Hometown Diners by Robert O. Williams

Photography So Personal, You'll Want To Leave A Tip...

The staff photographer for the Philadelphia Inquirer presents intimate pictures and lively personal anecdotes for readers nostalgic for their own hometown diner. 145 photos, 125 in color.

My Personal Review:
Williams' book plunges you head-first into an era when people truly did make money "the old-fashioned way" (they earned it with their sweat and tears). We sit as interlopers as we watch the toil of daily lives unfurl across the beautifully photographed pages. We sit at the counter while the waitress who has been at this particular diner way past her prime, exchanges small talk with the patrons. We can almost feel the cold rain against our faces as we view the water-drenched images of The Cheyenne (NYC) and The Highland Park (NY). We sense the simultaneous joy and frustration on the faces of diner owners who can't be sure what the future holds for their life's work. William's has taken us into a doorway that we rarely have a chance to enter; he has given us a license to the past. Through this book we have the opportunity to rekindle the memories of our childhood, teenage years and young adulthood...all at the same time. We remember what it felt like to sit at the counter with our Dads. We remember the hard formica tables against our ribs as we shared a ketchup-drenched kiss across the table. We remember introducing our "little ones" to the wall boxes of music that sit on the tables and watch in wonderment as they try to figure out "where the music comes from".

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