



For the Sins of My Father: A Mafia Killer, His Son, and the Legacy of a Mob Life

Albert Demeo , Mary Jane Ross

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A suspenseful, emotionally charged real-life Sopranos: The son of New York's most notorious Mafia killer reveals the conflicted life he led being raised by a cold-blooded murderer, who was also a devoted family man, and the wrenching legacy of Mafia family life.

Al DeMeo will never forget the day in 1992 when a coworker, a fellow trader at the New York Stock Exchange, taunted him with a copy of the hot new book *Murder Machine*, chronicling the horrific criminal life of DeMeo's father, Roy, the head of the most deadly gang in organized crime. The moment sent DeMeo into a psychological tailspin: How could he have spent his life looking up to, and loving, a vicious killer?

For the Sins of My Father recounts the chilling rise and fall of the man who led the Gambino family's most fearsome killers and thieves, through the eyes of a son who had never known any other kind of life. Coming of age in an opulent Long Island house where money is abundant but its source is unclear, Al becomes Roy's confidant, sent to call in loans at age fourteen and gradually coming to understand his father's job description--loan shark, car thief, porn purveyor and, above all, murderer. But when Al is seventeen, Roy's body is found in the trunk of a car, a gangland slaying that places Al between federal prosecutors seeking his testimony and a mob crew determined to keep him quiet.

Desperate to abide by the father-son bond, but equally determined to escape his father's dangerous and doomed life, Al Demeo embarks on a courageous quest for the truth, reconciliation, and honor. With the implacable narrative drive of a thriller and the power of a painfully honest memoir, *For the Sins of My Father* presents a startling and unprecedented perspective on the underworld of organized crime, exposing for the first time the cruel legacy of a Mafia life.

For the Sins of My Father: A Mafia Killer, His Son, and the Legacy of a Mob Life Details

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From Reader Review For the Sins of My Father: A Mafia Killer, His Son, and the Legacy of a Mob Life for online ebook

Sheena Dube says

For the Sins of my Father was a book that I was instantly hooked on! Although, at the beginning of the book there was like twenty characters Albert, who was also the author, was someone that stood out. I loved how he was truthful about his father, and how anyone at his age can relate to him. Aside from the fact that he was the son of a mafia member, he was just like an ordinary kid that had a family and did normal things a kid would do. For instance, he went to school every morning, and pulled pranks on his family members just to have fun! His actions throughout the book were acceptable considering the circumstances. Any kid at his age would obviously be confused and only do things that he was taught to do. For example, when Roy told Albert to only kill someone when he had a good reason, he instantly pulled out a gun when he was put to the "test" by his father and Uncle Joe. This was expected because he trusts his father's judgment and believes in whatever he told him to do. Albert in my opinion, was someone who I have so much sympathy for because he seemed to miss out on a happy, healthy childhood. Even though his family was really rich and could buy almost anything, he was restless almost every night, worrying his father would not make it back home. Albert had made so many sacrifices and to me is the best person in the book, due to his personality and characteristics.

Cody J says

This book is definitely a book for mob fanatics. For the Sins of My Father is a book that is written by a Albert DeMeo the son of Roy DeMeo the boss of the biggest car theft ring in the history of New York. The book explains the life of a mobster and the confusion of the family as it deals with the money, police, and reporters. It is also a book that shows the violence of the Mob and the thoughts, ideas, and way of thinking as a "wise guy". Albert DeMeo makes you feel as if you are growing up in the Mob along with him, from the owning his first gun to the first time he set foot in gemini. Every chapter leaves you wanting to know more, so if the mob is your kinda read then this book is a yes and even if your not entertained by the mob this book is a great read as well.

Shayla Clarke says

I absolutely loved this novel. I found it to be a very interesting and intriguing. I am not a huge, huge reader, but I'd have to say that I loved reading every page in this book. It was easy to enjoy, from the characters to the setting, it left me completely speechless. This novel really made me question every kind, gentle, caring person I have ever met. Literally anyone can be in the mob. Anyone can be a murderer, you truly can not judge a book by its cover: physically and metaphorically. After fully reading and having a true grasp on Alberts story, it's easy to understand why he was and is so miserable, and why he wrote and published his story. I find that I really connected with Albert, being both on the quiet side of things and sort of out of the loop, it was easy to understand where he was coming from. I am truly thankful for having the opportunity to read not just a book like this, but this particular novel, it gave me so much to think about and gave me the courage to be aware.

Erika says

Having never read a mafia book before, I wasn't sure exactly what to expect when I was given this book to read. However, not long after I started reading Albert DeMeos memoir, I found it was extremely suspenseful, highly enjoyable, and very well written. I found this book very hard to put down as it was quite the page turner. For the Sins of my Father was an insightful look into the life of mobster Roy DeMeo, and his son Albert, who was impacted by Roys double life. I find myself torn as I sit here and write this review as I have mixed feelings on Roy DeMeo. The stories Albert would share with the readers about his childhood would make me fall in love with the family man Roy was. He was a loving, thoughtful and good father/ husband, but I can't ignore the harsh reality that came with Mr.DeMeo, and that was the life he lived as a mobster. He brought his son Albert into the Mafia at the age of 7. He intentionally allowed Albert to grow into a young man who was clearly suited for this lifestyle; even though he claimed multiple times throughout the memoir that the mafia wasn't the lifestyle he wanted for Albert.

Although It's hard to justify Alberts action, I can't ignore the fact that it was his up bringing that caused him to struggle with right and wrong. For example, he believed stealing would be okay as his dad seemed okay with one of his many uncles stealing. The emotionally and physiological trauma from his fathers death and the outcome of the Gemini gangs actions are just two reasons as to why Alberts struggled in his adulthood. I believe this book is an attempt to clear his fathers name from the horrible mobster he was associated with. It's hard to ignore the harsh truth of Roy DeMeos actions, but I think Albert does a great job in showing the two sides to the story and exposing us the gentle, kinder side of Roy DeMeo; a side only his family knew. Albert changes drastically throughout the memoir. In the beginning he was a happy child who idolized his father. By the end of the novel, he is nothing like his father, and I think the way he changed his life for the better in the end was a good life choice.

Griffin Dool says

For The Sins of My Father is a thrilling page turner that often left me with the thought "how could this story possible be a true tale". The pure absurdity and danger presented in many of the situations kept me extremely engaged in the DeMeo family story. The most captivating person, and arguably the person who shares the role of main character, is none other than the titular, sinful father, Roy DeMeo. If we boil down all the events and conflicts which unfold in the pages of this memoir, they all have an undeniable origin from Roy's actions or lack thereof. Roy was a person who subjected me to a wide range of emotions since he can be argued as both the hero and the villain. Roy is painted as a terrific father by the actions he does to help his family. However he also dragged his family, mainly Albert, into the lethal mess that is the mafia which makes the reader question his thoughts and actions as a whole

Hayley Greenhalgh says

I felt that this book was an okay read. It wasn't complicated and was easy to understand and follow. However I found that it wasn't extremely interesting and the main character was bland. Even though his story was interesting the way his personality was portrayed gave him a less enticing storyline. The only time I really felt interested in him was when he went after the twins who killed his father. Other than that I felt he was much too cautious for the life he lived.

Lolly K Dandeneau says

Coming from a girl who loves The Godfather (not Godfather 3 so much) and Goodfellows, I really enjoyed diving into this book. I can't imagine what it must have been like living with such a father. This is a brutally honest, raw account of life inside the mafia. I love how the author pointed out the hypocrisy of the so-called morally superior people they encountered. The corruption amidst the powers that be in the law enforcement community really didn't shock me, just his candid way of writing about it.

He does not romanticize his father's sins, and there were many, but this really does touch on the 'shades of grey' (between what is right and wrong) reality of the world we exist in. As much as this book holds the horrors of the criminal underworld, it too has captured tenderness between father and son.

If killers are just evil monsters, how can they be such loving fathers; genuine in their affection?

Many reviewers wondered what Albert DeMeo was miserable about, since he lived a charmed childhood and what I say in his defense is our adulthood certainly clears the childlike cobwebs from our eyes and paints our parents as human beings with feelings and fears and sins of their own. Now apply that knowledge to a person whose father was in the mafia. I am sure there are many inner struggles between right and wrong, as the mafia has been famous for helping people who have been turned away by the police just as much as they've been nightmarishly devilsome in their dealings against people. It is likely such memories of the just and unjust actions of his father plague DeMeo as he walks with his memories today, so I believe he is deserving of a little complaining.

I found this book fascinating, frightening, eye-opening and tenderly sweet. I highly recommend it.

Alexis Reynard says

Throughout the book Albert (the author) became mature at a very young age and acted as if he was years older than he actually was, the situation that he was in needed him to act the way he did. From the time he could walk his father, Roy, taught him his trade and what to do and what not to do, and when his father was taken from him his personality and mind changed for the worse. He became depressed, overly aware as to what was going on around him and wondering what people were thinking about him, when Murder Machine was published his whole facade about his new life was shattered. It was as if he went back in time to when his father first died and was forced to relive how he felt, he ultimately went in a downward spiral and became suicidal. In the end half of the book you can see how he is changing as a person, trying to become healthy and mentally stable.

Bean says

For the Sins of My Father was an incredible memoir to read which I really enjoyed from start to finish. Albert DeMeo the son of a mafia killer Roy DeMeo, never failed to keep me captivated and intrigued emotionally and suspense-fully. To grow with characters is really important for myself as a reader, to see Albert grow as an individual once finding out his father was apart of the mob pushed himself to fight through all obstacles thrown at him. But while life continued to take a turn for him he became weak and experienced depression as well as, post traumatic stress disorder. Likewise to myself, Albert had a cloak of hidden emotions that were revealed when he was at his lowest point in life once Roy passed.

Matthew McGovern says

Unlike other kids at school whose father's were policeman, firefighters, or lawyers Albert DeMeo had no idea what his father did. A devoted family man, Roy DeMeo loved and cared for Al, his two sisters, his mother, and his extended family; but he didn't dress, talk, or act like any of the other Dad's in the neighborhood. With his tailored suits, silk shirts, impeccably shined loafers, pinky ring, and his gun, Roy would go to work late at night, to do business with Albert's many 'uncles'.

Beginning with Saturday excursions at a young age, Albert was gradually introduced to his father's secretive life. Wishing to emulate the man he and his family adored, Al learned to walk the walk and talk the talk. Unlike other kids in his exclusive Long Island neighborhood Albert spent whatever free time he could learning the tricks of the trade with his Father. From rigging horse races, loan sharking, stealing cars, filming porn, to contract killing; Albert learned how his family's luxury lifestyle was afforded.

At the age of seventeen, following the murder of his father; Albert had no choice but to enlist himself as a soldier in his father's war. To avoid jail time or the same fate as his beloved father, Albert had no choice but to fight battle after battle against both the feds and Roy's other family.

Onto adulthood the reader is introduced to an Albert who drove the car, wore the watch, lived in the house, and had the wife. But with the release of a new book and documentary, about his father's escapades as the most infamous killer and earner in New York's notorious Gambino crime family, the past Albert worked so hard to forget and escape came back to haunt him.

This book really comes full circle and through reading about the experience of a young man, in search of truth and reconciliation, the reader gets to see what is left out of movies like the Godfather. While the book shines some light on the secretive life of power and wealth so many are intrigued by, the true consequences of cosa nostra are put into the spotlight. Unlike any other book on the American Mob; *For the Sins of My Father*, delves into the parts of 'the life' Hollywood and publishers miss. A heart-wrenching yet wholesome narrative this book is really about one man's journey to fill his father's shoes. Only to find he must wear his own.

Kristina Koznova says

For the Sins of My Father is filled with so much suspense and detail. I could not stop reading it from the very start! The one thing that got me completely hooked is the fact that it has an interesting perspective of a child that got pulled into a world of fear, violence, and power. Albert goes into so much detail about what his father made him do and how Roy eventually dies. When Albert describes the many times that he has not slept at night until his father came home, I could not help but feel sympathy for him. Throughout his whole life, he worried constantly when he did not know where his father was and if he was even alive. As a child, the only thing he should be worrying about is his school work. But since his father is part of the mob, that is impossible for him. On top of that, Albert later developed depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, and he even had a few suicide attempts. At the start of the novel, Albert seems like a normal, happy child. It made my heart break when I read about what he had to go through as he grew up. Although my childhood was nothing like Albert's, it was easy to relate to the different emotions that Albert goes through

and has to defeat. Overall, I give this memoir a rating of 5 out of 5 stars. For the Sins of My Father is one of the most captivating and suspenseful books I have ever read!

Lea says

After reading For the Sins of my Father by Robert DeMeo I can say my views on the mafia and the lives these mobsters lived has been altered drastically. This book was filled with emotion suspense and above all I think it was a book of love. The genuine love Robert had for his father was truly something I admired about the book.

Now although this book was quite well written there are only two problems I had with it, the first being the multitude of characters presented to us at the beginning of the book and the person Albert depicted as his father. In the beginning of the book it was extremely hard to keep track of all the gang members Roy was introducing to young Albert. It took away from the overall feel of the book because I was so busy trying to keep track of the characters that I didn't have time to react all that was happening in the story. The second problem I had with this book was the person Albert depicted as his father. It is extremely difficult for me to identify my dislike or admiration of Roy simply because of his extremely violent career versus his loving nature towards those he loved. I truly fell in love with the family man Roy was, half the time I didn't even think of him as a mobster because he was just so caring and loving towards his family and friends. Reality did resurface every time for me however when Roy would take his son into the city to run "errands". Even now as I write this review I am still in shock about the circumstances Albert is placed under and as a result of this I can only view Roy DeMeo in a negative way because he was the reason for practically all of the things Albert is exposed to.

I definitely empathized with Albert as I felt he was thrown into the life he lived, not really given much of a choice on what he was and wasn't exposed to (another reason why I can not view Roy in a positive light). Albert's writing was extremely polished and I felt engrossed in every emotion he experienced. In my opinion Albert was extremely strong and was willing to do anything to keep his family and friends safe and happy. For example when Albert is in the process of attempting suicide and he waits until his wife leaves him so she doesn't have to see his dead body, or when he places towels on the floor to prevent people from having to clean up his bloody remains, he was always looking out for other people, always completely selfless and compassionate. In conclusion the novel was a wonderful piece, it was filled with questionable and complex characters, a suspenseful plot and beautiful ending, which I think are all elements of a fantastic story.

Robert says

"We are each responsible for our own sins, he for his, and I for mine. We are not intended to bear each other's. No one can survive that burden."

For the Sins of My Father: A Mafia Killer, His Son, and the Legacy of a Mob Life is the powerful autobiography of Albert DeMeo, who was forced to grow up quickly due to the events surrounding his father, the infamous Roy DeMeo. Roy DeMeo is best known in mafia history circles as having one of the top murder counts as a hit man and later Capo of the Gambino Crime Family. Albert's autobiography gives us a

unique look at someone involved in a high level in the mafia, the perspective from a child. Reading crime books about the various killers, hitmen, and other mobsters makes you sometimes forget that these people have families, and in this case we get to see the ups and downs of a father being a mobster.

Albert also becomes entangled in his father's business as he becomes older, eventually being asked by his father to do various things for him. Although while doing so, his father, who at this point was increasingly desperate, vocally expressed his regret about having to involve a son who he never wanted in his business. We get to see another side of Roy DeMeo that the history books don't paint in between paragraphs about his grisly murders, the story of a father who did everything right by his kids and wife. The book often reads like the perspective of Michael Corleone if he were in *Goodfellas*.

Albert himself is entirely straightforward about the crimes that his father committed, even going as far to admit his father's own morality about going to hell when he was dead. He doesn't try to deny that his father murdered people, including in one case an innocent college kid who was mistaken as a Columbian hit man. Albert also speaks frankly about the mafia itself and what he was aware that his father went through towards the end. It's also startling but in retrospect makes sense about what the events of having to quickly grow up with a father who could have been murdered any night and eventually was would have on his psyche. Although there may not have been many physical scars from what he went through, Albert received plenty of emotional and mental scars, as if he were a war veteran. In a way though, he did go through a war.

Overall, *For the Sins of My Father* offers a unique perspective about an often approached subject matter. For someone who doesn't have a background in writing, Albert's prose is actually really good and he is able to craft an interesting story. Definitely give this book a read if you have a chance.

Orinoco Womble (tidy bag and all) says

I see many reviews here that treat this memoir as a "novel", which suprised me at first. A lot of Americans choose to believe that the Mafia/Cosa Nostra/Syndicate never existed outside fiction, so any book dealing with it must be a "novel," right. Well, maybe the media image of it didn't, but such people are obviously too young to remember the war between the Five Families of the 1970s that touched even the sleepy Midwestern backwater where I grew up. Also I doubt the government of Italy would spend quite so many millions (or lose quite so many lives) dealing with a "myth".

This is the story of one Mafia "enforcer", the father referenced in the title seen through the eyes of his son. Parts of it are debatable--was an 8-yr-old boy really treated like such a princeling? After all, his dad was an enforcer, not a don. It is true that our childhood memories are often very different from an objective view, as children remember best those things that touched them directly, ignoring or skewing the background. However, it's an interesting book which reminded me of an episode of the ill-fated TV series of the 90s "Have Faith" in which the coadjutor is discovered to be the son of a Mob member who joins the witness protection plan.

The book is not as violent as I feared it might be; the author is not interested in the gory details--details that his father tried to keep from him, all the time he was grooming him to understand "the business." I found the story of Demeo's recovery after his father's death to be short-changed, rushed through in the last 20 pages or so. However, I'm sure that writing the book was an exercise in catharsis for him, an essential part of that recovery.

Interestingly, Demeo mentions the demise of the traditional American mafia, caused in part by the invasion of organised crime at the hands of other ethnic groups who according to the author didn't respect the traditional "rules of engagement" and were much quicker to kill than "the boys." It's worth bearing in mind that organized crime is as old as mankind itself, and each country has its own version. I direct the attention of the interested reader even to the Old Testament, in which the sons of Eli forced people to give them the best parts of their offerings to God (1 Samuel 2).

Anthony says

Very interesting to read the perspective of the son of a man involved in more murders than any other mafia crew I have heard of.
