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Mike Matusow: Check-Raising The Devil



Synopsis

The tumultuous rags to riches, fame to fortune, dream to nightmare autobiography of the most volatile and colorful poker player in the world, fan and media favorite Mike "The Mouth" Matusow. This book has it all: drugs, sex, partying like a rock star, jail, suicidal depression, bipolar bouts and world championship poker. Mike "The Mouth" Matusow, one of the top professional poker players in the world (with over \$6 million in tournament earnings) has become more than just a household name. He's a favorite among the millions of television viewers who have come to count on his outrageously candid comments, emotional outbursts, and constant taunts that affirm the aptness of his nickname and make for great television theatre. A rags-to-riches success story, Matusow's life has been as much nightmare as it has been dream. His struggle with undiagnosed bipolar and ADHD disorders led to self-medication with illegal drugs, such as crystal meth and ecstasy, and a tumultuous descent in the drug-fueled Las Vegas club scene. As drug use turned to drug abuse, Matusow's descent, taking his multi-million dollar bankroll along, went on the downward spiral that led to an arrest for a narcotics buy and the specter of a ten-year prison term (subsequently plea bargained down to a six month jail sentence). The Mouth's story is a high stakes rollercoaster ride featuring an insider's view of some of the world's largest poker tournaments, unbearable depression and suicidal tendencies, the Las Vegas party scene, rock star-like excess, outrageous antics, drug abuse, jail, and, in many ways, salvation. And through the worst of it, Matusow's phenomenal talent and tenacity prevailed; there was never a year that Mike failed to make a final table in a World Series of Poker event. This memoir is funny, outspoken and brash, while humbly and painfully honest about the highs and lows of poker, life, and the odyssey of overcoming psychological illness in a bastion of pressure and temptation. There is also a foreword by Phil Hellmuth, 11-time World Series of Poker bracelet holder.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In America, we're suckers for a rags-to-riches-to-rags-to-rehab-to-riches stories. Mike Matusow epitomized the American Dream and an E! True Hollywood Story all rolled up into one... white trash roots, lived a wild yet misunderstood childhood, harnessed an innate genius to become famous and rich, partied to excess, got in trouble with the law, went to rehab, and bounced back into the spotlight as one of the most noticeable pros in the game. Check-Raising the Devil was not the first attempt at extracting an autobiography from The Mouth. Michael Craig was originally attached to the project circa 2006 and spent the better part of the Christmas holiday in 2006 interviewing Matusow in Las Vegas. Within a couple of weeks, Craig left the project due to creative differences with Matusow's agent, and that's when Amy Calistri and Dr. Tim Lavalli (aka the Poker Shrink) got a crack at the book. They officially jumped on board after the 2007 WSOP and they have been attached to the project ever since. Craig even offered up all his notes and interview tapes that were approximately four hours in length. In total, the Shrink accumulated over 70+ hours of audio interviews with Matusow which were the genesis of the book. I'm friends with both authors and obtained first-hand knowledge regarding the trials and tribulations of the entire process. From the get-go, Amy and the Shrink had major obstacles to overcome beginning with hold-ups and delays in securing the contract to write the book. There were plenty of challenges dealing with a volatile personality such as Mike Matusow and keeping him focused enough to talk about specific and difficult points in his life. The book was not an easy birth.

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