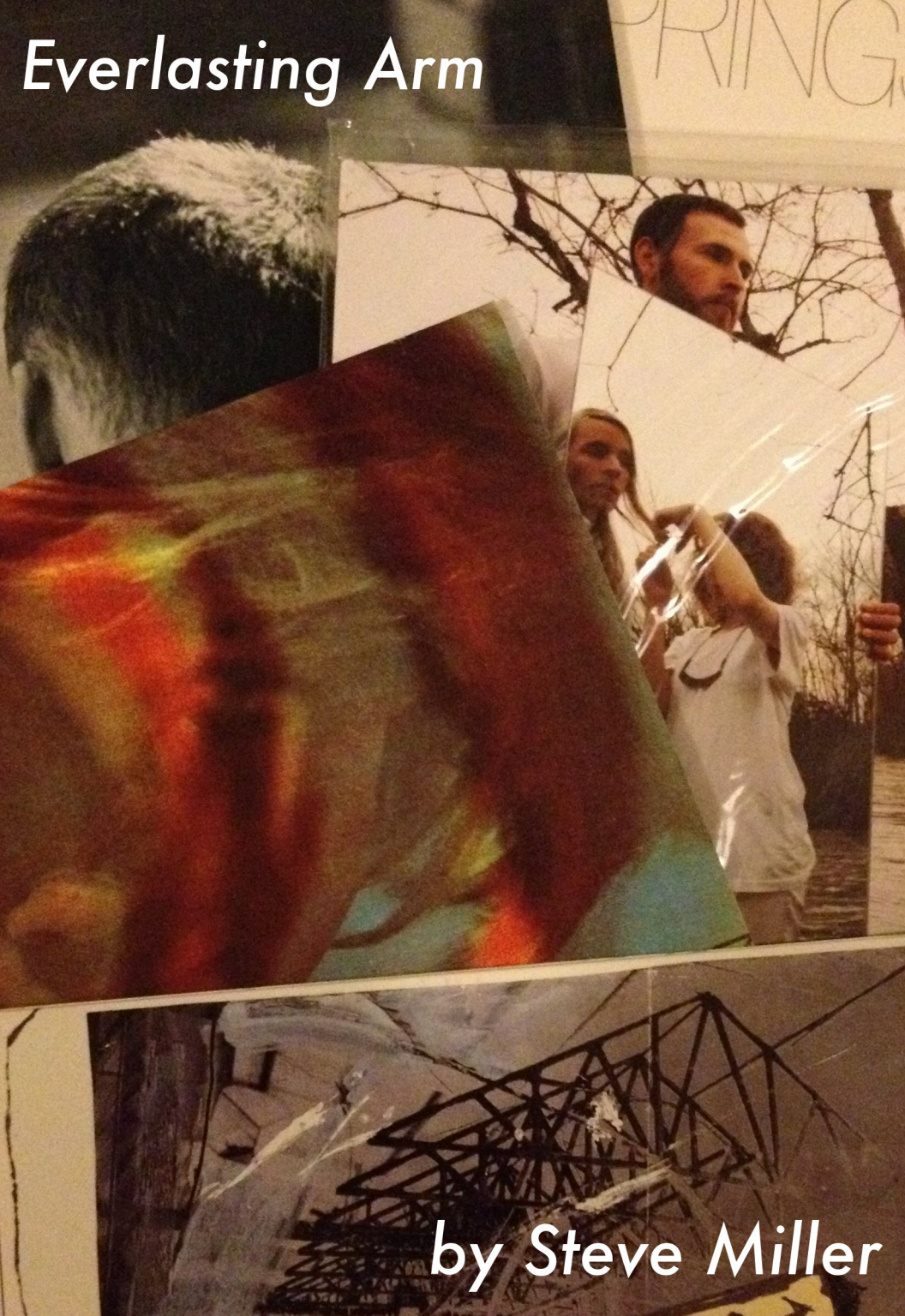
Everlasting Arm



by Steve Miller

Everlasting Arm

Steve Miller

This book is for sale at
http://leanpub.com/EverlastingArm

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This is a Leanpub book. Leanpub empowers authors and publishers with the Lean Publishing process. Lean Publishing is the act of publishing an in-progress ebook using lightweight tools and many iterations to get reader feedback, pivot until you have the right book and build traction once you do.

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Contents

Acknowledgments . . . . . **i**

Preface . . . . . **ii**

Introduction . . . . . **iii**

Markdown **1**
- Why Should You Care? 1
- How Markdown is Used in Leanpub 1
- Markdown Extensions in Leanpub 3

Acknowledgments

To Elaine & Jonah. Thank you.

Preface

In this sample Leanpub book we will show you how to write a Leanpub book.

Introduction

In 2009, as I approached my 40th Birthday, I decided that I wanted to set myself a writing project, and resolved to tell my autobiography by talking about my relationship to music. In an attempt to give it some structure, I set myself a strict set of rules (of which more later) and plotted the dates that I needed to publish each piece so that the final instalment would appear in the week of the birthday.

Unfortunately, rules can be a restriction as much as a liberation, and I gradually fell behind schedule before abandoning the whole thing in a fit of pique early in 2010.

I've decided to resurrect the project and I've I've tweaked the rules slightly. As the project is now 10 years beyond deadline, I think it's more important to make progress than to slavishly obey the rules.

The original rules were …

1 - Each piece has to be exactly 500 words. 2 - Each piece has to feature an album from a particular year (although I may not have listened to it in that particular year) 3 - No artist will feature more than once.

The word count one was the sticking point. So I've changed it to.

1 - Each piece has to be no less than 400 words, and no more than 500 words.

That's enough preamble. Let's talk about music.

Markdown

Why Should You Care?

A Leanpub book is composed of a bunch of Markdown files.

The order of these files is defined in a file called Book.txt, which is in the same folder as this file.

To learn about the syntax and philosophy of Markdown, see this article by John Gruber[1].

Briefly, Markdown is a nice way of writing content which is easily transformed into HTML. For example, # at the beginning of a line becomes an h1, ## becomes an h2, ### becomes an h3, etc. Lists, paragraphs and other formatting is also intuitive.

How Markdown is Used in Leanpub

Even if you know Markdown, you need to learn a few things about how we use it at Leanpub.

[1] http://daringfireball.net/projects/markdown/syntax

Heading Levels Become Chapters and Sections

First, we use # chapters, ## for sections and ### for sub-sections. (You can also use #### for sub-sub-sections, but don't get carried away! Most technical books are good with just #, ## and ###, and most business and fiction books are good with just # and possibly ##.)

So, if you look at the top of the Markdown.txt file you'll see that it has one #, meaning it is a Chapter.

Another thing this means is that one file can contain as many chapters or sections as you want: every # makes a new chapter; it has nothing to do with what file it is in. However, we strongly recommend having one file per chapter (or one file per chapter section), since it makes creating sample books easier and keeps your book directory cleaner. Since we recommend this, that's what we'll do in this example book.

Links Become Footnotes

We support Markdown syntax for links, as well as normal HTML links. Both of these are converted into functioning footnotes in the PDF. Here's an example of a link to Leanpub[2].

[2] http://leanpub.com

Markdown Extensions in Leanpub

We've made a few additions to Markdown for use in Leanpub. Two of the most important are tables and crosslinks. Furthermore, since Leanpub is so good for technical books, we also support extensions for external code samples, special directives for code syntnax highlighting, etc. If this is a technical book, you will see these discussed in the Code Samples chapter.

Tables

Creating a table in a Leanpub book is relatively simple. Here's an example:

First Name	Last Name	Email
Peter	Armstrong	peter@leanpub.com
Scott	Patten	scott@leanpub.com

Yes, that's it!

Crosslinks

A crosslink lets you refer to another element of your book. For example, you can refer to another section or figure, even if it's in a different chapter.

Creating crosslinks is a two-step process.

1. You need to set a name for the thing you want to link to. For example, you can name any chapter or section

by putting {#some-name} after the chapter title.
2. You need to link to it in the text. You do this with a regular Markdown link with a target of "#some-name"; for example this is a cross-link to the Why Sample Books section in the Sample Books chapter.

Note that for standalone crosslinks, this only works when the anchor {#some-name} is at the beginning of a section.

Footnotes

To add a footnote, you insert it like this[3] and then you define the footnote content later.

That's it. Then you can keep writing content after the footnote content definition as well.

[3]This is the footnote text.