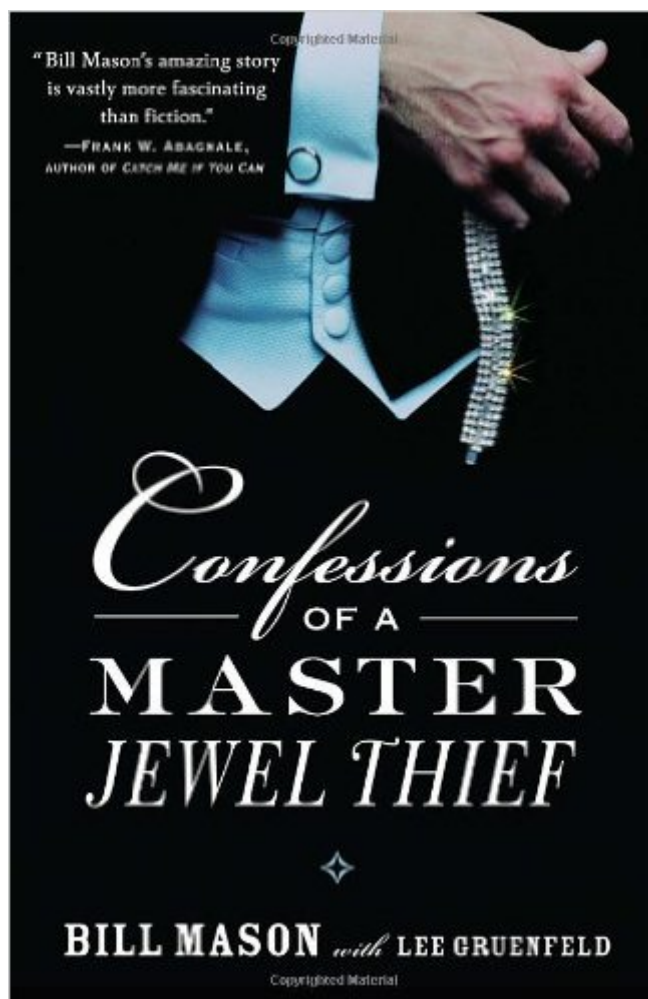


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Confessions Of A Master Jewel Thief



Synopsis

The extraordinarily captivating memoir of the remarkable jewel thief who robbed the rich and the famous while maintaining an outwardly conventional life "an astonishing and completely true story, the like of which has never before been told . . . or lived. Bill Mason is arguably the greatest jewel thief who ever lived. During a thirty-year career he charmed his way into the inner circles of high society and stole more than \$35 million worth of fabulous jewels from such celebrities as Robert Goulet, Armand Hammer, Phyllis Diller, Bob Hope, Truman Capote, Margaux Hemingway and Johnny Weissmuller "he even hit the Mafia. Along the way he seduced a high-profile Midwest socialite into leaving her prominent industrialist husband, nearly died after being shot during a robbery, tricked both Christie's and Sotheby's into fencing stolen goods for him and was a fugitive for five years and the object of a nationwide manhunt. Yet despite the best efforts of law enforcement authorities from several states as well as the federal government, he spent less than three years total in prison. Shadowy, elusive and intensely private, Mason has been the subject of many magazine and newspaper features, but no journalist has ever come close to knowing the facts. Now, in his own words and with no holds barred, he reveals everything, and the real story is far more incredible than any of the reporters, detectives or FBI agents who pursued Mason ever imagined. Confessions of a Master Jewel Thief, expertly co-written by bestselling author Lee Gruenfeld, is a unique true-crime confessional. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I read this book as it received a lot of publicity on initial release. I didn't find it to be a fast,

compelling story of a dangerous jewel thief. Rather, I found it to be a tale of a common thief with a substantial amount of time spent on normal legal proceedings and life as a fugitive. While his life was much more normal than you may expect by reading the title, I still found it to be a very compelling read. Mason starts the book as a teenager who has some minor run-ins with the law while living in Cleveland Ohio. He stumbles in to a life as a jewel thief while marrying, raising kids, and living a fairly normal life as an apartment manager. The book really revs up with a move to South Florida in the 70s. Florida was exploding with drugs, crime, and wealthy northerners living in ocean front condos with expensive jewels. Mason describes some of his successful heists but the more interesting story is his relationship with the police. Also, there is a comical sideline of him buying a small ocean front home to rent where the renters continually turn out to be drug runners using his house as a delivery point. The last part of the book has little to do with jewel thefts and more to do with family and escaping the law. Overall, I found this to be a worthwhile story to read. But "a master jewel thief" is really only about 40% of the story. That may be enough for most readers as it was for me.

The first hundred pages of this book were enthralling, but after that it was more of an ego driven story about how much smarter he was than anyone else. The first hundred pages covered his development as a thief, "scores", and how he combined this with his family and day job. I couldn't put it down. But soon after that the book turned to life behind bars, Mason duelling with the police, and a great deal on how he and his friends were much more intelligent than the DA's and police. Who he painted as angry, revenge fueled bullies. Certainly, this book is his side of the story and needs to be told, but the latter half of the book doesn't complete the energy he showed in the first half. I went from enticed to bored in about ten pages.

Was not particularly captivated with this read. Author is the thief here, and seemed a bright guy, but hit easy marks imo. If you are looking for Murph the Surf type scores, look elsewhere. (Guy also bashes Murph real badly in this book, calling him all kinds of names). No update on current situation either....don't waste your cash here.

If you are fan of the books or the movies from Goodfellas and Catch Me If You Can, then you will definitely enjoy this book. Truth is always way more fascinating than fiction. The risks that Bil Mason took will astound you and the people he met, stole from and almost stole from will fascinate you even more. Pay close attention to the first word in the title. This is not a book about bragging, but

rather an atonement for what he had done to his victims, their families and more importantly what he did to his family. You will also read great tidbits on home security and the judicial system. He tells a great story, but I enjoyed it more knowing that he was remorseful about what he had done and what he has and or is doing to atone for his bad choices. This will feel like a fast read in part because the author writes as if he is talking to you and too the point rather than at you in superfluous manner. It's been on the better books I've read this years. Enjoy to all those you decide if this subject is up your alley (hint: read the prologue before deciding to do further).

If you're interested in reading a self-congratulatory exercise in ego, combined with self-serving justifications for criminal activity, this book is for you. The title (and the cover photography) promises stories of daring heists by a thief who mingles, tuxedo-clad, among the bejeweled and glittering. The number of pages devoted to actual jewel thieving are few and far between. We learn a great deal more than is interesting about his legal problems (and what exactly makes him a master if he's been caught?), his relationships with women, his involvement with Mob figures and drug deals... all told with great attention to the number of times Mason can climb up a rope using only his amazing upper-arm strength. In the last seven of 358 pages, Mason takes the time to admit that perhaps his chosen profession was less than acceptable and to say that - at this late date - that perhaps he had inflicted more than financial damage when he stole, and gee, he's kinda sorry about that. Borrow this one from the library if you must read it; the man doesn't deserve a cent in royalties.

First let me say that this book was worth the time to read. Bill Mason is certainly an interesting guy. I think he set out trying to live a double life, but ultimately he become nothing more than a common criminal. Bill never intended to be a common criminal, but that is where he ended up. I don't think he ever accepted the reality of the fact that he became nothing more than a common criminal. He provided many excuses and justifications for his ongoing crimes. I think he continues to see himself as some sort of a non-criminal whose acts were harmless. I might agree that in some strange way he started out that way, but he did not end that way. My only real criticism of the book is that I did not always find myself believing what he was saying. As an attorney I found some of the alleged legal concepts questionable, at best. Bill is either the luckiest man in the world, or he took license to embellish what actually happened. In spite of all of that, I would recommend this book. It is very entertaining and gives you insight (at least for a while) of someone who was successfully leading a double life.

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