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Wiseguy: The 25th Anniversary Edition



Synopsis

Nicholas Pileggi's vivid, unvarnished, journalistic chronicle of the life of Henry Hill "the working-class Brooklyn kid who knew from age twelve that to be a wiseguy was to own the world, who grew up to live the highs and lows of the mafia gangster's life" has been hailed as "the best book ever written on organized crime" (Cosmopolitan). This is the true-crime bestseller that was the basis for Martin Scorsese's film masterpiece *GoodFellas*, which brought to life the violence, the excess, the families, the wives and girlfriends, the drugs, the payoffs, the paybacks, the jail time, and the Feds with Henry Hill's crackling narration drawn straight out of *Wiseguy* and overseeing all the unforgettable action. Read it and experience the secret life inside the mob "from one who's lived it.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an excellent book about the life of Henry Hill, a petty mobster in New York State. This book, of course, is the basis for the superb movie "Goodfellas." While *The Godfather* is a fictional account of the underworld's upper realm, Henry Hill was a part of the lower echelon of the Mafia. The people that run protection rackets, hold-ups, grand thefts, etc. and then pay tribute to the "made" members

of the Mafia, who are mainly pure-blooded Sicilians and who form an elite that people like Henry Hill could do business with, but never quite be part of. The book is extremely interesting because of the picture it shows us of organized crime "where the rubber hits the road." The most astounding thing I took away from the book is that Hill and his confederates didn't really benefit all that much from their ill-gotten gains. Instead, they tended to literally throw their money away on a silly, lavish, extravagant lifestyle, featuring, for example \$100 tips to doormen, big bribes to get the best tables at restaurants, etc. Hill explained that he saw no need to save because he could always generate all the earnings he needed. Wrong! Most of us are unaware that organized crime is such a large presence in society, costing all of us immense amounts of money. This book drives that point home and it is a shocking revelation. The other insight of the book, which also comes out brilliantly in the film, is that Hill and his fellow mobsters viewed themselves as far above ordinary schmucks who actually work for a living. After all, why work if you can spend a few hours a day playing the rackets making ten times as much?

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